



JIM PETRO
AUDITOR OF STATE

STATE OF OHIO

STRONGSVILLE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT PERFORMANCE AUDIT

JANUARY 8, 2002



STATE OF OHIO
OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR

JIM PETRO, AUDITOR OF STATE

To the residents and Board of Education of the Strongsville City School District:

In response to a request from the Strongsville City School District (Strongsville CSD) to complete comprehensive performance audits on all major areas of operations, including financial systems, human resources, facilities, transportation and technology, the State Auditor's Office is pleased to provide the completed performance audit report for the human resources department. Strongsville CSD requested that the performance audits be conducted to provide a resource in the District's ongoing effort to improve the efficiency of operations, the quality of education and the responsiveness of District administration to its residents and to help establish and maintain a financially-sustainable level of operation.

This report assesses the human resources department and various personnel issues within Strongsville CSD, including staffing levels, leave usage, benefits administration and contractual issues. The human resources section was selected to be released as the first phase of the project because personnel costs represent approximately 85 percent of Strongsville CSD's annual operating expenditures. The State Auditor's Office conducted an independent assessment of these functions and expenditures to provide commendations for effective practices and recommendations in areas where the District can either recognize financial benefits or achieve improved efficiencies in operations and service delivery.

An executive summary has been prepared which includes the project history, District overview, purpose and objective of the performance audit and a summary of findings, commendations, recommendations and financial implications. This report has been provided to Strongsville CSD and its contents discussed with members of the Board of Education and District management. Strongsville CSD has been encouraged to utilize the results of the performance audit as a resource in improving its overall operations, service delivery and financial stability. Additional copies of this report can be requested by calling the Clerk of the Bureau's office at (614) 466-2310 or the toll free number in Columbus, (800) 282-0370. In addition, this performance audit can be accessed on-line through the State Auditor's Office website at <http://www.auditor.state.oh.us/> by choosing the "On-Line Audit Search" option.

Sincerely,

JIM PETRO
Auditor of State

January 8, 2002

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project History

In July of 2001, Strongsville City School District (Strongsville CSD) contacted the Auditor of State's Office to request a performance audit. Consistent with the District's commitment to the City of Strongsville and the residents of the Strongsville CSD, the administration sought an independent assessment of District operations both to highlight efficient and effective practices and to identify areas for improvement. Strongsville CSD's engagement of the Auditor of State's Performance Audit Department is the first such request from a school district in Ohio. Performance audits have been conducted on the State's largest 21 urban school districts as well as fiscal emergency, fiscal watch and fiscal caution districts, as required by law. Strongsville CSD's willingness to voluntarily undergo this process indicates its interest in providing quality, cost-effective educational services while constantly striving to improve overall operations.

Pursuant to discussions with Strongsville CSD administration, the following assessment areas were identified for inclusion in the performance audit:

- Financial Systems;
- Human Resources;
- Facilities;
- Transportation; and
- Technology.

Planning for the performance audit began in August 2001. To meet the administrative and operational needs of Strongsville CSD, it was determined that the Human Resources section of the report would be released in January of 2002, while the remaining sections will be released in March of 2002.

The performance audit is designed to develop recommendations that provide cost savings, revenue enhancements and efficiency improvements and to develop commendations that recognize efficient and effective practices currently in place at Strongsville CSD. Strongsville CSD is encouraged to continue to monitor and assess its operations to identify recommendations for future improvements.

District Overview

Strongsville CSD is located in Cuyahoga County and encompasses approximately 25 square miles. According to average daily membership (ADM) data, Strongsville CSD served approximately 6,800 students in FY 2000-01. According to Strongsville CSD's 2000 and 2001 local report cards, the District has been in the *Continuous Improvement* category for two consecutive years – meeting 22 of 27 standards each year.

Strongsville CSD's interest in undergoing a performance audit demonstrates a proactive approach by District management to maintain financial stability and educational accomplishment. Strongsville CSD annually prepares and updates a five-year financial forecast. The current District forecast projects a deficit situation starting in FY 2002-03 and increasing annually through FY 2005-06. To prevent this from occurring, Strongsville CSD must either increase its revenues or decrease expenditures. An operating levy on the November 2001 ballot was defeated. Although this performance audit provides opportunities for cost savings, Strongsville CSD should balance those savings with the District's educational mission and should consider reallocating some cost savings to other areas, such as direct instruction.

Per pupil revenues were \$7,639 in FY 1999-00, which was above the peer average of \$7,493 and the State average of \$7,013. Per pupil expenditures exceeded per pupil revenues by \$308 in FY 1997-98, \$252 in FY 1998-99 and \$784 in FY 1999-00. Strongsville CSD spends 83.7 percent of its operating budget to fund payroll and fringe benefit costs. In FY 1999-00, Strongsville CSD's average teacher salary was \$50,604, which was 2.0 percent below the peer average but 21.3 percent above the State average. Strongsville CSD's teacher salaries are affected by the high level of experience and education of its teaching staff.

According to District personnel, Strongsville CSD has negotiated to pay its employees' share of the contributions to the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS) in lieu of pay raises for 1995 through 1997. Despite these additional costs, Strongsville CSD's Bachelor Degree base salary ranks thirteenth highest out of the 33 school districts in Cuyahoga County, and its Masters Degree maximum salary with longevity ranks twenty-second highest compared to the same districts. Strongsville CSD's salary data throughout the **executive summary** have been adjusted to reflect this benefit.

In FY 2000-01, Strongsville CSD had 774.2 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees and was the only district among the peers to increase staffing from FY 1999-00. However, Strongsville's staffing per 1,000 ADM was the lowest of the peers, lower than the peer average for both FY 1999-00 and FY 2000-01, and ranked 27th out of 30 other regular school districts in Cuyahoga County. Also, Strongsville CSD's student-to-teacher ratio indicates lower teacher staffing than the State average. By implementing the recommendations contained in this report, Strongsville CSD may be able to reallocate some of its resources to direct instruction.

Strongsville CSD's total annual insurance cost per employee was the second lowest of the peers and below the peer and State averages. However, Strongsville CSD's health insurance costs are above those reported by the State Employment Relations Board (SERB) for like-sized districts. Classified employees hired after 1997 are responsible for \$7.07 per month toward the cost of healthcare premiums. Strongsville CSD pays the entire premium amount for all classified employees hired before 1997 and all certificated employees.

The performance audit provides a series of recommendations, many of which include associated cost reductions, redirected services or efficiency improvements. Management should carefully consider these recommendations when making the important decisions necessary to maintain financial stability while improving the quality of educational services.

Summary Results

The summary results of the performance audit are contained on pages 1-3 through 1-6. The summary results are followed by overall performance audit information including a definition of performance audits, the objective and methodology of performance audits and peer district comparisons of key information.

The performance audit addresses the human resources functions of Strongsville CSD. A summary of background information, major findings, major commendations, major recommendations and financial implications is provided here, although more thorough analyses are contained throughout the report. All interested parties are encouraged to read the entire report. The results of this performance audit should not be construed as criticism of Strongsville CSD management. Rather, the performance audit should be used as a management tool by Strongsville CSD and the community to improve operations within the District.

A table representing a summary of the financial implications of the recommendations is presented on page 1-7. The financial implications are divided into two groups: those that are not subject to negotiations and those that are subject to negotiations. The performance audit also contains a number of recommendations which may not generate cost savings but will result in enhanced service delivery. If implemented, these recommendations would improve the operational efficiency of Strongsville CSD and its effectiveness in achieving its educational mission.

The performance audit is not a financial audit. Therefore, it was not within the scope of this work to conduct a comprehensive and detailed examination of Strongsville CSD's fiscal records and past financial transactions. However, copies of the financial audits are available through the Auditor of State's Office.

Background:

Strongsville CSD has a separate human resources department. All Strongsville CSD employees are categorized either as certificated or classified staff. Certificated staff include principals, teachers, counselors, therapists, nurses, librarians, social workers, psychologists and certain supervisors and directors. Classified staff include instructional teaching aides, library aides, maintenance personnel, custodians, food service workers, secretaries, transportation personnel and certain supervisors and directors.

Findings: A summary of the significant findings in the **human resources** section is as follows:

- During the calculation of staffing levels reported in EMIS for FY 2001, Strongsville CSD reported some employees in the wrong classifications. This resulted in incorrect information being reported to EMIS which causes the staffing levels to be improperly recorded. EMIS

was developed and implemented by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) to assist school districts in effectively and efficiently managing student and personnel demographics.

- Although Strongsville CSD's overall staffing appeared reasonable, the staffing allocation in the clerical classification is higher than the peers and the peer average.
- Strongsville CSD's staffing allocation in the teaching aide classification is higher than the peers and the peer average. Approximately 24.0 percent of all teaching aides are used to assist with special education instruction. The remaining teaching aides that are not assisting with special education instruction are either assisting in regular education classrooms or assisting with student supervision duties (recess, cafeteria and study hall).
- The majority of middle and high school teaching staff teach at least five periods a day. Middle school teachers have one team planning period and two planning/conference periods while high school teachers have two planning/conference periods. Based upon a review of previous school district performance audits, middle school teachers usually have two planning/conference periods while high school teachers have one planning/conference period.
- Strongsville CSD is responsible for the pick-up on the pick-up of the employee's retirement contribution. According to Strongsville CSD personnel, this provision was agreed to in lieu of a salary increase and was implemented over a three-year period.
- During FY 2001, the average Strongsville CSD teacher used 9.5 sick leave days which is 11 percent higher than the 8.4 sick leave days used by the average Brecksville-Broadview Heights teacher. While the amount of sick leave days used by teachers does not appear to be dramatically higher than Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD, the amount is 27 percent higher than Cleveland Heights-University Heights CSD and 46 percent higher than Canton CSD.
- Strongsville CSD's average hospitalization premiums per employee are approximately \$28.00 per month higher than those reported by SERB for like-sized districts, but an average of \$88.00 per month lower than the peer district average. Strongsville CSD requires a fixed employee contribution from some of its employees.
- While Strongsville CSD's annual insurance cost per employee is the second lowest when compared to the peers' annual cost per employee and 10.3 percent lower than the peer average, Strongsville CSD's total dental costs are 105.2 percent higher than the peer average. This is due to the higher level of benefits offered by Strongsville CSD compared to the benefits offered by the peer districts.

- In an effort to encourage professional growth among its teachers, Strongsville CSD has implemented a voluntary professional growth program. There is no minimum time restriction limiting when teachers can receive the first voluntary professional growth reward. However, after each reward has been received, subsequent growth periods require a minimum of four consecutive years. There is no mention within the negotiated agreement as to how much time must have been spent in each activity in order to receive the eligible points. An evaluation committee was established to evaluate activities and award points; however, the evaluations take place after the activity has been completed.

Commendations: A summary of the significant commendations in the **human resources** section is as follows:

- While Strongsville CSD has a lower percentage of its teachers with a masters degree when compared to the peer average, it has a higher percentage of teachers with more than a bachelors degree (bachelors degree plus 150 hours and masters degree) when compared to the peer average. The higher level of educational attainment may have a positive impact on classroom teaching skills and may assist Strongsville CSD in meeting its educational goals. Additionally, Strongsville CSD receives additional state funding based on the experience and education level of its teachers.
- Strongsville CSD has maintained a lower annual insurance cost per employee when compared to the peers, peer district averages and SERB reports. Decreasing the annual insurance costs allows Strongsville CSD to allocate additional resources to other areas.
- Strongsville CSD personnel have indicated that the District has an effective labor management committee. An effective labor management committee creates an avenue of open communication between employees and management. Furthermore, it assists in having a positive effect on the general morale of Strongsville CSD, informs management of potential contractual problems and involves bargaining unit members in managerial discussions when developing Strongsville CSD policies.

Recommendations: A summary of the significant recommendations in the **human resources** section is as follows:

- Strongsville CSD should develop policies and procedures to ensure that accurate reports are prepared and reconciled before being submitted to ODE and EMIS. In addition, there should be a review process by a person that is independent of the data gathering process to ensure that policies and procedures are followed and accurate numbers are reported to ODE and EMIS.

- Strongsville CSD should conduct a detailed analysis on the duties and responsibilities of its clerical personnel and determine if resources are being used efficiently and effectively in relation to the needs of Strongsville CSD. Strongsville CSD may be able to reduce 11 clerical positions, creating an estimated annual cost savings of \$372,000.
- Strongsville CSD should consider increasing the number of class assignments for middle school and high school teachers to six per day. Increasing the number of classes taught by teachers to six classes per day would increase the amount of direct student contact and also may assist Strongsville CSD in using some of its teachers to perform supervisory duties or take on additional duty periods. More effective use of teachers and teaching aides could allow Strongsville CSD to reduce 30 teaching aide positions, for an annual cost savings of \$624,000. Savings from these reductions could be used to hire additional teachers and bring the District closer to the statewide student-to-teacher ratio of 18.1 to 1.
- While Strongsville CSD indicated that the pick-up on the pick-up of the employee's retirement contribution was agreed to in lieu of a salary increase, Strongsville CSD should continue to monitor average salaries of its personnel within the various classifications. In addition, Strongsville CSD should monitor the financial impact of being responsible for the pick-up on the pick-up of the employee's retirement contribution.
- Strongsville CSD should examine the use of sick leave by its teachers and seek methods to reduce the use of sick leave among its certificated personnel. The excessive use of sick leave may increase administrative costs and impact the quality of education by interrupting the flow of a teacher's curriculum. If Strongsville CSD could reduce the use of sick leave by two days per teacher, the District could realize an annual cost savings of \$74,460.
- Based upon the rising health care costs for governmental entities, the potential need for Strongsville CSD to reduce its operating costs and the employee contribution statistics reported by SERB, Strongsville CSD should require all its employees to contribute towards the monthly premium costs for health and dental insurance. Requiring an employee co-pay amount for monthly premiums could create \$348,100 in annual savings. However, the contribution should be stated in terms of a percentage, rather than a fixed dollar amount, to help offset future cost increases. In addition, if Strongsville CSD were to increase its employee co-pay for prescription drugs, it could realize an annual cost savings of \$214,000.
- Strongsville CSD should examine the current benefits offered under its dental insurance plan and determine if the current high level of benefits should be renegotiated. Should Strongsville CSD need to reduce its operating costs in the future, obtaining lower dental insurance benefits with lower monthly premiums could create an annual cost savings of \$151,700. The District is also considering self-insuring its dental coverage.

- Although the concept of a voluntary professional growth program could be beneficial because it encourages involvement in the community, certain parameters of the program should be strengthened in order to meet its objectives. Provisions of the program that should be renegotiated include the relationship of the activity to Strongsville CSD's educational priorities; length of time spent in each activity to obtain the eligible points; prior approval of activity to ensure a benefit to the teacher, students or Strongsville CSD; and the number of activities that can be completed in order to accrue professional growth program points.

Summary of Financial Implications

The following tables summarize the performance audit recommendations that contain financial implications. These recommendations provide a series of ideas or suggestions that Strongsville CSD should consider when making the important decisions necessary to maintain its financial stability while continuing to meet its educational needs. The financial implications are divided into two groups: those that are not subject to negotiation and those that are subject to negotiation. Detailed information concerning the financial implications, including assumptions, is contained within the report.

Summary of Financial Implications Not Subject to Negotiation

Recommendation	Estimated Annual Cost Savings	Estimated Implementation Costs
R3.2 Reduction in clerical personnel	\$372,000	
R3.3 Reduction in teaching aide personnel	\$624,000	
R3.3 Reduction in student-to-teacher ratio by hiring additional teachers		\$697,000
R3.7 Reduction in certificated sick leave usage	\$74,460	
Total	\$1,070,460	\$697,000

Summary of Financial Implications Subject to Negotiation

Recommendation	Estimated Annual Cost Savings
R3.8 Renegotiation of dental insurance premiums	\$151,700
R3.9 Increasing employee insurance co-pay	\$348,100
R3.9 Increasing co-pay on generic and brand-named drugs	\$214,000
Total	\$713,800

Based on Strongsville CSD’s financial forecast, the District will enter a growing deficit situation in FY 2002-03. These recommendations provide a means to control costs in order to avoid this situation. However, when implementing recommendations, Strongsville CSD should remain cognizant of its educational mission and consider reallocating funds from personnel reductions to attain a student-to-teacher ratio more in line with the State average. The magnitude of cost savings associated with some recommendations could be affected by the implementation of other interrelated recommendations. Therefore, the actual cost savings could vary depending on the implementation of the various recommendations.

Objectives and Scope

A performance audit is defined as a systematic and objective assessment of the performance of an organization, program, function or activity to develop findings, conclusions and recommendations. Performance audits are usually classified as either economy and efficiency audits or program audits.

Economy and efficiency audits consider whether an entity is using its resources efficiently and effectively. They attempt to determine if management is maximizing output for a given amount of input. If the entity is efficient, it is assumed that it will accomplish its goals with a minimum of resources and with the fewest negative consequences.

Program audits are normally designed to determine if the entity's activities or programs are effective, if they are reaching their goals and if the goals are proper, suitable or relevant. Program audits often focus on the relationship of the program's goals with the actual program's outputs or outcomes. Program audits attempt to determine if the actual outputs match, exceed or fall-short of the intended outputs. This audit was primarily designed as an economy and efficiency audit.

The objectives of performance audits may vary. The AOS has designed this performance audit with the objective of reviewing systems, organizational structures, finances and operating procedures to develop recommendations for reducing operating costs, increasing revenues or improving efficiency. Specific objectives of this performance audit include the following:

- Identify opportunities for improving district effectiveness, responsiveness and quality of service delivery which is cost beneficial;
- Identify opportunities for improving district procedures, work methods and capital asset utilization;
- Determine if the current district's organization is flexible and effectively structured to meet future demands;
- Evaluate financial policies and procedures and provide recommendations for enhanced revenue flow, expenditure reduction ideas or alternative financing techniques;
- Assure administrative activities are performed efficiently and effectively without unnecessary duplication;
- Determine if support activities are sufficient to meet educational objectives;
- Ensure education goals and objectives are supported by the administrative organization;
- Ensure the administrative hierarchy does not diminish teacher effectiveness; and
- Perform an independent assessment of the district's financial situation.

The performance audit topics focus primarily on the system/business side of school district operations. By focusing on systems, the audit provides Strongsville CSD with alternative recommendations to enable it to operate more efficiently and economically. Enhancements to these systems will assist in improving the delivery of educational services to students.

This section of the performance audit on Strongsville CSD covers district operations in the area of human resources. A subsequent report will examine district operations in the areas of financial systems, facilities, transportation and technology.

Methodology

To complete the performance audit, the auditors gathered and assessed a significant amount of data pertaining to Strongsville CSD, conducted interviews with various groups associated with Strongsville CSD and conducted interviews and assessed information from the peer districts along with other nearby school districts. The methodology is further explained as follows:

Studies, reports and other data sources

In assessing human resources functions at Strongsville CSD, the District was asked to provide any previous studies or analyses already prepared on the subject. In addition to assessing this information, the auditors spent a significant amount of time gathering and assessing other pertinent documents or information. Examples of the studies and other data sources which were studied include the following:

- Strongsville CSD financial and budgetary reports;
- Board policy manual and meeting minutes, including appropriation resolutions and amendments;
- Negotiated union contracts;
- Organizational charts and position descriptions;
- Various reports from the Education Management Information System (EMIS);
- Cost of Health Insurance in Ohio's Public Sector Report from the State Employee Relations Board (SERB);
- Data from the Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC);
- Ohio Revised Code and Ohio Administrative Code.

Interviews, Discussions and Surveys

Numerous interviews and discussions were held with many levels and groups of individuals involved internally and externally with Strongsville CSD. These interviews were invaluable in developing an overall understanding of Strongsville CSD operations and in some cases, were useful sources in identifying concerns with Strongsville CSD's operations and in providing recommendations to address these concerns. Examples of the organizations and individuals who were interviewed include administrators and support staff, the Ohio Department of Education and peer district administrators and support staff.

Benchmark Comparisons with Other Districts

Two school districts, Brecksville-Broadview Heights City and Solon City, were selected to provide benchmark comparisons with SCSD. Additional information from Mason City School District was used in the *Contractual and Employment Issues* section of this report. Performance indicators were established to develop a mechanism for determining how effectively and efficiently Strongsville CSD is providing necessary human resources functions. The information was gathered primarily through information contained within EMIS, information provided by the selected peer districts named above, and information provided by ODE.

Certain other performance audits had information or suggested procedures which were incorporated where applicable. These suggested procedures were selected to provide benchmark comparisons with Strongsville CSD's operations.

Comparative Districts

Peer district comparisons provide information on like practices, statistics and benchmarking data. Peer school districts are selected based on a variety of factors, including demographic and educational data provided by ODE. Based on school district report card data, ODE establishes groups of similar districts, from which peers were selected for the performance audit, pursuant to discussions with Strongsville CSD administration. Peer averages exclude Strongsville CSD, unless otherwise noted. State averages include all school districts within the State of Ohio. Certain information contained within this executive summary may differ from the individual sections due to the timing of data from ODE.

ODE issues annual school district report cards that measure attainment of Statewide academic performance standards. These report cards reflect data for the school year prior to that in which the report card is issued (for example, the 2001 report cards reflect data for the 1999-00 school year). It is important to note that the number of standards increased from 18 to 27 in FY 1998-99.

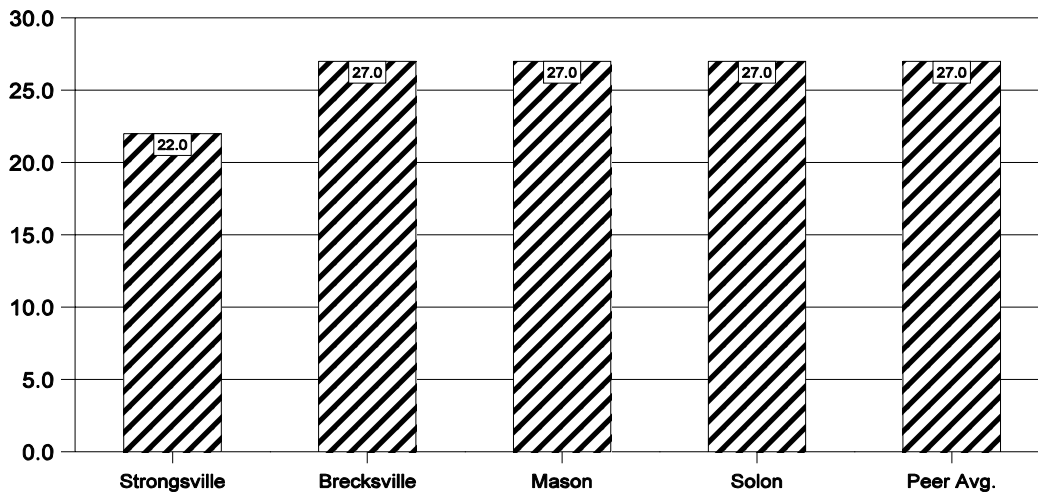
Strongsville CSD’s report card scores have been the lowest among the peers for the two most recent years listed and the second lowest for the first year. For the most recent year listed, Strongsville CSD was the only school district among the peers to be listed as *Continuous Improvement*.

Report Card Standards Met			
District	FY 1997-1998	FY 1998-1999	FY 1999-2000
Strongsville CSD	16.0	22.0	22.0
Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD	17.0	27.0	27.0
Mason CSD	15.0	26.0	27.0
Solon CSD	18.0	26.0	27.0
Peer Average	16.7	26.3	27.0
Total Standards Possible	18.0	27.0	27.0

Source: ODE’s School District Report Cards

Report Card Standards Met

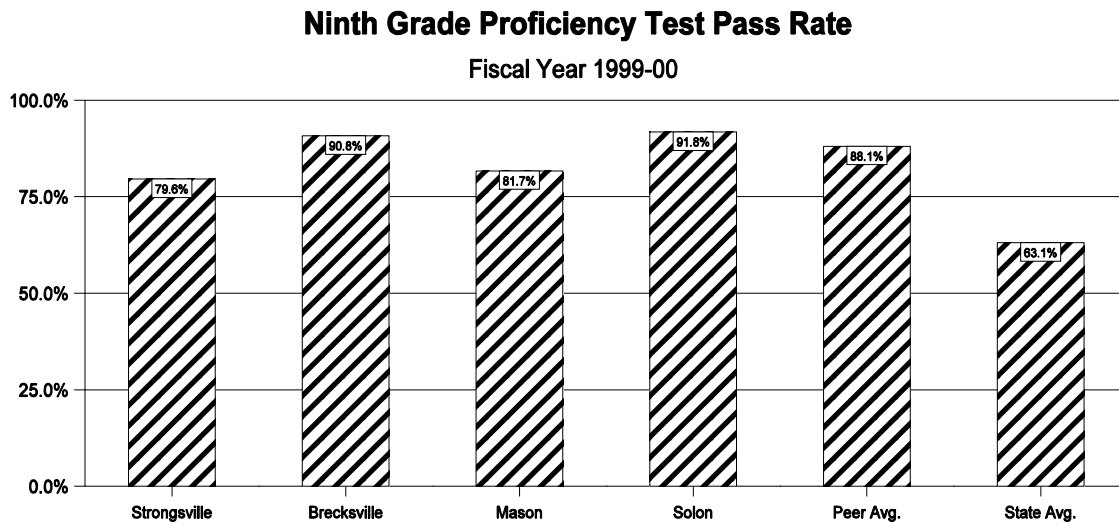
Fiscal Year 1999-00



For FY 1999-00, Strongsville CSD’s ninth grade proficiency test passage rate was the lowest among the peer districts and lower than the peer average, although it was 26.1 percent higher than the State average. Over the four-year trend period, Strongsville CSD’s passage rate actually declined. Only one of the peer district experienced a decline in passage rates while the peer and State averages each increased.

Ninth Grade Proficiency Test Passage Rate (All Subjects)					
	FY 1996-97	FY 1997-98	FY 1998-99	FY 1999-00	% Change 1997-00
Strongsville CSD	81.3	82.5	82.4	79.6	(2.1)%
Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD	76.9	87.3	89.7	90.8	18.1%
Mason CSD	83.3	82.8	88.4	81.7	(1.9)%
Solon CSD	88.0	89.4	89.6	91.8	4.3%
Peer Average	82.7	86.5	89.2	88.1	6.5%
State Average	55.0	55.6	61.1	63.1	14.7%

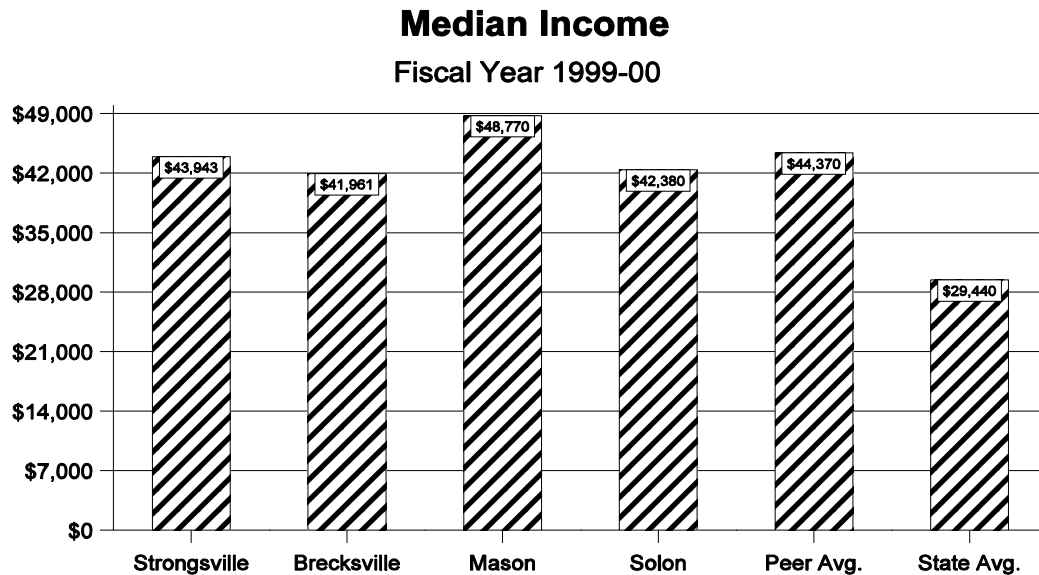
Source: ODE’s School District Report Cards



Strongsville CSD’s median income of \$43,943 in FY 1999-00 was the second highest of the peer districts. Over the four-year trend period, Strongsville CSD’s median income increased 20.0 percent, which was commensurate with the peer and State averages. However, Strongsville CSD’s median income in FY 1999-00, while only 1.0 percent below the peer average, was 49.3 percent above the State average.

Median Income					
	FY 1996-97	FY 1997-98	FY 1998-99	FY 1999-00	% Change 1997-00
Strongsville CSD	\$36,612	\$39,760	\$46,432	\$43,943	20.0%
Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD	\$36,126	\$39,067	\$43,758	\$41,961	16.2%
Mason CSD	\$36,907	\$42,104	\$47,694	\$48,770	32.1%
Solon CSD	\$36,441	\$38,679	\$41,926	\$42,380	16.3%
Peer Average	\$36,491	\$39,950	\$44,459	\$44,370	21.6%
State Average	\$24,446	\$26,075	\$27,244	\$29,440	20.4%

Source: Ohio Department of Taxation, Personal Income Tax Return by School District(Y-2) reports

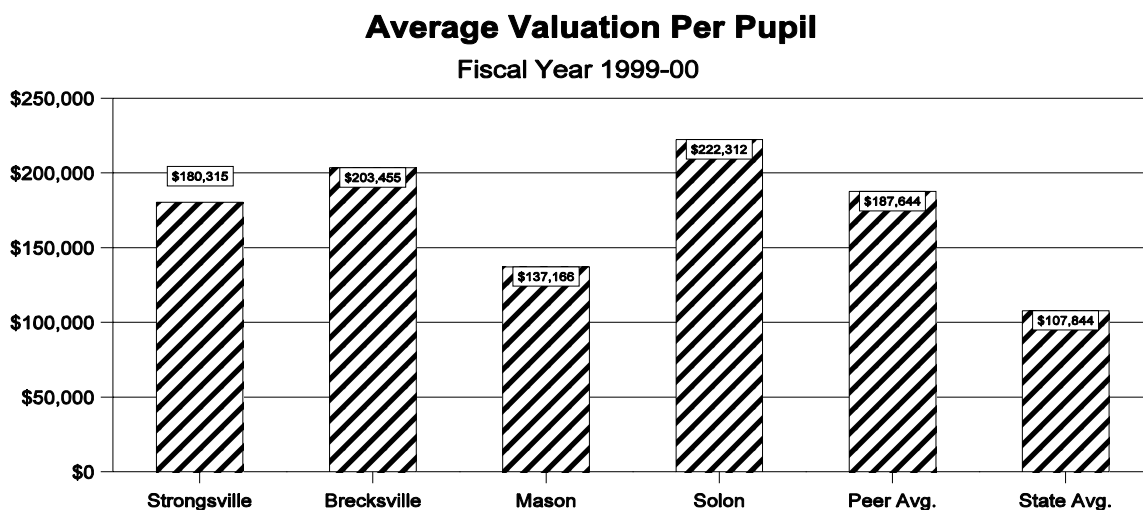


The assessed average property valuation per pupil is an important component in a school district’s funding. Average property valuation is a significant factor in determining the ability of the school district to generate stable or additional income. Because school district funding in the State of Ohio is driven by local property tax revenue, a higher average property valuation indicates a greater potential to generate income for a school district.

Strongsville CSD’s average property valuation per pupil was \$180,315 in FY 1999-00, the second lowest among the peer districts and below the peer average, although it was 57.5 percent above the State average. Strongsville CSD’s average property valuation increase of 17.4 percent over the four-year trend period was the highest among the peer districts and higher than the peer average, although it was below the State average increase.

Average Valuation Per Pupil					
	FY 1996-97	FY 1997-98	FY 1998-99	FY 1999-00	% Change 1997-00
Strongsville CSD	\$153,577	\$159,348	\$163,631	\$180,315	17.4%
Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD	\$189,615	\$188,822	\$186,457	\$203,455	7.3%
Mason CSD	\$117,647	\$119,995	\$120,795	\$137,166	16.6%
Solon CSD	\$195,175	\$197,421	\$198,460	\$222,312	13.9%
Peer Average	\$167,479	\$168,746	\$168,571	\$187,644	12.0%
State Average	\$95,461	\$99,831	\$107,844	\$114,498	19.9%

Source: Ohio Department of Taxation, School District Average Values per Pupil (SD-1) reports

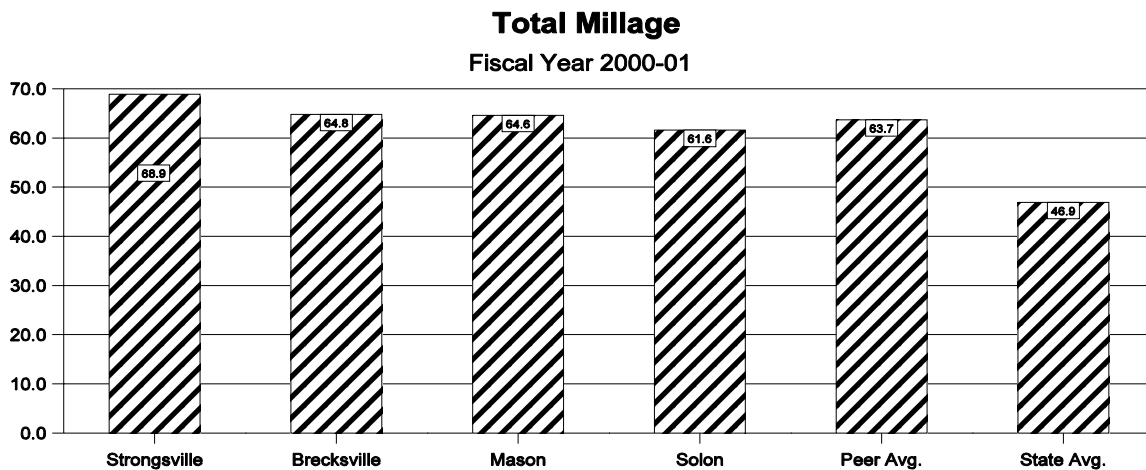


Effective millage and total millage are the measurement units of assessed local property taxes. A mill will raise \$1.00 of tax revenue for every \$1,000 of taxable property value it is levied against. Total millage is the voted rate assessed to the entire local tax base, while effective mills are the rates applied to real property in each school district after the application of the tax reduction factor.

Strongsville CSD’s total millage was the highest of the peers, 8.2 percent higher than the peer average and 46.9 percent above the State average. All of the peers had total millage that was significantly above the State average. Strongsville CSD’s total millage increased over the four-year trend period, as was the case at all but one of the peers. Strongsville CSD’s percentage increase, however, was the smallest among the remaining two peers and the peer and State averages.

Total Millage					
	FY 1997-98	FY 1998-99	FY 1999-00	FY 2000-01	% Change 1998-01
Strongsville CSD	68.6	68.4	68.2	68.9	0.4%
Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD	65.5	65.4	65.3	64.8	(1.1)%
Mason CSD	62.0	62.0	62.0	64.6	4.2%
Solon CSD	61.2	61.7	61.7	61.6	0.7%
Peer Average	62.9	63.0	63.0	63.7	1.3%
State Average	45.7	45.9	46.3	46.9	2.6%

Source: Ohio Department of Taxation, Compilation of School District Published Data reports



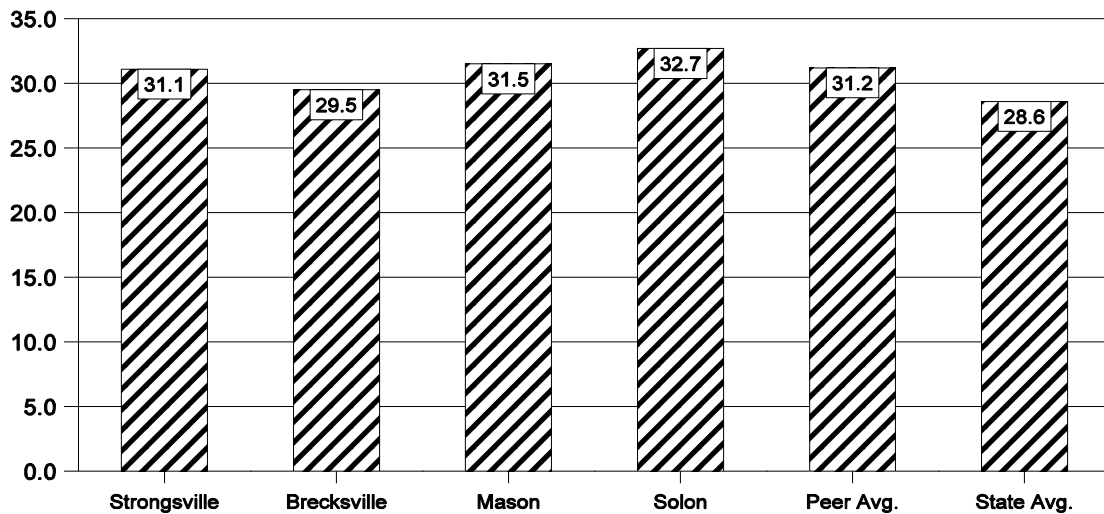
Because of the impact of H.B. 920, effective millage is a more accurate gauge for assessing the amount of revenue school districts generate from property taxes. Strongsville CSD’s effective millage was 31.1 in FY 2000-01, the second lowest among the peers and slightly below the peer average. Strongsville CSD and the peer districts all had effective millage amounts that were consistently above the State average. Strongsville CSD’s decline in effective millage from FY 1997-98 to FY 2000-01 was the second lowest of the peers. Although it was below the peer average decline, it was 176.2 percent higher than the State average decline.

Effective Millage					
	FY 1997-98	FY 1998-99	FY 1999-00	FY 2000-01	% Change 1998-01
Strongsville CSD	33.0	32.7	32.4	31.1	(5.8)%
Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD	32.6	32.4	32.3	29.5	(9.5)%
Mason CSD	33.0	32.3	31.7	31.5	(4.5)%
Solon CSD	35.2	35.5	35.5	32.7	(7.1)%
Peer Average	33.6	33.4	33.2	31.2	(7.1)%
State Average	29.2	29.2	28.5	28.6	(2.1)%

Source: Ohio Department of Taxation, Compilation of School District Published Data reports

Effective Millage

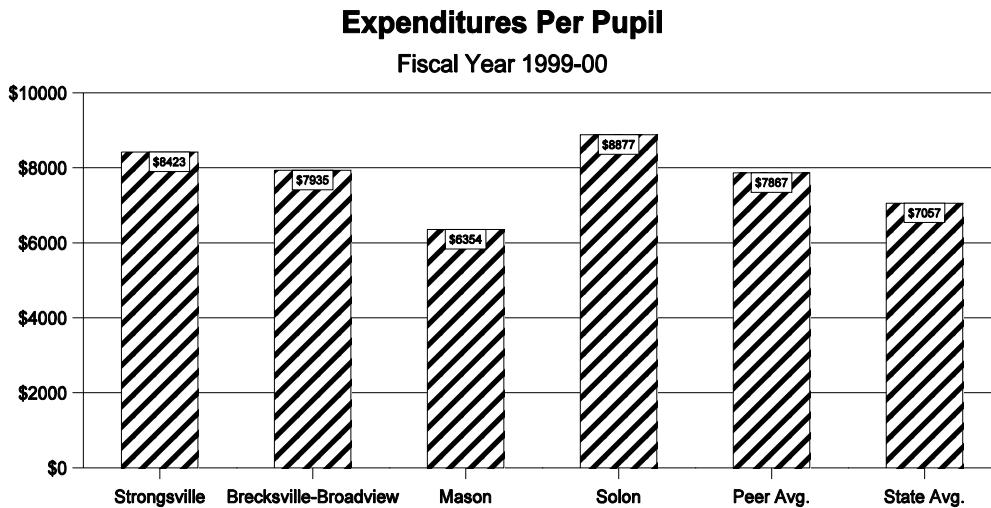
Fiscal Year 2000-01



Strongsville CSD’s expenditures per pupil of \$8,423 for FY 1999-00 were the second highest among the peer districts. Strongsville CSD’s percentage increase over the four-year trend period was the highest among the peers and higher than the State average increase. Strongsville CSD’s FY 1999-00 expenditures per pupil were 9.1 and 19.4 percent higher than the peer and State averages, respectively.

Expenditures Per Pupil					
	FY 1996-97	FY 1997-98	FY 1998-99	FY 1999-00	% Change 1997-00
Strongsville CSD	\$6,442	\$7,133	\$7,717	\$8,423	30.8%
Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD	\$6,965	\$6,822	\$7,484	\$7,935	13.9%
Mason CSD	\$4,871	\$5,821	\$6,287	\$6,354	30.4%
Solon CSD	\$7,934	\$8,239	\$8,530	\$8,877	11.9%
Peer Average	\$6,590	\$6,961	\$7,434	\$7,722	17.2%
State Average	\$5,939	\$6,232	\$6,642	\$7,057	18.8%

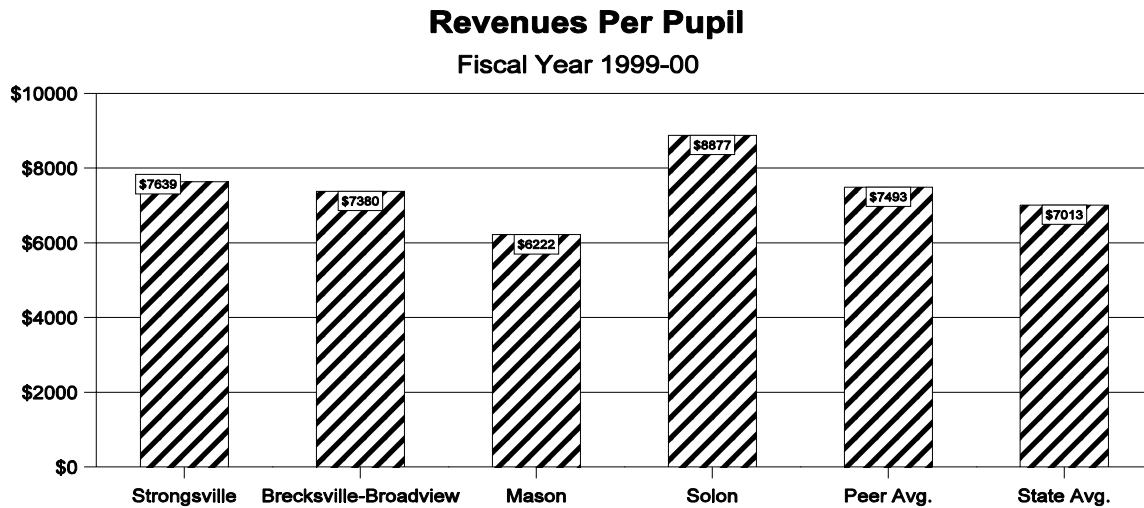
Source: ODE’s School District Report Cards



Strongsville CSD’s revenues per pupil were approximately \$784 less than its expenditures per pupil for FY 1999-00. Strongsville CSD’s revenues per pupil were the second highest among the peers and higher than the peer and State averages. Although Strongsville CSD’s increase in revenues per pupil over the four-year trend period of 19.9 percent was the second highest among the peers and above the peer average, it was slightly lower than the State average increase of 21.6 percent.

Revenues Per Pupil					
	FY 1996-97	FY 1997-98	FY 1998-99	FY 1999-00	% Change 1997-00
Strongsville CSD	\$6,369	\$6,825	\$7,464	\$7,639	19.9%
Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD	\$6,675	\$6,536	\$7,226	\$7,380	10.6%
Mason CSD	\$4,674	\$5,641	\$5,941	\$6,222	33.1%
Solon CSD	\$7,726	\$8,443	\$8,651	\$8,877	14.9%
Peer Average	\$6,358	\$6,873	\$7,273	\$7,493	17.9%
State Average	\$5,767	\$6,177	\$6,681	\$7,013	21.6%

Source: ODE’s School District Report Cards



Of the four peer districts, Strongsville CSD had the second lowest percentage of revenue generated from local sources. While this figure was in line with the peer average, it was 48.7 percent above the State average. As was the case for the peers, a vast majority of Strongsville CSD’s revenues have come from local sources over the past four years. Strongsville CSD’s percentage of State funding was exactly equal to the peer average of 23.1 percent. Although this number was the second highest among the peers, it was 47.1 percent below the State average. Strongsville CSD’s percentage of revenue from federal sources (1.8) was also significantly below the State average (5.8), although it was commensurate with the peers’ percentages.

Percentage of Revenue - Local					
	Fiscal Year 1997	Fiscal Year 1998	Fiscal Year 1999	Fiscal Year 2000	% Change 1997-2000
Strongsville CSD	73.7	74.2	75.1	75.1	1.9%
Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD	81.9	80.7	80.6	80.4	(1.8)%
Mason CSD	60.0	61.7	60.5	59.3	(1.2)%
Solon CSD	87.4	86.6	86.2	86.8	(0.7)%
Peer Average	76.4	76.3	75.8	75.5	(1.2)%
State Average	51.7	51.5	51.0	50.5	(2.3)%

Source: ODE’s School District Report Cards

Percentage of Revenue - State					
	Fiscal Year 1997	Fiscal Year 1998	Fiscal Year 1999	Fiscal Year 2000	% Change 1997-2000
Strongsville CSD	24.9	24.6	23.6	23.1	(7.2)%
Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD	16.7	17.7	17.9	17.8	6.6%
Mason CSD	38.3	37.0	38.3	39.2	2.3%
Solon CSD	11.4	11.7	12.2	12.2	7.0%
Peer Average	22.1	22.1	22.8	23.1	4.5%
State Average	42.3	42.6	43.4	43.7	3.3%

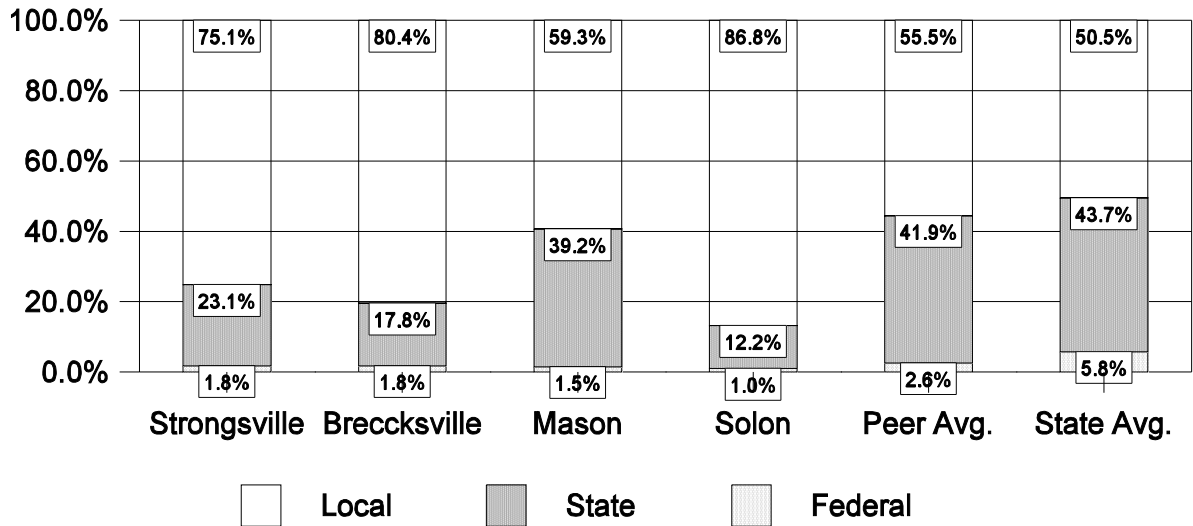
Source: ODE’s School District Report Cards

Percentage of Revenue - Federal					
	Fiscal Year 1997	Fiscal Year 1998	Fiscal Year 1999	Fiscal Year 2000	% Change 1997-2000
Strongsville CSD	1.4	1.2	1.3	1.8	28.6%
Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD	1.4	1.6	1.5	1.8	28.6%
Mason CSD	1.7	1.3	1.2	1.5	(11.8)%
Solon CSD	1.2	1.7	1.6	1.0	(16.7)%
Peer Average	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.4	0.0%
State Average	6.0	5.7	5.6	5.8	(3.3)%

Source: ODE's School District Report Cards

Percentage of Revenue by Source

Fiscal Year 1999-00



Strongsville CSD’s average teacher salary of \$50,604 in FY 1999-00 was only slightly lower than the peer average. However, Strongsville CSD’s average teacher salary was 21.3 percent higher than the State average for FY 1999-00. Strongsville CSD’s increase in average teacher salary from FY 1998-99 to FY 1999-00 was the lowest of the peers and below the peer and State averages.

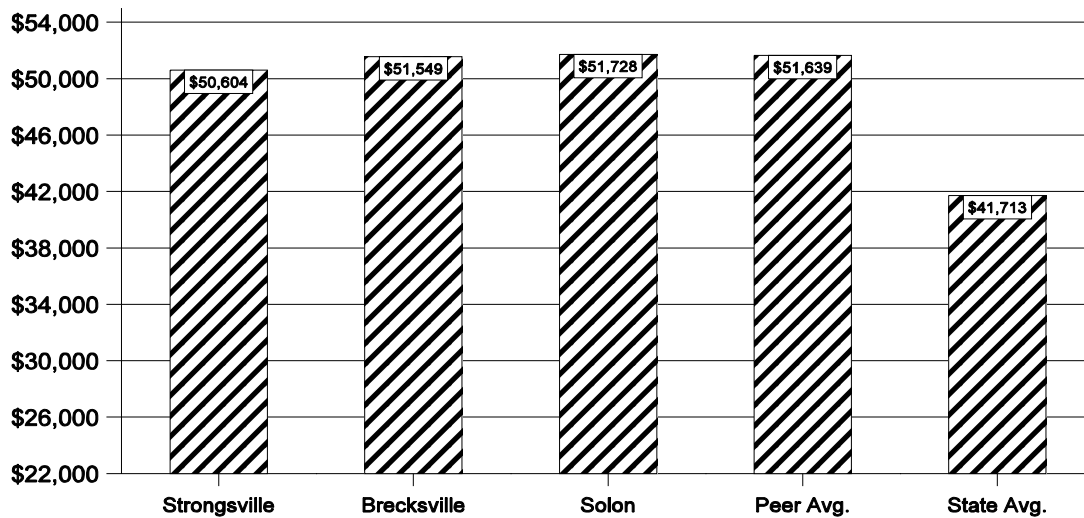
Average Teacher Salary			
	FY 1998-99	FY 1999-00	% Change 1998-00
Strongsville CSD ¹	\$49,780	\$50,604	1.7%
Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD	\$49,034	\$51,549	5.1%
Solon CSD	\$49,844	\$51,728	3.8%
Peer Average	\$49,439	\$51,639	4.4%
State Average	\$40,746	\$41,713	2.4%

Source: Educational Management Information System (EMIS) Staff Summary reports

¹ Salaries were adjusted by a factor of 10.1649.

Average Teacher Salary

Fiscal Year 1999-00



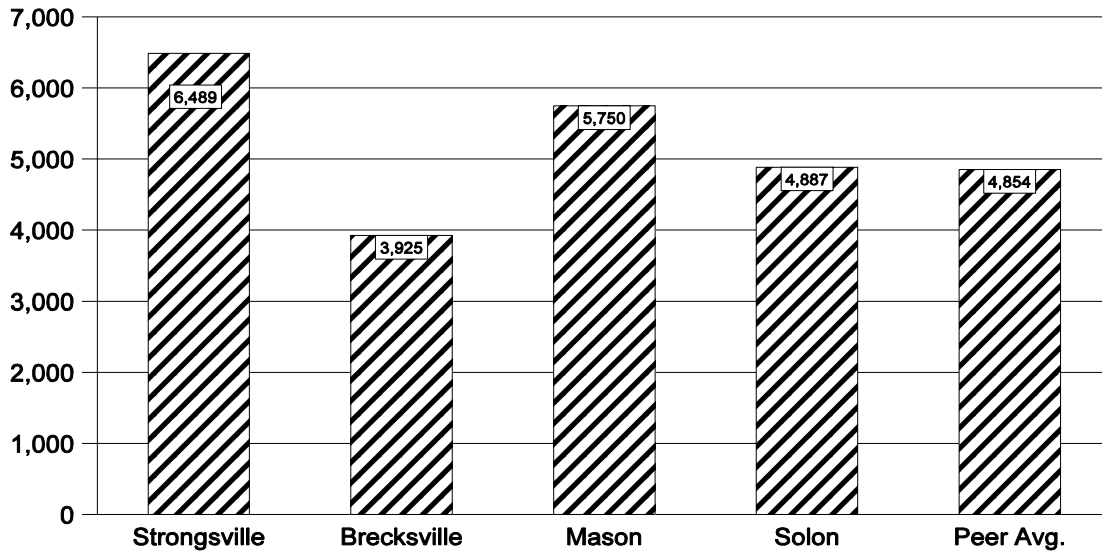
Average daily membership (ADM) differs from standard enrollment in that it makes adjustments for attendance and for enrollment in kindergarten, special and vocational education. From 1997 - 2000, Strongsville CSD's ADM decreased by 2.2 percent. Strongsville CSD's reported ADM was 6,489 in FY 1999-00, which was the highest among the peer districts and significantly above the peer average for FY 1999-00. Strongsville CSD was the only district that experienced a decrease in ADM over the four-year trend period, although the State average also decreased over the same period.

Average Daily Membership					
	FY 1996-97	FY 1997-98	FY 1998-99	FY 1999-00	% Change 1997-00
Strongsville CSD	6,636	6,723	6,820	6,489	(2.2)%
Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD	3,908	3,899	4,053	3,925	0.4%
Mason CSD	4,341	4,760	5,339	5,750	32.5%
Solon CSD	4,650	4,757	4,885	4,887	5.1%
Peer Average	4,300	4,472	4,759	4,854	12.9%
State Average	2,996	3,000	3,009	2,835	(5.4)%

Source: ODE's School District Report Cards

Average Daily Membership

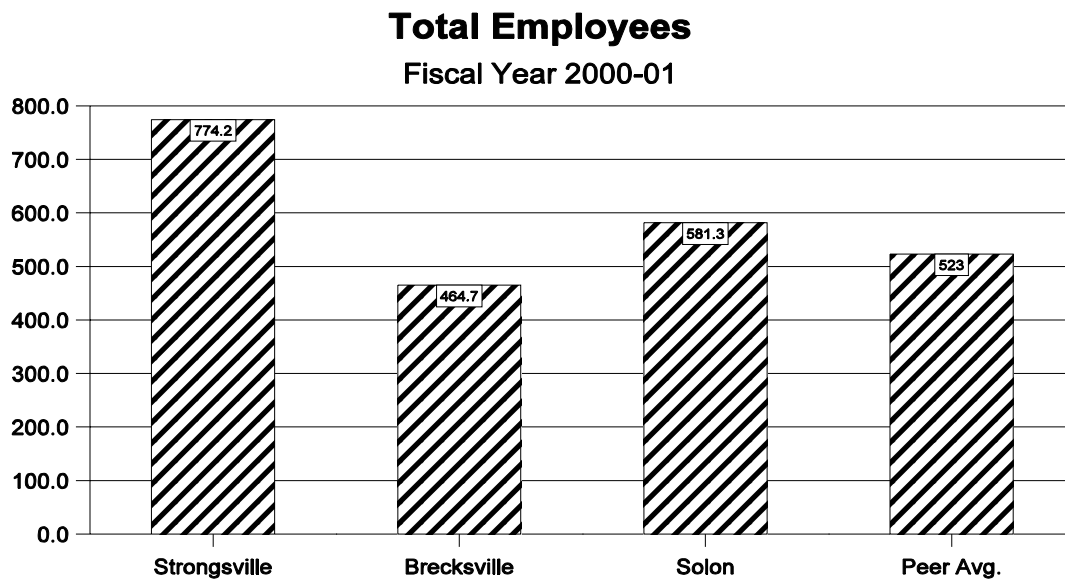
Fiscal Year 1999-00



In FY 2000-01, Strongsville CSD had 774.2 employees, which was the highest among the peer districts and significantly higher than the peer average of 523.0 employees. Strongsville CSD's staffing per 1,000 students enrolled, however, was the lowest of the peers and below the peer average. Strongsville CSD increased total employees by 3.2 percent from FY 1999-00 through FY 2000-01, which was the highest percentage increase among the peers.

Total Employees			
	FY 1999-00	FY 2000-01	% Change 1998-01
Strongsville CSD	750.5	774.2	3.2%
Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD	452.6	464.7	2.7%
Solon CSD	578.5	581.3	0.5%
Peer Average	515.6	523.0	1.4%

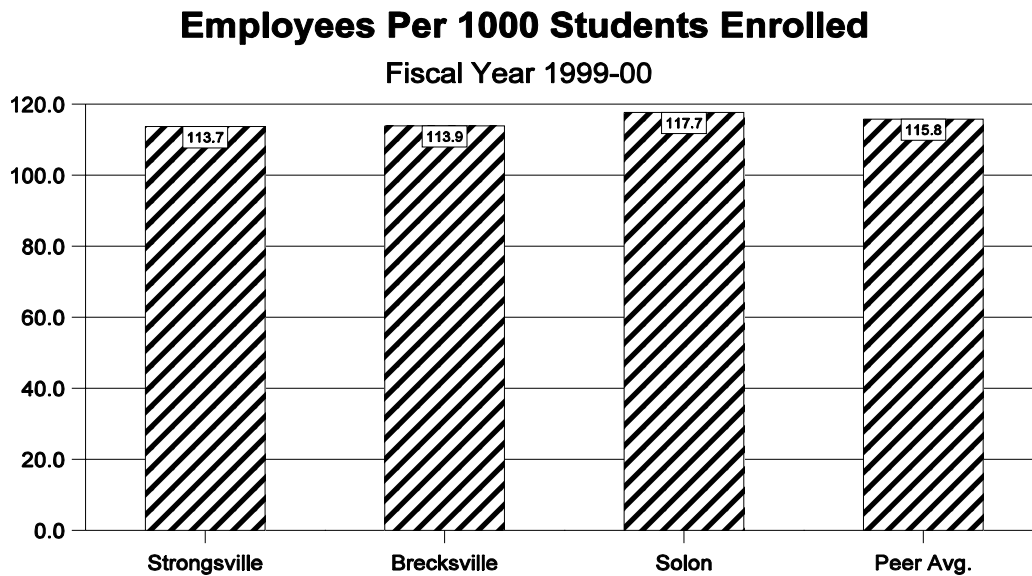
Source: Educational Management Information System (EMIS) Staff Summary reports



The number of employees per 1000 students enrolled provides a means for comparing staffing levels from district to district. A higher ratio indicates higher staffing in relation to the student population, and contributes to overall costs per pupil. Strongsville CSD had 113.7 employees per 1000 students enrolled in FY 2000-01. This figure was the lowest among the peer districts and below the peer district average. Strongsville CSD was the only school district among the peers that increased staffing per 1,000 students enrolled from FY 1999-00 to FY 2000-01, although the staffing figures for each year were the lowest of the peers and below the peer average.

Employees per 1000 Students Enrolled			
	FY 1999-00	FY 2000-01	% Change 1998-01
Strongsville CSD	111.4	113.7	2.1%
Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD	114.5	113.9	(0.5)%
Solon CSD	118.2	117.7	(0.4)%
Peer Average	116.4	115.8	(0.5)%

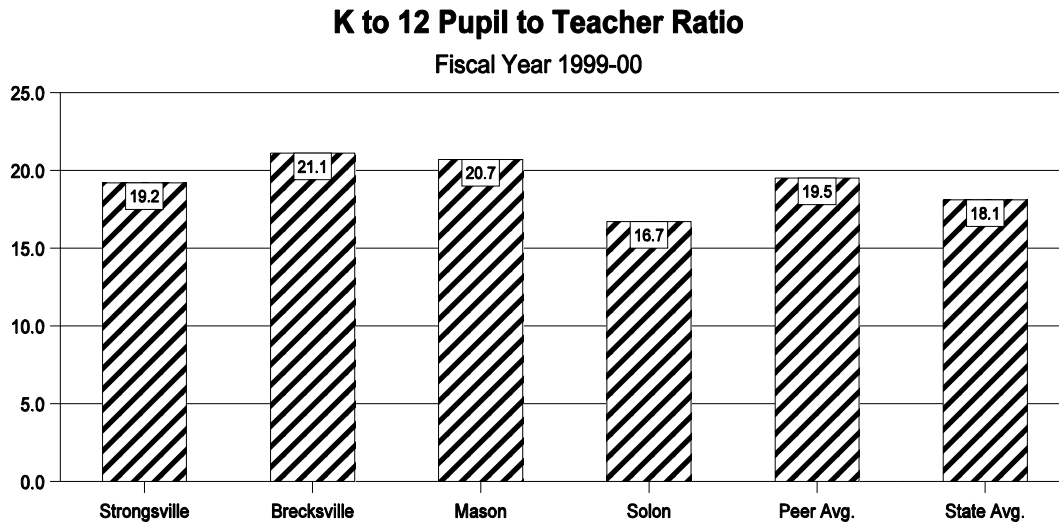
Source: SF-3 reports; Educational Management Information System (EMIS) Staff Summary reports



Strongsville CSD’s average pupil/teacher ratio (class size) was 19.2 for FY 1999-00, the second lowest among the peer districts, slightly lower than the peer average and 6.1 percent higher than the State average. Over the four-year trend period, Strongsville CSD’s pupil-to-teacher ratio declined by 10.3 percent which was the second highest decline among the peers and 53.7 percent above the peer average. Strongsville CSD is able to maintain fairly small class sizes despite its low staffing per 1,000 ADM as a result of dedicating most of its resources to direct instruction.

K-12 Pupil/Teacher Ratio					
	FY 1996-97	FY 1997-98	FY 1998-99	FY 1999-00	% Change 1997-00
Strongsville CSD	21.4	21.4	19.4	19.2	(10.3)%
Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD	21.7	22.9	21.3	21.1	(2.8)%
Mason CSD	22.3	22.2	20.4	20.7	(7.2)%
Solon CSD	18.7	18.5	17.6	16.7	(10.7)%
Peer Average	20.9	21.2	19.8	19.5	(6.7)%
State Average	20.7	20.4	18.6	18.1	(12.6)%

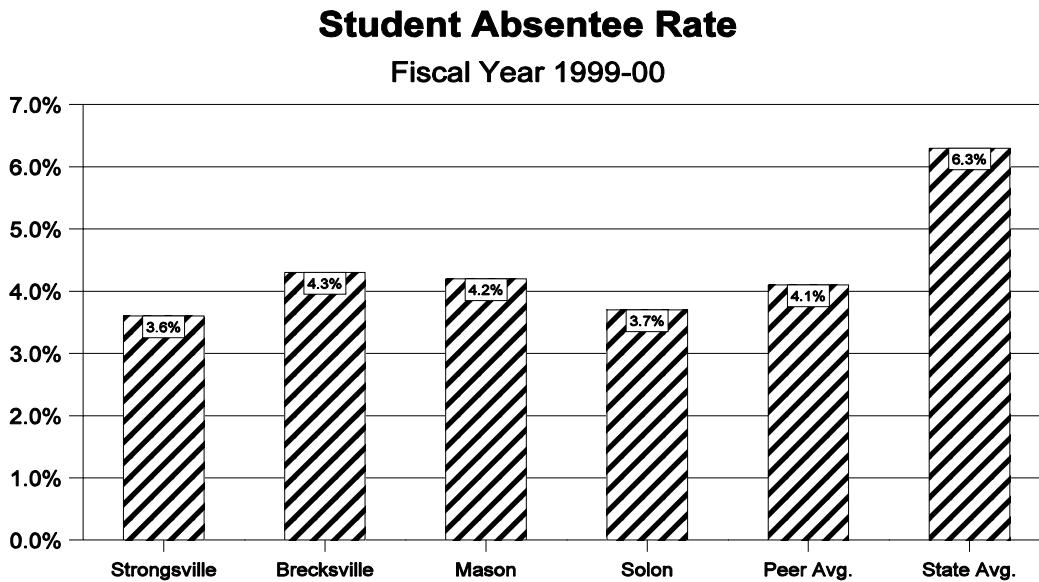
Source: ODE’s School District Report Cards



For FY 1999-00, Strongsville CSD’s student absentee rate was 3.6 percent, which was the lowest rate among the peers and lower than the peer average. Further, Strongsville CSD’s absentee rate was 42.9 percent below the State average. Over the four-year trend period, Strongsville CSD’s student absentee rate declined by 23.4 percent, which was a significantly greater improvement than the State average. Two of the three peers also experienced a decline in absentee rates ver the four-year trend period, although the peer average increased over the same years.

Student Absentee Rate					
	FY 1996-97	FY 1997-98	FY 1998-99	FY 1999-00	% Change 1997-00
Strongsville CSD	4.7%	4.5%	4.9%	3.6%	(23.4)%
Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD	3.8%	3.7%	3.9%	4.3%	13.2%
Mason CSD	4.3%	4.3%	4.4%	4.2%	(2.3)%
Solon CSD	3.8%	3.8%	3.9%	3.7%	(2.6)%
Peer Average	4.0%	3.9%	4.1%	4.1%	2.5%
State Average	6.4%	6.1%	6.5%	6.3%	(1.6)%

Source: ODE’s School District Report Cards



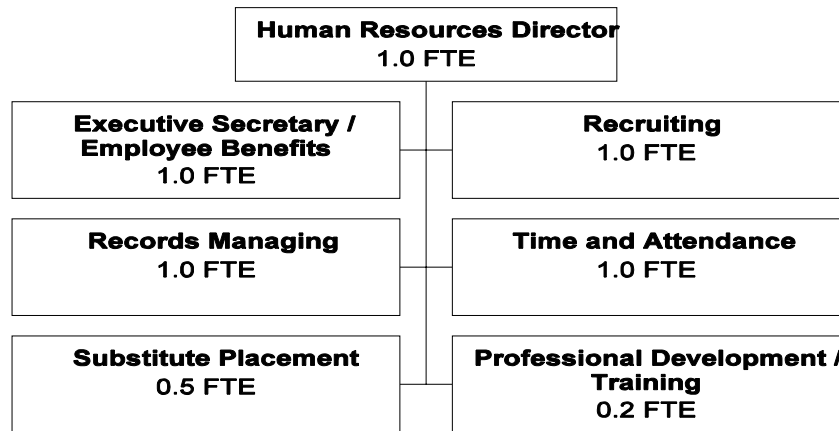
Human Resources

This section of the report focuses on the human resources operations within Strongsville City School District (Strongsville CSD). Comparisons will be made throughout this section of the report to the following peer school districts: Brecksville-Broadview Heights City School District (Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD) and Solon City School District (Solon CSD). Mason City School District (Mason CSD) will be used as an additional peer district comparison during the certificated and classified employee contractual analysis. Strongsville CSD's peers were identified based upon comparable districts identified by the Ohio Department of Education, review of various demographic information and input from the Strongsville CSD personnel. Furthermore, these peer districts also demonstrated report card standards equal or greater than those of Strongsville CSD.

Organizational Function

Strongsville CSD has a separate department dedicated to performing human resources functions. The primary responsibilities of the human resources department include the following: coordinating the activities and programs for the recruitment and selection of employees; monitoring compliance with employment standards (criminal background checks and teaching certifications); facilitating employee performance evaluations; administering and monitoring grievance policies and procedures; negotiating and administering union contracts; conducting disciplinary hearings; maintaining personnel files; placing selected substitutes and participating in new employee orientations. In addition, the human resources department assists the treasurer's office in sending salary notices to all employees and developing appropriations for salaries and benefits. **Chart 3-1** illustrates the organizational structure for the human resources department which was created based upon interviews with Strongsville CSD personnel.

Chart 3-1: Strongsville CSD Human Resources Organizational Chart



Summary of Operations

All Strongsville CSD employees are categorized as either certificated or classified employees. Certificated personnel include principals, assistant principals, teachers, counselors, therapists, nurses, librarians, coaches, social workers, psychologists and certain supervisors and directors. Classified personnel include instructional assistants, maintenance workers, custodians, maintenance personnel, food service workers, secretaries and certain classified supervisors and administrators.

All human resources functions are carried out by 5.7 full-time equivalents (FTEs) within the human resources department at Strongsville CSD. The human resources director (1.0 FTE) is responsible for managing, planning, supervising and directing the operations of the human resources department. This includes, but is not limited to, managing the administration of employee benefits; overseeing recruitment activities; managing the maintenance of personnel files; facilitating employee performance evaluations; responding to complaints from employees and overseeing the negotiation and administration of union contracts. All employees within the human resources department report directly to the human resources director.

The benefits secretary (1.0 FTE) is responsible for the administration of employee benefits and the Bureau of Workers' Compensation program. In addition, this individual also serves as the executive assistant to the human resources director. The recruiting secretary (1.0 FTE) is responsible for coordinating all recruitment activities, posting vacant positions, conducting special projects and coordinating the voluntary professional growth program.

The records managing secretary (1.0 FTE) maintains all personnel files, teacher certifications, transcripts of employees, supplemental contracts and salary notices. The time and attendance secretary (1.0 FTE) is responsible for processing, posting and tracking hours worked and leave hours used; tracking and monitoring of merit pay increases; and finding substitutes for absences that are known in advance. The human resources department also has a substitute secretary (0.5 FTE) who is responsible for locating substitutes each morning and a secretary (0.2 FTE) who is responsible for coordinating the professional development and training of Strongsville CSD employees. The remaining 0.8 FTE for this position is divided between technology responsibilities and forecasting/appropriation responsibilities.

All vacancies within Strongsville CSD are first reviewed by the human resources director and various personnel to determine if the position is needed before it is filled. When it is determined that the position will be filled, the job is posted by the human resources department. The human resources director is responsible for the pre-screening of all resumes based upon the skills and qualifications of the individuals in relation to the job requirements. The human resources director then holds an initial interview with the candidates and normally recommends three individuals for second interviews.

Second interviews take place at the building level by an interviewing team. The interviewing team is made up of key individuals based upon the position that is vacant and includes any of the following: principals, assistant principals, directors, supervisors and teachers. The interviewing team makes a recommendation to the human resources director who will then check references. A recommendation will then be made to the superintendent and upon approval of the recommendation, the candidate will be offered the job and a recommendation will be made to the Strongsville City School District Board of Education (Board) for final approval.

Performance Measures

The following performance measures were used to review Strongsville CSD's human resources department:

- Obtain information to understand the historical and background information regarding its human resources operations;
- Assess the staffing levels of Strongsville CSD in FTEs compared to the peer districts;
- Assess the teacher's workday and the student-to-teacher ratios within the elementary, middle and high school levels;
- Assess the salary structure, as well as the supplemental payments and contracts;
- Assess the staffing levels within the vocational education program;
- Assess the staffing levels within the special education program;
- Analyze substitute payments within Strongsville CSD and the use of leave by personnel;
- Assess benefits administration of employees and workers' compensation; and
- Analyze key contractual and employment issues for certificated and classified employees.

Findings / Recommendations / Commendations

Staffing Analysis

F3.1 **Table 3-1** presents the staffing levels of full-time equivalents (FTEs) per 1,000 students enrolled as reported in the Educational Management Information System (EMIS) in FY 2001 for Strongsville CSD and the peer school districts.

Table 3-1: Peer District Staffing Patterns (FTE Staff per 1,000 Students)

Category	Strongsville	Brecksville-Broadview Heights	Solon	Peer Average
Average Daily Membership (ADM)	6,800	4,083	4,935	4,509
Administrators: Subtotal	4.2	5.2	5.9	5.6
Central Based	0.4	1.8	0.8	1.3
Site Based	3.8	3.2	5.1	4.2
Other Administrators	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.1
Professional Education: Subtotal	65.0	61.8	72.5	67.3
Curriculum Specialists	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.1
Counseling	2.1	2.1	3.2	2.7
Librarian Media	1.2	1.2	1.4	1.3
Remedial Specialists	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.7
Regular Education Teachers	46.1	42.4	51.6	47.0
Special Education Teachers	5.4	5.8	8.7	7.3
Vocation Education Teachers	0.9	1.2	0.2	0.7
Tutors / Small Group Instructors	3.4	3.2	1.2	2.2
Educational Service Personnel	5.1	5.7	4.8	5.3
Supplemental Service Teacher	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other Professional Education Personnel	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Professional - Other	2.6	3.2	2.9	3.1
Technical: Subtotal	0.8	1.7	2.6	2.2
Computer Operator	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.2
Computer Programmer	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Printer	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.2
Library Aide	0.4	1.4	1.8	1.6
Other Technical Personnel	0.4	0.3	0.0	0.2
Office / Clerical: Subtotal	21.2	16.1	12.5	14.4
Bookkeeping	0.0	0.7	0.2	0.5
Clerical	8.6	6.6	7.4	7.0
Messenger	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1
Records Managing	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Teaching Aides	12.3	8.7	4.7	6.7
Parent Mentor	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.1
Other Office / Clerical	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Crafts / Trades	1.9	2.0	3.0	2.5
Transportation	6.6	7.7	5.2	6.5
Custodial	7.1	10.0	7.4	8.7
Food Service	4.3	6.2	2.7	4.5
Other Service Worker / Laborer	0.0	0.0	3.0 ¹	1.5
Totals (FTE per 1,000 ADM)	113.7	113.9	117.7	116.3

Source: FY 2001 staff summary report and FY 2001 EMIS school enrollment reports for Strongsville CSD and peer school districts; interviews
¹ The “other service worker / laborer” classification includes 2.6 FTEs per 1,000 ADM dedicated to the “monitoring” classification and 0.4 FTEs per 1,000 ADM dedicated to the “other service worker / laborer” classification.

During the calculation of staffing levels to be reported in EMIS for FY 2001, Strongsville CSD reported some employees in the wrong classifications. This resulted in incorrect information being reported to EMIS which causes the staffing levels to be improperly recorded. All tables within this report, including **Table 3-1**, illustrate the revised and corrected staffing levels.

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) developed and implemented EMIS to assist school districts in effectively and efficiently managing student and personnel demographics. All schools are required to provide specific student, staff and financial data to ODE for processing. Prior to FY 2001, staff demographic information entered into EMIS was not verified on a regular basis. However, the human resources director has indicated that new control procedures were developed and implemented prior to the start of the performance audit to ensure the accuracy of data entered into EMIS.

A review of Strongsville CSD staffing levels per 1,000 ADM compared to other school districts in Cuyahoga County revealed that Strongsville CSD's staffing levels per 1,000 ADM ranks 27th out of 30 school districts. This would indicate that Strongsville CSD's staffing levels are lower than the majority of the school districts in Cuyahoga County.

R3.1 Strongsville CSD should develop policies and procedures to ensure that accurate reports are prepared and reconciled before being submitted to ODE and EMIS. In addition, there should be a review process by a person that is independent of the data gathering process to ensure the policies and procedures are followed and accurate numbers are reported to ODE and EMIS. The individual responsible for gathering and compiling EMIS information should use the *EMIS Definitions, Procedures and Guidelines* report which is produced annually by ODE to assist school districts in entering information into EMIS. If it is needed, Strongsville CSD should seek the necessary training and assistance to meet these objectives.

During the course of this audit, the human resources director indicated that new policies and procedures have been developed to ensure that accurate information is gathered and compiled before being submitted to ODE and EMIS. In addition, control procedures have been put in place to ensure accurate review of the information, and the *FY 2002 EMIS Definitions, Procedures and Guidelines* report is being used by the appropriate personnel.

F3.2 **Table 3-2** compares the total number of FTEs to the total administrators responsible for supervising and coordinating staff for Strongsville CSD and the peer districts.

Table 3-2: FTEs to Administrator Comparison

	Strongsville	Brecksville-Broadview Heights	Solon	Peer Average
Total FTE Administrators	29.0	21.3	29.0	25.2
Total FTE Employees ¹	745.2	443.4	552.3	497.9
FTE Employees per Administrator	25.7 to 1	20.8 to 1	19.0 to 1	19.8 to 1
Total FY 2001 ADM	6,800	4,083	4,935	4,509
Administrators per 1,000 ADM	4.2	5.2	5.9	5.6

Source: FY 2001 EMIS Staff Summary Report

¹ The total number of FTEs excludes the FTE equivalent for the administrators.

Table 3-2 indicates that Strongsville CSD has the highest FTE per administrator ratio when compared to the peer districts and a higher ratio when compared to the peer average. This would indicate that Strongsville CSD administrators, on average, are responsible for a larger number of FTEs. Based upon the ratios indicated in **Table 3-2**, it does not appear that staffing reductions in the administrator area are justified.

F3.3 **Table 3-1** indicates that Strongsville CSD had 8.6 FTEs per 1,000 ADM (58.7 FTEs) in the clerical personnel classification in FY 2001 compared to 6.6 FTEs per 1,000 ADM (27.0 FTEs) and 7.4 FTEs per 1,000 ADM (36.7 FTEs) at Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD and Solon CSD, respectively. The human resources director at Strongsville CSD indicated that this could potentially be due to clerical personnel not maximizing the use of technology in the completion of job functions. **Table 3-3** illustrates some key ratios in regards to the clerical personnel at Strongsville CSD and the peer districts. All staffing numbers are illustrated in FTEs.

Table 3-3: Clerical Personnel Ratio Comparisons

	Strongsville	Brecksville- Broadview Heights	Solon	Peer Average
Total clerical personnel	58.7	27.0	36.7	31.9
Clerical personnel per 1,000 ADM	8.6	6.6	7.4	7.0
Total administrative personnel	29.0	21.3	29.0	25.2
Clerical personnel to administrative personnel	2.0 to 1	1.3 to 1	1.3 to 1	1.3 to 1
Total district personnel	774.2	464.7	581.3	523.0
Total district personnel to clerical personnel	13.2 to 1	17.2 to 1	15.8 to 1	16.4 to 1

Source: FY 2001 EMIS Staff Summary Report

Table 3-3 indicates that Strongsville CSD maintains more FTEs per administrative FTEs than the peer districts as well as the peer average. In addition, **Table 3-3** illustrates that the ratio between total district personnel and clerical personnel is lower than the peer districts and the peer average. A lower ratio of total district personnel to clerical personnel would indicate that Strongsville CSD could be overstaffed in its clerical personnel classification. This is further supported by the clerical personnel per 1,000 ADM analysis conducted in **Table 3-1**.

R3.2 Strongsville CSD should conduct a detailed analysis of the duties and responsibilities of its clerical personnel and determine if resources are being used efficiently and effectively in relation to the needs of Strongsville CSD. Considering Strongsville CSD’s current financial position and its possible future financial situation, Strongsville CSD may need to seek savings in certain areas in order to have additional resources which can be allocated to the direct instruction of students. If Strongsville CSD can obtain a staffing level per 1,000 ADM in the clerical personnel classification similar to the peer average, it could potentially reduce 11.0 FTEs from its clerical personnel.

Financial Implication: Assuming an estimated annual salary of \$26,000 per clerical position and benefits equal to 30 percent of annual salaries, Strongsville CSD could generate an estimated annual cost savings of \$372,000 as a result of reducing its clerical personnel. As a result, these cost savings would be able to be reallocated to other operational areas within Strongsville CSD.

F3.4 As stated in **Table 3-1**, Strongsville CSD maintained 12.3 FTEs per 1,000 ADM during FY 2001 in the teaching aides classification. This equates to a total of 83.5 FTE teaching aides.

Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD and Solon CSD maintained 35.4 FTEs and 23.3 FTEs, respectively, in the teaching aides classification.

Strongsville CSD personnel indicated that approximately 20.0 FTEs are responsible for assisting with special education students as a result of an IEP assessment. Of the remaining 63.5 FTEs, approximately 50 percent are responsible student supervision duties (recess, cafeteria and study hall) while the remaining are responsible for assisting teachers in the classroom. An assistant superintendent at Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD indicated that all teaching aides are used for student supervision duties. **F3.8** illustrates a detailed analysis on the average teacher day for middle school and high school teachers while **F3.9** provides a detailed analysis of the class sizes for regular education teachers. **R3.3** is a recommendation addressing the teacher workday, class sizes and use of teaching aides.

F3.5 Strongsville CSD’s total FTEs for FY 2001 were divided into six personnel classifications as defined in **Table 3-4**. The position descriptions were obtained from the FY 2001 EMIS staff summary report. The six personnel classifications identified in **Table 3-4** are used in further assessments in **F3.6** and **F3.12**.

Table 3-4: Personnel Classifications and Position Descriptions

Classification	Position Descriptions
Administrative Employees	Administrative Assistant, Assistant Superintendent, Superintendent, Assistant Principal, Principal, Supervisor/Manager/Director, Treasurer, Coordinator, Curriculum Specialists
Teachers	Remedial Specialists, Regular Education Teachers, Special Education Teachers, Vocational Education Teachers, Tutor/Small Group Instructors, Educational Service Personnel, Supplemental Service Teacher
Pupil Services	Counselors, Librarian/Media, Dietitian/Nutritionist, Psychologist, Registered Nurse, Social Worker, Speech and Language Therapist, Educational Interpreter
Support Services	General Maintenance, Mechanic, Foreman, Transportation, Custodian, Food Services
Other Classified Employees	Personnel, Library Aide, Clerical, Records Managing, Teaching Aide, Parent Mentor
Technical	Other Technical ¹

Source: The position descriptions are the same as those found on the FY 2001 EMIS staff summary report. However, the classifications are AOS-defined.

¹ Within the FY 2001 EMIS report, there are many position descriptions within the technical classification including Computer Operating, graphic arts and computer programming. However, at Strongsville CSD, all technical personnel are classified in the “other technical” position description.

F3.6 **Table 3-5** illustrates the number of FTEs within the AOS-defined personnel classifications for Strongsville CSD and the peer school districts. In addition, **Table 3-5** states the percentage of FTEs within each classification when compared to the total number of FTEs at each of the school districts.

Table 3-5: Breakdown of Total FTE Employees and Percentages of Total Employees

Classification	Strongsville		Brecksville-Broadview Heights		Solon		Peer Average	
	FTEs	Percent	FTEs	Percent	FTEs	Percent	FTEs	Percent
Administrative	32.0	4.1%	22.3	4.8%	29.0	5.0%	25.7	5.0%
Teachers	416.6	53.8%	237.9	51.2%	334.6	57.6%	286.3	54.7%
Pupil Services	37.7	4.9%	26.5	5.7%	37.5	6.4%	32.0	6.1%
Support Services	136.0	17.6%	105.3	22.6%	92.4	15.9%	98.9	18.9%
Other Classified	148.9	19.2%	71.4	15.4%	83.8	14.4%	77.6	14.8%
Technical	3.0	0.4%	1.3	0.3%	4.0	0.7%	2.7	0.5%
Total	774.2	100.0%	464.7	100.0%	581.3	100.0%	523.2	100.0%

Source: FY 2001 Staff Summary Report from Strongsville CSD and the peer school districts

Strongsville CSD has the lowest percentage of staff in the administrative and pupil services classification when compared to the peers. When compared to the peer average, Strongsville CSD maintains a lower percentage of staff in the administrative, teachers, pupil services and support services classification. However, the 19.2 percent of total FTEs maintained in the other classified classification is higher than the peer districts and higher than the peer average. The higher number of FTEs maintained in the other classified classification is due to the high number of teaching aide and clerical personnel at Strongsville CSD (F3.3 and F3.4). The 53.8 percent in the teachers classification is second highest when compared to the peers.

F3.7 **Table 3-6** compares the number and percentage of FTEs categorized as direct instructional personnel and educational support personnel for Strongsville CSD and the peer districts for FY 2001.

Table 3-6: Personnel Classifications and Position Descriptions

Classification ¹	Strongsville		Brecksville-Broadview Heights		Solon		Peer Average	
	FTEs	Percent of Total	FTEs	Percent of Total	FTEs	Percent of Total	FTEs	Percent of Total
Direct Instructional	454.3	58.7%	264.4	56.9%	372.1	64.0%	318.2	60.8%
Educational Support	319.9	41.3%	200.3	43.1%	209.2	36.0%	204.8	39.2%
Total	774.2	100.0%	464.7	100.0%	581.3	100.0%	523.0	100.0%

Source: FY 2001 EMIS staff summary reports from Strongsville CSD and the peer districts

¹ Direct instructional personnel are teachers and pupil services personnel as defined in **Table 3-4**. Educational support personnel are administrative, support services, other classified and technical personnel as defined in **Table 3-4**.

As shown in **Table 3-6**, 454.3 FTEs or 58.7 percent of Strongsville CSD’s total FTEs are made up of direct instructional personnel which is a lower percentage than the peer average. Direct instructional personnel are those staff which are dedicated to classroom teaching and other instructional functions. Consequently, **Table 3-6** indicates that Strongsville CSD has allocated a lower percentage of its total FTEs toward classroom teaching and other instructional areas and may need to redirect resources to this area in the future.

F3.8 The negotiated agreement between Strongsville CSD and its certificated personnel stipulates the length and make-up of the teacher workday. **Table 3-7** illustrates an average workday for regular education teachers at the middle schools and high school as defined by the average minutes taught and other variables identified below.

Table 3-7: Analysis of Teachers’ Work Day

Description of Activity	Average Middle School Teacher	Average High School Teacher
Length of Day (based on the negotiated agreement)	450 minutes or 7 hours, 30 minutes	450 minutes or 7 hours, 30 minutes
Number of Periods in Day	10 periods	8 periods
Breakdown by Minutes:		
Time prior to start of class	25 minutes	15 minutes
Home room	0 minutes	0 minutes
Planning and preparation	86 minutes (2 periods)	102 minutes (2 periods)
Duty-free lunch	30 minutes (1 period)	25 minutes (1 period)
Team planning period	45 minutes (1 period)	0 minutes
Instructional minutes	215 minutes (5 periods)	255 minutes (5 periods)
Student outreach	29 minutes (1 period)	0 minutes
Time after school	20 minutes	8 minutes
Time in-between classes	0 minutes	45 minutes
Total actual minutes (on average)	450 minutes	450 minutes
Balance of minutes (or periods) not accounted	0 minutes	0 minutes
Average length of Student day	6 hours, 45 minutes	7 hours, 5 minutes

Source: Strongsville CSD negotiated agreements

As indicated in **Table 3-7**, middle school teachers are required to teach no more than five periods per day (215 minutes) and also receive two planning/conference periods, one team planning period and one outreach period. High school teachers are also required to teach no more than five periods per day (255 minutes) and also receive two planning/conference periods. A review of the master teacher schedules for the regular education teachers in the middle school and high school indicates that all full-time teachers are teaching the five periods per day which are required by the negotiated agreement. Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD middle and high school teachers have six class assignments. Solon CSD middle school teachers have five or six class assignments (depending upon if the teacher has a duty period) and the high school teachers have five class assignments.

F3.9 As indicated in **F3.19**, Strongsville CSD uses the inclusion model when educating special education students. As a result, there can be both regular and special education students in

a regular education classroom. **Table 3-8a** presents a review of the FY 2001 middle school master teacher schedule for all students (regular and special education) enrolled in regular education classes.

Table 3-8a: Middle School Enrollment Analysis (All Students)

Number of Students	17 or fewer	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25 or more
Number of Periods at Albion Middle School	4	6	0	4	5	10	12	11	84
Percentages at Albion Middle School	2.9%	4.4%	0.0%	2.9%	3.7%	7.4%	8.8%	8.1%	61.8%
Number of Periods at Center Middle School	15	0	1	1	2	5	3	3	101
Percentages at Center Middle School	11.5%	0.0%	0.8%	0.8%	1.5%	3.8%	2.3%	2.3%	77.1%
Number of Periods (Both Middle Schools)	19	6	1	5	7	15	15	14	185
Percentages (Both Middle Schools)	7.1%	2.2%	0.4%	1.9%	2.6%	5.6%	5.6%	5.3%	69.3%

Source: Albion Middle School and Center Middle School FY 2001 master teaching schedules

As indicated in **Table 3-8a**, 69.3 percent of all middle school, regular education classes have at least 25 students. However, **Table 3-8a** includes both regular and special education students enrolled in these classes. **Table 3-8b** presents a review of the same master teacher schedules for the middle schools; however, it analyzes only regular education students within each class.

Table 3-8b: Middle School Enrollment Analysis (Regular Students)

Number of Students	7 or fewer	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15 or more
Number of Periods at Albion Middle School	14	5	4	5	6	14	18	13	57
Percentages at Albion Middle School	10.3%	3.7%	2.9%	3.7%	4.4%	10.3%	13.2%	9.6%	41.9%
Number of Periods at Center Middle School	19	4	5	2	2	4	4	7	84
Percentages at Center Middle School	14.5%	3.1%	3.8%	1.5%	1.5%	3.1%	3.1%	5.3%	64.1%
Number of Periods (Both Middle Schools)	33	9	9	7	8	18	22	20	141
Percentages (Both Middle Schools)	12.4%	3.4%	3.4%	2.6%	3.0%	6.7%	8.2%	7.5%	52.8%

Source: Albion Middle School and Center Middle School FY 2001 master teaching schedules

Table 3-8b shows that 47.2 percent of the regular education classes consist of 14 or fewer regular education students. Furthermore, 12.4 percent of the regular education classes consist of 7 or fewer regular education students. While **Table 3-8a** indicates that there are a high percentage of middle school classes consisting of at least 25 students, **Table 3-8b** illustrates that regular education teachers are teaching a higher percentage of classes with 14 or fewer regular education students.

Table 3-9a presents a review of the high school master teacher schedules for all students within the regular education classes during FY 2001.

Table 3-9a: High School Enrollment Analysis (All Students)

Number of Students	17 or fewer	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25 or more
Number of Periods at the High School	53	30	22	15	18	22	25	24	180
Percentages at the High School	13.6%	7.7%	5.7%	3.8%	4.6%	5.7%	6.4%	6.2%	46.3%

Source: High School FY 2001 master teaching schedules

Table 3-9a illustrates that 46.3 percent of high school regular education classes consist of 25 or more students. This is a lower percentage when compared to the analysis conducted on the middle school master teacher schedules (**Table 3-8a**). However, 13.6 percent of the high school regular education classes consist of 17 or fewer students. **Table 3-9b** presents a review of the same master teacher schedules for the high school; however, it analyzes only regular education students within each class.

Table 3-9b: High School Enrollment Analysis (Regular Students)

Number of Students	7 or fewer	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15 or more
Number of Periods at Strongsville High School	78	8	18	15	16	29	24	23	178
Percentages at Strongsville High School	20.0%	2.1%	4.6%	3.9%	4.1%	7.4%	6.2%	5.9%	45.8%

Source: High School FY 2001 master teaching schedules

Within the high school regular education classes, 54.2 percent of the classes have 14 or fewer regular education students. Furthermore, 20.0 percent have class sizes with 7 or fewer regular education students. **Table 3-9a** and **Table 3-9b** indicates that teachers are not educating higher class sizes when compared to what has been illustrated in other school district performance audits.

R3.3 Although the number of teachers (**Table 3-1**) and the student-to-teacher ratio appear to be comparable to the peer districts, Strongsville CSD’s student-to-teacher ratio is higher than the State average of 18.1 to 1. Strongsville CSD teachers are provided with two planning/conference periods in the middle school and the high school. Furthermore, teachers are not required to perform additional supervisory duties. As stated in **F3.4**, duty periods are supervised by teaching aides. Strongsville CSD should negotiate changes that would allow it to redistribute the teachers’ workload and possibly reduce operating costs. In future negotiations, Strongsville CSD should pursue increasing the number of class assignments to six periods per day. Two planning/conference periods in middle schools and one planning/conference period in high schools is the normal trend among other school district performance audits. Decreasing the number of planning/conference periods and increasing the number of class assignments for each teacher would allow Strongsville CSD to increase the amount of student contact time spent in the classroom educating students.

While increasing the number of classes taught by its teachers to six classes per day would increase the amount of direct student contact, Strongsville CSD may also be able to use some of this additional teacher time to perform supervisory duties which are currently being performed by teaching aides. As stated in **F3.4**, Strongsville CSD has indicated that approximately 30.0 FTEs of all teaching aides are performing supervisory duties. These duties could potentially be addressed by Strongsville CSD teachers. This would allow Strongsville CSD to potentially reduce the number of teaching aides which would, in turn, allow the District to redirect these financial resources toward additional regular teachers. Strongsville CSD would need to hire 19 additional teachers to attain the State average student-to-teacher ratio of 18.1.

Financial Implication: Assuming that Strongsville CSD is able to reduce the number of teaching aides by 30 FTEs, Strongsville CSD could potentially reduce operating expenditures by approximately \$624,000. Estimated savings assume an average annual salary for teaching aides of \$16,000, and benefits equal to 30 percent of salary amounts.

If Strongsville CSD were to hire 19 additional teachers, which would put the District in line with the State average student-to-teacher ratio of 18.1, the total annual cost would be approximately \$697,000. A portion of these funds could potentially be redirected from the reduction in teaching aides.

F3.10 Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 3301-35-05(A)(5) states that “the ratio of teachers to students district-wide shall be at least one full-time equivalent teacher for each 25 students in the regular student population.” **Table 3-10** compares the student-to-teacher ratio for Strongsville CSD with the peer districts in three different calculations.

Table 3-10: Comparison of Student-to-Teacher Ratios

	Strongsville	Brecksville-Broadview Heights	Solon	Peer Average	FY 2000 State Average ¹
Regular Students to Regular Teachers ²	19.2 to 1	21.6 to 1	17.3 to 1	19.0 to 1	18.1 to 1
Total ADM to Regular Education Teachers	21.7 to 1	23.6 to 1	19.3 to 1	21.1 to 1	18.1 to 1
Total ADM to Regular and Special Teachers	19.4 to 1	20.8 to 1	16.6 to 1	18.3 to 1	18.1 to 1

Source: FY 2001 EMIS School Enrollment Reports; FY 2001 Staff Summary Reports; 2000 Report Cards

¹ Because the 2002 report cards have not been released by the ODE, the State average was obtained from Strongsville CSD’s 2001 report card which encompasses FY 2000. The report card does not distinguish how this is calculated.

² Calculations are based upon the FY 2001 ADM and the percentage of handicapped students reported in the 2000 report cards for each district (see **F3.19** and **Table 3-19**).

As stated in **Table 3-10**, Strongsville CSD’s regular student to regular teacher ratio and total ADM to regular teacher ratio are the second highest when compared to the peers and are higher than the peer average. The total ADM to regular and special teacher ratio is calculated because Strongsville CSD educates its special education students in the regular classroom as well as in special settings when required (**F3.19**). Strongsville CSD’s student-to-teacher ratios are higher than the FY 2000 State average in all three calculations. As discussed in **R3.3**, Strongsville CSD could potentially reduce staffing in its teaching aides classification and reallocate those funds to hire 19 additional teachers. This would put Strongsville CSD’s student-to-teacher ratio in line with the FY 2000 State average.

Salaries and Supplementals

F3.11 **Table 3-11** compares the average salaries within each EMIS classification between Strongsville CSD and the peer districts. As indicated in the certificated and classified negotiated agreements (**Table 3-31** and **Table 3-34**), Strongsville CSD is responsible for the pick-up on the pick-up of the employee’s retirement contribution. Strongsville CSD indicated this provision was agreed to in lieu of a salary increase and was phased in from 1995 to 1997. As a result, the salaries in **Table 3-11** have been adjusted to reflect the additional benefit received by employees at Strongsville CSD. If a revised average salary for Strongsville CSD is bolded, then it is the highest average salary in comparison to the peer districts. However, if a revised average salary for Strongsville CSD is underlined, then it is a higher average salary than the peer average.

Table 3-11: Average Salary by EMIS Classification

	Strongsville			Brecksville-Broadview Heights		Solon		Peer Average	
	FTEs	Average Salary	Revised Average Salary ¹	FTEs	Average Salary	FTEs	Average Salary	FTEs	Average Salary
Official / Administrative	29.0	\$67,593	\$74,464	21.3	\$71,840 ¹	29.0	\$78,295 ¹	25.2	\$75,068
Professional Education	441.6	\$46,801	\$51,558	252.4	\$51,983	357.6	\$54,182	305.0	\$53,083
Professional Other	17.7	\$46,294	\$51,000	13.0	\$35,408	14.5	\$52,873	13.8	\$44,141
Technical ²	5.8	\$37,478	<u>\$41,288</u>	6.8	\$18,597	13.0	\$29,314	9.9	\$23,956
Office / Clerical	144.1	\$20,311	\$22,376	65.9	\$22,700	62.0	\$22,902	64.0	\$22,801
Crafts / Trades	13.0	\$40,330	<u>\$44,430</u>	8.0	\$43,263	15.0	\$42,072	11.5	\$42,668
Transportation	45.1	\$23,173	<u>\$25,529</u>	31.3	\$23,025	25.8	\$21,798	28.6	\$22,412
Custodians	48.5	\$31,776	<u>\$35,006</u>	40.9	\$26,151	36.3	\$34,434	38.6	\$30,293
Food Service	29.4	\$16,194	<u>\$17,840</u>	25.1	\$16,749	13.3	\$15,535	19.2	\$16,142
Other Service Worker	0.0	\$0	\$0	0.0	\$0	14.8	\$17,316	7.4	\$8,658

Source: FY 2001 EMIS staff summary report from Strongsville CSD and peer districts

¹ Salaries were adjusted by a factor of 10.1649.

² Strongsville CSD technical personnel include 2.8 FTEs classified as library/media aides. Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD has 5.5 FTEs classified as library/media aides while Solon CSD has 9.0 FTEs classified as library/media aides. As a result of the higher number of positions classified as library/media aides, the average salaries at the peer districts are lower than Strongsville CSD.

As illustrated in **Table 3-11**, when salaries were adjusted for the pick-up on the pick-up of the employee’s retirement contribution, Strongsville CSD has the highest average salary in 6 of the 10 classification when compared to the peer districts. When compared to the peer district average, Strongsville CSD has a higher average salary in 5 of the 10 classifications.

R3.4 While Strongsville CSD indicated that the pick-up on the pick-up was agreed to in lieu of a salary increase, Strongsville CSD should continue to monitor average salaries of its

personnel within the various classifications. In addition, Strongsville CSD should monitor the financial impact of being responsible for the pick-up on the pick-up of the employee’s retirement contribution. Because the pick-up on the pick-up was given in lieu of a salary increase, Strongsville CSD should consider the benefit received by employees during future salary negotiations since Strongsville CSD pays their portion of retirement benefits.

F3.12 **Table 3-12** illustrates the percentage of employees salaries in the various AOS-defined classifications to total district salaries for Strongsville CSD and the peer districts. **Table 3-4** defines the AOS-defined classifications.

Table 3-12: Percentage of Total FTEs and EMIS Salaries by AOS-Defined Classification

Classification	Strongsville		Brecksville-Broadview Heights		Solon		Peer Average	
	Percent of total FTEs	Percent of total salaries	Percent of total FTEs	Percent of total salaries	Percent of total FTEs	Percent of total salaries	Percent of total FTEs	Percent of total salaries
Administrative	4.1%	7.1%	4.8%	7.7%	5.0%	7.7%	4.9%	7.7%
Teachers	53.8%	63.8%	51.2%	64.1%	57.6%	67.1%	54.4%	65.6%
Pupil Services	4.9%	6.6%	5.7%	6.3%	6.4%	7.7%	6.0%	7.0%
Support Services	17.6%	11.9%	22.6%	13.4%	15.9%	10.1%	19.3%	11.8%
Other Classified	19.2%	10.1%	15.4%	8.4%	14.4%	6.8%	14.9%	7.6%
Technical	0.4%	0.5%	0.3%	0.1%	0.7%	0.6%	0.5%	0.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: FY 2001 Staff Summary Report from Strongsville CSD and the peer districts

In comparison to the peer district averages, Strongsville CSD has a lower percentage of salaries dedicated in the administrative, teachers and pupil services classifications. Strongsville CSD has a higher percentage of salaries when compared to the peer averages dedicated in the support services, other classified and technical classifications.

F3.13 **Table 3-13** compares the average years of experience and educational backgrounds for certificated personnel at Strongsville CSD and the peer districts.

Table 3-13: Average Teachers’ Experience and Background for FY 2000

	Strongsville	Brecksville- Broadview Heights	Solon	Peer Average
Average Teacher’s Salary	\$50,604	\$51,549	\$51,728	\$51,639
Average years of experience	13.8 years	12.9 years	13.4 years	13.2 years
Percent with no degree	0.0%	0.9%	0.3%	0.6%
Percent with bachelors	20.5%	17.2%	34.8%	26.0%
Percent with bachelors + 150 hours	31.0%	36.0%	0.3%	18.2%
Percent with masters	48.3%	45.5%	64.3%	54.9%
Percent with doctorate	0.2%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%

Source: FY 2000 ODE Average Experience of Teachers report

¹ The average salary as reported by ODE is \$45,935. However, the salary was adjusted for the pick-up on the pick-up of the employee’s retirement contribution.

As shown in **Table 3-13**, the average years of experience for teachers at Strongsville CSD is higher than the peer districts. However, 79.5 percent of teachers in FY 2000 had either a bachelors degree plus 150 hours of education or a master degree compared to a peer average of 73.1 percent for the same educational degrees. While educational attainment directly affects salaries, it could also have a positive impact on classroom teaching skills. In addition, districts who have a highly experienced teaching corps that are above the State average in education and experience, receive additional State funding. Strongsville CSD received an additional \$74,500 in FY 2000 and \$28,800 in FY 2001 according to the respective SF-3 reports.

C3.1 While Strongsville CSD has a lower percentage of its teachers with a masters degree when compared to the peer average, Strongsville CSD has a higher percentage of teachers with more than a bachelors degree (bachelors degree plus 150 hours and masters degree) when compared to the peer average. The higher level of educational attainment may have a positive impact on classroom teaching skills and may assist Strongsville CSD in meeting its educational goals. Additionally, Strongsville CSD has received additional State funding based upon the experience and educational level of its teachers.

F3.14 **Table 3-14** ranks the bachelors degree base teacher’s salaries and maximum teacher’s salaries for the school districts in Cuyahoga County (County). All salaries included in this table were in effect in October 2001.

Table 3-14: Rank of Teacher's Bachelors Degree Salaries, Effective October 2001

Bachelor Degree Base Salary			Bachelor Degree Maximum Salary		
Rank	District	Salary	Rank	District	Salary
1	Beachwood CSD	\$34,895	1	Cuyahoga Heights LSD	\$67,335
2	Orange CSD	\$33,601	2	Rocky River CSD	\$60,383
3	Shaker Heights CSD	\$33,418	3	Polaris JVSD	\$58,247
4	Solon CSD	\$33,209	4	Orange CSD	\$57,122
5	Polaris JVSD	\$33,001	5	Beachwood CSD	\$55,835
6	Independence LSD	\$32,793	6	Warrensville Heights CSD	\$54,566
7	Berea CSD ¹	\$32,494	7	Cleveland Heights-University Heights CSD	\$54,500
8	Cuyahoga Valley Career Center	\$32,345	8	Shaker Heights CSD	\$54,487
9	Mayfield CSD	\$32,109	9	North Royalton CSD	\$54,444
10	Cleveland Heights-University Heights CSD	\$31,700	10	Independence LSD	\$54,436
11	Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD	\$31,690	11	Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD	\$54,193
12	North Royalton CSD	\$31,254	12	Cuyahoga Valley Career Center	\$53,886
13	STRONGSVILLE CSD ¹	\$31,095	13	Mayfield CSD	\$53,596
14	Cleveland Municipal School District	\$31,081	14	Westlake CSD	\$53,206
15	Richmond Heights CSD	\$31,032	15	Richmond Heights CSD	\$52,733
16	Rocky River CSD	\$31,002	16	Solon CSD	\$52,618
17	Chagrin Falls EVSD	\$30,894	17	East Cleveland CSD	\$52,444
18	Bedford CSD	\$30,347	18	Chagrin Falls EVSD	\$51,902
19	North Olmsted CSD	\$29,993	19	Berea CSD ¹	\$51,687
20	Westlake CSD	\$29,975	20	Bedford CSD	\$51,590
21	South Euclid-Lundhurst CSD	\$29,971	21	North Olmsted CSD	\$51,534
22	East Cleveland CSD	\$29,968	22	Cleveland Municipal School District	\$51,230
23	Bay Village CSD	\$29,903	23	Brooklyn CSD	\$50,710
24	Fairview Park CSD	\$29,781	24	Euclid CSD	\$50,429
25	Garfield Heights CSD	\$29,636	25	South Euclid-Lundhursts CSD	\$50,351
26	Euclid CSD	\$29,629	26	Fairview Park CSD	\$49,874
27	Brooklyn CSD	\$29,551	26	Parma CSD	\$49,874
28	Warrensville Heights CSD	\$29,495	28	Bay Village CSD	\$49,791
29	Cuyahoga Heights LSD	\$29,231	29	Garfield Heights CSD	\$49,788
30	Parma CSD	\$28,779	30	Olmsted Falls CSD	\$49,535
31	Lakewood CSD	\$28,540	31	STRONGSVILLE CSD ¹	\$49,427

Bachelor Degree Base Salary			Bachelor Degree Maximum Salary		
Rank	District	Salary	Rank	District	Salary
32	Olmsted Falls CSD	\$28,534	32	Lakewood CSD	\$46,663
33	Maple Heights CSD	\$27,936	33	Maple Heights CSD	\$44,991

Source: Cuyahoga County Teachers' Salary Information

¹ The amount reported in the published document has been adjusted due to the board of education's responsibility for the pick-up on the pick-up of the teacher's State Teacher Retirement System (STRS) share.

Strongsville CSD's bachelors degree base salary is actually \$28,226 while the maximum salary is \$44,866. These are both the second lowest within the County. However, because Strongsville CSD is responsible for the pick-up on the pick-up of the teachers' STRS share, annual salaries were adjusted. With the adjustment, Strongsville CSD's bachelors degree base salary is the 13th highest in the County while the maximum salary is the third lowest.

F3.15 **Table 3-15** ranks the masters degree maximum teacher's salaries without longevity and masters degree maximum teacher's salaries with longevity for the school districts in Cuyahoga County. All salaries included in this table were in effect in October 2001.

Table 3-15: Rank of Teacher's Masters Degree Maximum Salaries, Effective October 2001

Masters Degree Maximum Salary, without Longevity			Masters Degree Maximum Salary, with Longevity		
Rank	District	Salary	Rank	District	Salary
1	Cuyahoga Heights LSD	\$70,715	1	Orange CSD	\$74,258
2	Beachwood CSD	\$68,791	2	Cuyahoga Heights LSD	\$70,717
3	Orange CSD	\$67,202	3	Shaker Heights CSD	\$70,195
4	Shaker Heights CSD	\$66,836	4	Independence LSD	\$68,865
5	Rocky River CSD	\$66,421	5	Beachwood CSD	\$68,791
6	Independence LSD	\$65,586	6	Garfield Heights CSD	\$67,985
7	Cuyahoga Valley Career Center	\$65,216	7	Polaris JVSD	\$67,817
8	Polaris JVSD	\$64,683	8	Berea CSD ¹	\$66,718
9	Cleveland Height-University Heights CSD	\$64,500	9	Rocky River CSD	\$66,421
10	Mayfield CSD	\$64,218	10	North Royalton CSD	\$65,827
11	Warrensville Heights CSD	\$64,181	11	Mayfield CSD	\$65,718
12	Berea CSD ¹	\$62,686	12	Cuyahoga Valley Career Center	\$65,216
13	North Royalton CSD	\$62,508	13	Bay Village CSD	\$64,671
14	Solon CSD	\$61,796	14	Cleveland Heights-University Heights CSD	\$64,500
15	STRONGSVILLE CSD ¹	\$61,686	15	Cleveland Municipal School District	\$64,433
16	Richmond Heights LSD	\$60,922	16	Olmsted Falls CSD	\$64,408

Masters Degree Maximum Salary, without Longevity			Masters Degree Maximum Salary, with Longevity		
Rank	District	Salary	Rank	District	Salary
17	Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD	\$60,696	17	Warrensville Heights CSD	\$64,181
18	Chagrin Falls EVSD	\$60,552	18	Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD	\$64,014
19	East Cleveland CSD	\$60,385	19	Richmond Heights LSD	\$63,522
20	Westlake CSD	\$59,950	20	Westlake CSD	\$62,948
21	Bay Village CSD	\$59,791	21	East Cleveland CSD	\$62,574
22	Garfield Heights CSD	\$59,572	22	STRONGSVILLE CSD ¹	\$62,574
23	North Olmsted CSD	\$59,518	23	Solon CSD	\$61,796
24	Cleveland Municipal School District	\$59,491	24	Fairview Park CSD	\$61,766
25	South Euclid-Lyndhurst CSD	\$58,743	25	Bedford CSD	\$61,271
26	Olmsted Falls CSD	\$58,630	26	Brooklyn CSD	\$60,905
27	Parma CSD	\$58,508	27	Chagrin Falls EVSD	\$60,552
28	Brooklyn CSD	\$58,245	28	South Euclid-Lyndhurst CSD	\$60,043
29	Lakewood CSD	\$57,936	29	Euclid CSD	\$59,582
30	Bedford CSD	\$57,811	30	North Olmsted CSD	\$59,518
31	Euclid CSD	\$57,332	31	Parma CSD	\$58,508
32	Fairview Park CSD	\$58,843	32	Lakewood CSD	\$57,936
33	Maple Heights CSD	\$54,196	33	Maple Heights CSD	\$56,431

Source: Cuyahoga County Teachers' Salary Information

¹ The amount reported in the published document has been adjusted due to the board of education's responsibility for the pick-up on the pick-up of the teacher's State Teacher Retirement System (STRS) share.

Strongsville CSD's masters degree maximum salary without longevity is actually \$55,931 while the masters degree maximum salary with longevity is \$56,800. These are both the second lowest within the County. When the adjustments are made for the pick-up on the pick-up of the teachers' STRS share, Strongsville CSD's annual salaries are the 15th highest and 22nd highest, respectively.

F3.16 **Table 3-16** indicates the gross earnings paid to full-time, regular education teachers at Strongsville CSD in calendar year 2000. According to ODE, the average teacher's salary for FY 2000 at Strongsville CSD was \$45,935. When adjusted for the pick-up on the pick-up of the employee's retirement contribution, the average teacher's salary was \$50,604. Based upon the analysis for **Table 3-16**, the average gross earnings was \$54,429 for calendar year 2000. The differences between the adjusted average teacher's salary and the average gross earnings are attributable, in part, to supplemental contracts (**F3.17**) and the voluntary professional growth program (**F3.35**).

Table 3-16: Range of Actual Teacher Gross Earnings for CY 2000

Range	Number of Teachers ¹	Percentage
\$27,364 - \$29,999	6	2.2%
\$30,000 - \$39,999	48	17.3%
\$40,000 - \$49,999	47	17.0%
\$50,000 - 59,999	63	22.7%
\$60,000 - \$66,929	35	12.6%
\$66,930 +	78	28.2%
Total	277	100.0%

Source: FY 2001 EMIS staff demographics report; CY 2000 W-2s

¹ Represents only regular education teachers in the elementary schools, middle schools and high school whose earnings were greater than the FY 2001 base salary of \$27,364.

As illustrated in **Table 3-16**, there is a high number of employees (approximately 40.8 percent) who received compensation in excess of \$60,000 in CY 2000. However, as stated in **Table 3-13**, Strongsville CSD 48.3 percent of its teachers had a masters degree. According to the negotiated agreements, the base salary for a masters degree (after adjustment for the pick-up on the pick-up) was \$35,083 while the maximum salary for a masters degree with longevity was \$62,574. These base salaries do not include supplemental contracts (**F3.17**) or the voluntary professional growth program (**F3.35**).

F3.17 **Table 3-17** compares the total amount paid in supplemental contracts at Strongsville CSD with the peer districts during FY 2001.

Table 3-17: Total Supplemental Payments

	Strongsville	Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD	Solon	Peer Average
FY 2001 ADM	6,800	4,083	4,935	4,509
Total Supplemental Payments	\$807,085	\$444,743	\$992,490	\$718,617
Supplemental Expenditures per ADM	\$119	\$109	\$201	\$159

Source: FY 2001 EMIS Staff Summary Report, interviews

Table 3-17 indicates that Strongsville CSD’s total supplemental payments are higher than the peer average and the second highest when compared to the peers. However, Strongsville CSD’s supplemental expenditure per ADM is the second lowest when compared to the peers

and lower than the peer average. Supplemental contracts are used to help school districts offer programs outside the scope of regular classroom instruction. **Table 3-18** compares the amounts paid for some common supplemental contract positions for Strongsville CSD and the peer districts.

Table 3-18: Comparison of Selected Supplemental Contract Amounts ¹

	Strongsville	Brecksville-Broadview Heights	Solon	Peer Average
Head Varsity Basketball Coach (Boys)	\$5,473	\$4,278	\$4,818	\$4,548
Head Varsity Basketball Coach (Girls)	\$5,473	\$4,278	\$4,818	\$4,548
Head Varsity Track Coach (Boys)	\$3,831	\$3,803	\$3,854	\$3,829
Head Varsity Baseball Coach	\$3,831	\$3,803	\$4,175	\$3,989
Head Varsity Softball Coach	\$3,421	\$3,803	\$4,175	\$3,989
Head Varsity Cheerleader Advisor	\$1,642	\$2,852	\$3,212	\$3,032
Junior Class Advisor	\$1,478	\$634	\$1,606	\$1,120
Senior Class Advisor	\$1,478	\$634	\$964	\$799
Total number of eligible positions	344	194	N/A	N/A
Total FY 2001 Payments	\$807,085	\$444,743	\$992,490	\$718,617
Average per eligible position	\$2,346	\$2,292	\$2,931 ²	\$2,612

Source: Strongsville CSD and peer school district negotiated agreements and supporting documentation

¹ All amounts indicated are the base amounts for each positions. The payments for some positions may increase the longer an individual is in the same position.

² Since the number of eligible positions was not available, the average was calculated based upon the sample positions looked at within Solon CSD.

As illustrated in **Table 3-18**, the average supplemental payment per eligible position is the second highest when compared to the peers and is lower than the peer average. The number of eligible positions at Strongsville CSD is higher than Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD and is higher than the number of eligible positions which have been seen in other performance audits.

R3.5 Strongsville CSD should review the number of eligible supplemental positions offered to determine if there is an excessive number of positions being offered. If Strongsville CSD were to experience financial problems in the future, decreasing the number of supplemental positions could assist Strongsville CSD in allocating financial resources to other areas within its operations.

Special Education

F3.18 Ohio pre-school and school-aged children are placed in a special education program when they meet various conditions identified through a multi-factored assessment process conducted in accordance with State and federal regulations. Children with disabilities may be identified from birth through 2 ½ years old, but are typically identified at the pre-school (ages 3 to 5) or school-age level. The MFE Team forms to assess and determine eligibility. Once a student is identified as being eligible for the special education program, an individualized education planning team is formed. Typically, the individualized education planning team will consist of any of the following: building principal, special education teacher, regular education teacher, psychologist, therapist, nurse and child's parents. The individualized education planning team meets at least annually to develop an individualized education plan (IEP), identifying the goals for educating the child and specifying how those goals are to be achieved. Like regular education students, special education students must meet the 20-unit requirement in order to graduate. However, special education students are given 22 years to achieve this requirement and the intensity of the education varies in accordance with the student's IEP. The program includes a transition component for students age 14 and older.

Strongsville CSD in FY 2002 has 864.5 resident students between the ages of 3 and 22 with IEPs, each of which must be reviewed at least annually. Under all circumstances, Strongsville CSD is responsible for assessing, developing and maintaining a student's IEP, even when another agency or school district is responsible for servicing the student. This occurs when the IEP dictates that a student attends school district or agency, when a student resides in a foster home outside of Strongsville CSD, when a student receives home schooling or is educated in another setting outside Strongsville CSD. Strongsville CSD is currently responsible for educating all of the 864.5 special education students for which it maintains IEPs.

F3.19 **Table 3-19** compares Strongsville CSD's ratio of handicapped students to special education FTEs to the peer districts' ratios for FY 2001.

Table 3-19: Comparison of Special Education Students per Special Education FTE

School District	ADM	Total Handicapped	Percent Handicapped ¹	Special Education FTE	Ratio of Special Education Students to FTEs
Strongsville	6,800	775	11.4%	37.0	20.9 to 1
Brecksville-Broadview Heights	4,083	351	8.6%	23.7	14.8 to 1
Solon	4,935	528	10.7%	42.8	12.3 to 1
Peer Average	4,509	440	9.7%	33.3	13.2 to 1

Source: FY 2001 EMIS School Enrollment Reports; FY 2001 Staff Summary Reports; 2000 Report Cards

¹ Because the 2002 report cards have not been released by the ODE, the percentages were obtained from the 2001 report cards for each of the school districts.

As shown in **Table 3-19**, Strongsville CSD’s special education student-to-teacher ratio is higher than both the peer districts and higher than the peer average. ODE requires each school district to develop a district-wide special education plan to meet the needs of its special education students. ODE establishes recommended student-to-teacher ratios by handicap, but the recommendations allow school districts to deviate from the ratios based on the adopted special education plan.

Strongsville CSD developed a plan to educate its special education students through a Model IV Alternative Service Delivery Options (ASDO) program. In a Model IV ASDO program, services may be provided in a regular classroom environment with the regular education teacher (inclusion), in a special class or learning center (resource room). The role of the special educator varies based upon the needs of the student. Special education teachers may provide services to students in the regular classroom, in a self-contained special education class or on an as-needed basis in a resources room. The Model IV ASDO program allows Strongsville CSD more flexibility in the use of staff and provides special needs students the opportunity to be educated in a regular classroom. To further assist in the education of special education students, Strongsville CSD uses small group instructors. The small group instructors are used exclusively in the special education program and assist teachers in enforcing what is being taught in the classroom. The IEP developed for each student identifies the use of small group instructors.

Based upon the analysis conducted in **F3.10** on student-to-teacher ratios for Strongsville CSD and the analysis in **Table 3-19** on student-to-teacher ratios in special education, it does not appear that staffing reductions in the special education area are justified.

Substitutes

F3.20 **Table 3-20** compares Strongsville CSD and the peer district substitute costs. The categories in **Table 3-20** represent key indicators in determining efficiency of substitute use in a school district.

Table 3-20: Comparison of Substitute Hourly Rates

	Strongsville	Brecksville-Broadview Heights	Solon
Auto/Manual Substitute Placement	Manual	Manual	Manual
Daily Cost of Teacher Substitutes	0-6 days: \$85/day 6-19 days: \$90/day 20-59 days: \$112/day 60+ days: first step of agreement and eligible for benefits Permanent: \$125/day	0-5 days: \$80/day 5-41 days: \$85/day 41+ days: first step of agreement 40 non-consecutive days: \$90 day Retired Brecksville-Broadview Heights Teachers: \$95/day	0-30 days: \$95/day 31-59 days: \$100/day 60+ days: first step of agreement
Small Group Instructors	½ day: \$40.00 Full day: \$80.00	\$11.00 per hour	N/A
Hourly Cost of Teaching Aides	\$7.21 per hour	\$8.28 per hour	\$10.93 per hour
Hourly Cost of Bus Drivers	\$11.73 per hour	\$12.70 per hour	\$11.76 per hour
Hourly Cost of Cafeteria Personnel	\$6.75 per hour	\$6.83 per hour	\$7.00 per hour
Hourly Cost of Clerical Personnel	\$7.53 per hour	\$9.00 per hour	\$11.44 per hour
Hourly Cost of Custodians	\$9.35 per hour	\$8.16 per hour	\$9.40 per hour
Hourly Cost of Maintenance	\$9.61 per hour	N/A	\$9.15 per hour
Hourly Cost of Mechanics	\$9.87 per hour	N/A	\$13.82 per hour

Source: Strongsville CSD and peer school district documentation, interviews

As shown in **Table 3-20**, the hourly substitute rates for teachers at Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD are higher than those at Strongsville CSD because substitute teachers are eligible to be placed on the salary scheduled sooner. Retired Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD teachers are also used as substitute teachers and they receive a higher daily rate than other substitutes. Retired teachers are used by Strongsville CSD, but they do not receive a higher rate of pay. The hourly costs for substitutes in the teaching aide, bus driver, cafeteria personnel, clerical personnel and mechanics are lower when compared to the peer districts. High hourly or daily substitute rates could increase the overall costs to a district. However, low hourly or daily substitute rates could make it difficult for a district to locate substitutes when needed. Strongsville CSD has indicated that it does not normally have a problem finding substitutes.

R3.6 If Strongsville CSD begins to have difficulties in obtaining substitute teachers, it should consider placing an emphasis using retired teachers as substitutes. While Strongsville CSD has indicated that it does not normally have a problem finding teaching substitutes, this may be a problem which it may encounter in the future. In addition to placing an emphasis on using retired teachers as substitutes, it may be necessary to follow the lead of other school districts and increase the rate of pay for retired teachers who function as substitute teachers. This will allow Strongsville CSD to use teachers who are familiar with its educational goals as well as its curriculum. Furthermore, it may assist Strongsville CSD in adding to its available substitute teaching pool.

F3.21 **Table 3-21** shows the substitute payments made by Strongsville CSD and the peers during FY 2001. As illustrated, teaching substitutes constituted 61.5 percent of the total substitute costs for FY 2001 which was the lowest when compared to the peers. However, the substitute costs paid in FY 2001 in the “other classified personnel” classification were the highest when compared to the peers.

Table 3-21: Substitute Payments for FY 2001

Classification	Strongsville		Brecksville-Broadview Heights		Solon	
	Amount Paid	Percent of Total	Amount Paid	Percent of Total	Amount Paid	Percent of Total
Teachers	\$446,948 ¹	61.5%	\$442,937	74.4%	\$508,831	77.3%
Food Service	\$11,738	1.6%	\$15,852	2.7%	\$11,618	1.8%
Special Education Interpreter	\$2,783	0.4%	\$0	0.0%	\$0	0.0%
Transportation Personnel ²	\$74,193	10.2%	\$66,509	11.1%	\$77,487	11.8%
Other Classified Personnel	\$191,633	26.3%	\$70,214	11.8%	\$59,960	9.1%
Totals	\$727,295	100.0%	\$595,512	100.0%	\$657,896	100.0%

Source: Strongsville CSD and peer school district documentation

¹ Total substitute costs for teachers includes \$425,707 paid from the General Fund and \$21,241 paid from other funding.

² Substitute costs for transportation personnel include bus monitors, bus drivers and field trip pay for bus drivers.

Leave Usage

F3.22 ORC §3319.141 stipulates that “Each person who is employed by any board of education in this state shall be entitled to 15 days sick leave with pay, for each year under contract, which shall be credited at the rate of 1.25 days per month.” Based upon documentation submitted by Strongsville CSD, the average teacher used 9.5 sick leave days and 1.6 personal leave days during FY 2001. Assuming all sick leave days used by a Strongsville CSD teacher are covered by a substitute, 5.3 percent of all periods taught in FY 2001 were taught by a

substitute. Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD reported that during FY 2001, the average teacher used 8.4 sick leave days and 1.5 personal leave days. Information is not available for Solon CSD since all leave balances are tracked manually. While the amount of sick leave days does not appear to be dramatically higher than Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD, the amount is higher than what has been seen in other school district performance audits. A review of three other urban/suburban school district performance audits conducted by the Auditor of State (Parma CSD, Cleveland Heights-University Height CSD and Canton CSD) indicated sick leave usage by certificated employees of 8.7 days, 7.5 days and 6.9 days, respectively.

F3.23 **Table 3-22** illustrates the number of days of leave used by Strongsville CSD’s classified staff for FY 2001 which could have required either a substitute or another staff member to cover for the vacancy.

Table 3-22: Classified Staff Leave Days Taken During FY 2001

Classification	Sick Leave	Personal Leave	Professional Leave	Vacation Leave	Total Days Taken	Number of Employees	Average Sick & Personal Leave per Employee	Average per Employee (All Leave)
Aides	992.0	146.0	130.0	0.0	1,268.0	131	8.7	9.7
Clerical/Office	448.0	49.0	67.0	330.0	894.0	56	8.9	16.0
Custodians	529.0	53.0	23.0	454.0	1,059.0	52	11.2	20.4
Food Service	203.0	34.0	25.0	0.0	262.0	46	5.2	5.7
Classified Leadership	167.0	17.0	125.0	246.0	555.0	19	9.7	29.2
Maintenance	52.0	5.0	6.0	96.0	159.0	9	6.3	17.7
Mechanics	74.0	3.0	5.0	75.0	157.0	6	12.8	26.2
Transportation	630.0	90.0	46.0	0.0	766.0	73	9.9	10.5
Totals	3,095.0	397.0	427.0	1,201.0	5,120.0	392	8.9	13.1

Source: Strongsville CSD

Note: Strongsville CSD indicated that it does not get substitutes for the following: some clerical positions, classified leadership positions, some maintenance positions and mechanic positions.

The total average number of leave days used per classified employee is 13.1 which does not appear to be excessive based upon previous school district performance audits. The average amount of sick leave used per classified employee at Strongsville CSD is 7.9 days compared to 7.4 days per classified employee at Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD. Information was not available from Solon CSD.

While the average number of sick leave days used by classified employees appears to be significantly less than sick leave days used by teachers, the custodial employees and maintenance employees at Strongsville CSD appear to use a high number of sick leave days per employee. During FY 2001, the average custodial employee used 10.2 sick days while the average maintenance employee used 12.3 sick days. Excessive use of sick leave within these classifications or any other employee classification of the classified employees could limit Strongsville CSD’s resources, disrupt daily routines and weaken the quality of education.

R3.7 Strongsville CSD should examine the use of sick leave by its teachers and seek methods to reduce the use of sick leave among its certificated employees. The use of sick leave by teachers has a direct impact on school district costs as both the teacher’s regular salary and the substitute cost must be paid by the district. In addition, the excessive use of sick leave may increase administrative costs and impact the quality of education by interrupting the flow of a teacher’s curriculum. Strongsville CSD may need to develop and implement policies to assist with the reduction of sick leave which may include the following:

- Implementing a sick leave abuse policy such as a rolling year occurrence policy where employees are held accountable for the number of times taken off rather than the length of time taken off.
- Requiring sick leave to be a component of the employee’s evaluation.

During FY 2001, Strongsville spent \$446,948 in teaching substitute costs. **Table 3-23** illustrates estimated annual cost savings for Strongsville CSD should it be able to reduce the number of sick leave days per teacher based upon the \$85 daily teacher substitute cost.

Table 3-23: Annual Savings Calculated for Reducing the Usage of Teacher’s Sick Leave

Estimated Annual Cost Savings		
Reduction of 1 day per teacher	Reduction of 2 days per teacher	Reduction of 3 days per teacher
\$37,230	\$74,460	\$111,690

In addition to the sick leave usage by teachers, Strongsville CSD should continue to monitor the use of sick leave by its classified employees. While the overall use of sick leave among the classified employees does not appear to be excessive, the average custodial employee and the average mechanic used 10.2 days and 12.3 days, respectively. Excessive use of sick leave by classified employees could limit Strongsville CSD’s resources, disrupt daily routines and weaken the quality of education.

Financial Implication: Reducing the number of sick leave days by one day per teacher would bring Strongsville CSD in line with Parma CSD and would produce an estimated annual cost savings of \$37,230. Reducing the number of sick leave days by two days per teacher would bring Strongsville CSD in line with Cleveland Heights-University Heights CSD and would produce an estimated annual cost savings of \$74,460. However, reducing sick leave usage by three days per employee would bring Strongsville CSD in line with Canton CSD and would produce an estimated annual cost savings of \$111,690.

Benefits Administration

F3.24 A report on the *Cost of Health Insurance in Ohio's Public Sector* was completed by the State Employee Relations Board (SERB). Based on the 2000 study, approximately 65 percent of the responding employers required employees to pay a portion of the cost of a family medical plan. Fifty-one percent required employees to share the cost for the single medical plan. The average monthly employee contribution is \$23.41 for the single medical plan and \$66.88 for the family medical plan. These rates amount to 10.8 percent of the cost of the single medical plan and 12.1 percent of the cost of the family medical plan. Other findings from the study include the following:

- The estimated cost of medical and other health care benefits was \$6,352 per covered employee in 2000.
- Monthly medical insurance premiums currently average \$215.60 for a single medical plan and \$549.41 for a family medical plan.
- The average total monthly cost of employee health care benefits is \$262.65 for single coverage and \$632.24 for family coverage.
- Approximately 91 percent of public employers offer some level of dental coverage, 56 percent provide some level of vision coverage and 94 percent offer life insurance.
- Dental coverage costs an average of \$29.99 per month for a single plan and \$53.52 per month for a family plan. The cost of vision insurance averages \$8.41 per month for a single plan and \$16.08 per month for a family plan.
- Medical premiums in 2000 rose an average of 10.7 percent for both single and family plans compared to the 1999 levels. This represents the first double-digit increase in health insurance rates since 1992.

F3.25 The SERB report *Cost of Health Insurance in Ohio's Public Sector* also reports numerous findings specifically for school districts. This information is important because it allows

school districts to compare information based on a school district average as well as a like-sized school districts. Some of the key information contained within the report includes the following:

- The average medical premium for school districts is \$215.80 for a single plan and \$537.90 for a family plan. The average medical premium for school districts with an enrollment between 2,500 and 9,999 is \$214.17 for a single plan and \$530.77 for a family plan.
- The average employee contribution for school districts is \$11.63 for a single plan and \$45.23 for a family plan. The average employee contribution for school districts with an enrollment between 2,500 and 9,999 is \$10.05 for a single plan and \$33.40 for a family plan.
- The average total premium per employee for all insurance costs for school districts is \$274.17 for a single plan and \$633.00 for a family plan. The average total premium per employee for all insurance costs for school districts with an enrollment between 2,500 and 9,999 is \$273.62 for a single plan and \$626.58 for a family plan.
- The average annual cost of insurance per employee for a school district in 2000 was \$6,429. The average annual cost of insurance per employee for a school district with enrollment between 2,500 and 9,999 in 2000 was \$6,385.
- The average contribution per employee at a school district is \$21.22 for a single plan (9.8 percent of premium costs) and \$63.66 for a family plan (11.8 percent of premium costs). The average contribution per employee at a school district with enrollment between 2,500 and 9,999 is \$18.40 for a single plan (8.8 percent of premium costs) and \$52.34 for a family plan (9.8 percent of premium costs).

F3.26 **Table 3-24** provides selected medical insurance information for Strongsville CSD and the peer districts. Employees hired after 1999 are required to contribute \$20.00 per month towards the monthly premium cost of the family Medical Mutual Major (PPO) plan. However, Strongsville CSD pays 100 percent of all monthly premiums for all other personnel and medical insurance plans.

Table 3-24: Hospitalization Insurance Premium Comparisons

District	Provider(s)	Single Plan Monthly Premium	Full-time Employee Share	Family Plan Monthly Premium	Full-time Employee Share	FY 2001 Average Enrollment per plan	Self Insured
Strongsville	Medical Mutual Major (PPO)	\$245.91	\$0.00	\$616.19	\$20.00 ¹	58/298	No
	Medical Mutual Select	\$235.48	\$0.00	\$590.30	\$0.00	79/211	No
	Kaiser Health (HMO)	\$212.65	\$0.00	\$561.40	\$0.00	4/10	No
Brecksville-Broadview Heights ²	Medical Mutual (PPO)	\$281.37	\$0.00	\$727.69	\$0.00	76/153	No
	Kaiser	\$239.93	\$0.00	\$606.85	\$0.00	6/7	No
Solon	Medical Mutual ³	\$272.88	\$0.00	\$758.07	\$0.00	26/190	Yes
	Medical Mutual (PPO) ³	\$229.38	\$0.00	\$637.16	\$0.00	50/91	Yes
	Medical Mutual ⁴	\$339.05	\$0.00	\$941.89	\$0.00	20/100	Yes
	Medical Mutual (PPO) ⁴	\$283.57	\$0.00	\$787.74	\$0.00	36/33	Yes

Source: Strongsville CSD and peer school district schedule of benefits

¹ An employee at Strongsville CSD is only responsible for a portion of the monthly premium on a family plan if the employee was hired after 1997.

² Only those plans which are currently available are illustrated. Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD also has an additional health care plan which is no longer offered. In addition, the hospitalization plans have been adjusted to include the cost of the prescription plan for comparison with the Strongsville CSD.

³ These two medical plans are for the certificated personnel at Solon CSD.

⁴ These two medical plans are for the classified personnel at Solon CSD. The premiums have been adjusted to include the cost of the prescription plan for comparison with Strongsville CSD.

In comparison to the SERB study (**F3.24** and **F3.25**), the average cost of Strongsville CSD’s single medical plans (\$231.35 a month) is higher than SERB’s average reported monthly medical premium cost and the average reported monthly medical premium cost for school districts of like-size (\$215.60 and \$214.70, respectively). The average cost of the family medical plans (\$589.30) is also higher than SERB’s average reported monthly medical premiums and the average reported monthly medical premium cost for school districts of like-size (\$549.41 and \$530.77). However, while the costs are higher than those reported by SERB, the average costs are lower than the peer districts.

F3.27 Benefits offered as components of a medical insurance plan may impact the cost of the plan and should be considered when conducting a cost/benefit analysis. Typically, the level of benefits, including co-pays, annual deductibles and the inclusion of prescription plans is included in the bargaining agreements. **Table 3-25** compares certain benefits of Strongsville CSD and the peer districts.

Table 3-25: Key Medical Plan Benefits ¹

	Strongsville Medical Mutual Major (PPO) Medical Mutual Select (POS) Kaiser (HMO)	Brecksville-Broadview Heights Super Med Plus Kaiser (HMO)	Solon Medical Mutual Medical Mutual (PPO) Medical Mutual Medical Mutual (PPO)
Office visits	\$8 co-pay, then 90% \$10 co-pay, then 100% 100%	100% 100%	100% 100% 100% 100%
Employee annual deductible	\$100 (S) \$200 (F) None None	\$100 (S) \$200 (F) None	\$50 (S) \$100 (F) \$50 (S) \$100 (F) \$50 (S) \$100 (F) \$50 (S) \$100 (F)
Out-of-pocket maximum	\$200 (S) \$400 (F) None None	\$500 per covered person None	None None None None
Prescription plan included	Yes Yes Yes	No No	Yes Yes No No
Need to choose primary physician	No Yes Yes	No Yes	No No No No
Maternity	90% 100% 100%	100% 100%	100% 100% 100% 100%
Well-child care	0-9 years: 90%; \$500 max \$10 co-pay, then 100% 100%	0-9 years: 100%; \$500 max \$100%	0-9 years: 100%; \$500 max 0-9 years: 100%; \$500 max 0-9 years: 100%; \$500 max 0-9 years: 100%; \$500 max
Inpatient hospital care	90% 100% 100%	100% 100%	100% 100% 100% 100%

Source: Strongsville CSD and peer school district benefit books

¹ For all health care plans, information presented is assuming that the employee chooses an authorized provider within the network, if applicable.

As stated in **Table 3-25**, the premium costs for medical insurance at Strongsville CSD are lower than the premium costs at the peer districts. An analysis of some of the key medical plan benefits indicates many similarities in the benefits between the medical insurance plans at Strongsville CSD and the peer districts. However, one key difference is that the employee annual deductible for the Medical Mutual PPO when compared to the similar plan offered at Solon CSD. In addition, the amount of employee contributions, as illustrated in **Table 3-25** is greater than the employee contribution at the peer districts.

F3.28 **Table 3-26** provides selected dental insurance information for Strongsville CSD and the peer districts. Classified employees hired after 1995 are required to contribute \$7.07 per month towards the monthly premium cost of the single and family dental insurance plans. However, Strongsville CSD pays 100 percent of all monthly premiums for all other personnel.

Table 3-26: Dental Insurance Premium Comparisons

District	Provider	Single Plan Monthly Premium	Full-time Employee Share	Family Plan Monthly Premium	Full-time Employee Share	FY 2001 Average Enrollment per plan	Self Insured
Strongsville	CoreSource	\$82.07	\$0.00 ¹ \$7.07 ¹	\$82.07	\$0.00 ¹ \$7.07 ¹	121/607	No
Brecksville-Broadview Heights	CoreSource	\$26.56	\$0.00	\$72.31	\$0.00	41/119	No
Solon	Medical Mutual	\$28.02	\$0.00	\$77.85	\$0.00	120/412	Yes

Source: Strongsville CSD and peer school district schedule of benefits

¹ All certificated employees and all classified employees hired before 1995 do not have to contribute any portion of the monthly premium cost associated with dental insurance. However, all classified employees hired after 1995 are responsible for \$7.07 per month towards the monthly contribution of dental premium costs.

In comparison to the SERB study (F3.24), the cost of Strongsville CSD’s single and family dental insurance plans (\$82.07 a month) is higher than SERB’s average reported monthly dental premium cost for single and family plans (\$29.99 and \$53.52 per month, respectively). In addition, the monthly dental premiums at Strongsville CSD are higher than the monthly dental premiums at the peer districts. As indicated in **Table 3-26**, Strongsville CSD and Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD have the same dental insurance provider. **Table 3-27** compares key dental insurance benefits received by employees at Strongsville CSD and Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD.

Table 3-27: Comparison of Dental Insurance Benefits

Description	Strongsville	Brecksville-Broadview Heights
Maximum benefit each calendar year for class 1, 2 and 3	\$2,500	\$1,500
Lifetime maximum for orthodontic services, per person	\$1,500	\$1,000
Annual Deductible	\$25 (S) \$50 (F)	\$25 (S) \$50 (F)
Percentages for Covered Dental Procedures:		
Class 1 - Preventive and Diagnostic	100%	100%
Class 2 - Basic Restoration	80%	80%
Class 3 - Major Restoration	80%	60%
Class 4 - Orthodontia	60%	60%

Source: Dental insurance benefit books from Strongsville CSD and Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD

As illustrated in **Table 3-27**, the dental benefits offered at Strongsville CSD are better than the benefits offered by Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD under the same dental provider. This level of dental benefits is the primary reason for the higher monthly premiums at Strongsville CSD.

R3.8 Strongsville CSD should examine the current benefits offered under its dental insurance plan and determine if the current high level of benefits should be renegotiated. Strongsville CSD’s dental costs are the highest among the peers and the peer average and are above the State average costs reported by SERB for like-sized districts. Should Strongsville CSD need to reduce its operating costs in the future, obtaining lower dental insurance with lower monthly premiums could assist in reducing costs. In order to do this, Strongsville CSD may need to find a new dental insurance provider or decrease the benefit level of its dental insurance plan. District officials have indicated that consideration is being given to self-insurance as an additional means of controlling costs in this area.

Financial Implication: Assuming Strongsville CSD can obtain monthly dental premiums comparable to the Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD and assuming enrollment levels comparable to the FY 2001 enrollment, Strongsville CSD could save an estimated \$151,700 annually as a result of renegotiating its dental premiums.

F3.29 Strongsville CSD’s total annual healthcare costs are affected by the total insurance premiums and the employees’ share of the monthly premiums. **Table 3-28** compares the annual cost for certain benefits for FY 2001 for Strongsville CSD and the peer districts.

Table 3-28: Yearly Total of All Insurance Costs

District	Healthcare Costs	Dental Costs	Prescription Costs	Life Insurance Costs	Vision Costs	Totals	Annual Insurance Cost per Employee ¹
Strongsville	\$3,787,995	\$647,182	N/A ²	\$137,705	N/A	\$4,572,882	\$5,907
Brecksville-Broadview Heights	\$1,967,294	\$252,372	\$405,964	\$57,439	N/A	\$2,683,069	\$5,774
Solon	\$3,317,873	\$378,407	\$309,003 ³	\$47,519	\$154,575	\$4,207,377	\$7,238
Peer Average	\$2,642,584	\$315,390	\$357,484	\$52,479	\$77,288	\$3,445,225	\$6,587

Source: Documentation provided by Strongsville CSD and the peer districts

¹ Average insurance cost per employee is calculated based upon the total FTEs within the district.

² Costs are included within the healthcare costs.

³ Prescription costs are only for classified employees. Prescription costs for certificated employees are included in the healthcare costs.

Strongsville CSD’s annual insurance cost per employee is the second lowest when compared to the peers’ annual cost per employee and 10.3 percent lower than the peer average. Strongsville CSD’s low cost per employee is due, in part, to the employee contributions by

some of its employees as indicated in **Table 3-24**. However, while the annual insurance cost per employee is lower than the peers and the peer districts, the total dental costs for Strongsville CSD are 105.2 percent higher than the peer average.

Strongsville CSD's annual cost per employee is lower than the State average and the average for like-sized school districts. SERB survey results indicated that the State average cost per employee for school districts was \$6,429 or 8.8 percent higher than Strongsville CSD (**F3.24**). Similarly, the average annual cost of insurance per employee for a school district with enrollment between 2,500 and 9,999 in 2000 was \$6,385 or 8.1 percent higher than Strongsville CSD (**F3.25**).

C3.2 Strongsville CSD has maintained a lower annual insurance cost per employee when compared to the peers, peer averages and SERB responses. Decreasing the annual insurance costs allows Strongsville CSD to allocate additional resources to other areas.

R3.9 Based upon rising health care costs for governmental entities (**F3.24**), the potential need for Strongsville CSD to reduce its operating costs and the employee contribution statistics reported by SERB (**F3.24** and **F3.25**), Strongsville CSD should require all its employees to contribute towards the monthly premium costs for health and dental insurance. Although Strongsville CSD's total insurance costs are the second lowest of the peers and below the State average, its health care costs are higher than the State average reported by SERB for like-sized districts. As stated in **Table 3-24** and **Table 3-26**, some employees are required to contribute a fixed dollar amount. However, not all employees are required to do so. If Strongsville CSD decides to require all employees to pay a portion of monthly premium costs, it should state the employee contribution in a percentage rather than a fixed dollar amount. This will assist Strongsville CSD in offsetting annual increases in health care costs.

Strongsville CSD should also consider possibly renegotiating its prescription plan co-pay. Under the current agreement, Strongsville CSD's employees pay \$0 for generic drugs and \$5 for brand-named drugs. However, the District retained the services of a consultant to review its health insurance provisions. Documentation provided by the consultant indicates that if the District requires a co-pay of \$10 for generic drugs and \$20 for brand-named drugs it could save approximately \$214,000 per year.

Financial Implication: Assuming Strongsville CSD requires an employee contribution of 10 percent for health and dental insurance, Strongsville CSD would save an estimated \$348,100 annually. The savings illustrated is net of current employee contributions received by Strongsville CSD. Strongsville CSD could save an additional \$214,000 per year if it modifies its co-pay on its generic and brand-named drugs.

Workers' Compensation

F3.30 Ohio employers can apply for group workers' compensation coverage and potentially achieve lower premium rates than they could individually. Strongsville CSD is in a group experience rating plan, and based on its claims history, should be able to maintain its group experience rating status. **Table 3-29** illustrates workers' compensation benefits for Strongsville CSD and the peer districts for calendar year 2000.

Table 3-29: Comparison of Workers' Compensation Benefits for 2000

District	Total FTEs ¹	Number of Medical Claims	Number of Lost Time Claims	Claims per FTE	Premium	Premium per FTE	Experience Modifier	Program
Strongsville	774.2	16.0	6.0	0.03	\$174,589	\$226	0.51	Group
Brecksville-Broadview Heights	464.7	22.0	2.0	0.05	\$198,656	\$427	1.10	EXP
Solon	581.3	9.0	3.0	0.02	\$198,897	\$342	0.69	Group
Peer Average	523.0	15.5	2.5	0.03	\$198,777	\$380	0.90	N/A

Source: Bureau of Workers' Compensation; FY 2001 EMIS staff summary reports

¹ The total FTEs were obtained from the FY 2001 EMIS staff summary reports.

As shown in **Table 3-29**, Strongsville CSD had an experience modifier of 0.51 which is 43.3 percent less than the peer average. The experience modifier is based upon factors such as the number of total claims in any previous time period, the severity of those claims and the extent that lost time claims went into effect. An experience modifier greater than 1.0 is a penalty and may result in higher premiums. Strongsville CSD also had the lowest premium cost per employee when compared to the peers and the peer average despite having a higher number of medical claims and lost time claims compared to the peer average. **Table 3-30** shows Strongsville CSD's number of medical claims, number of lost time claims, premium costs and experience modifiers since 1996.

Table 3-30: Number of Workers' Compensation Claims

Year	Number of Medical Claims	Number of Lost Time Claims	Premium Costs	Experience Modifier
1996	17.0	6.0	\$193,301	0.65
1997	22.0	6.0	\$156,637	0.47
1998	17.0	8.0	\$187,740	0.51
1999	22.0	7.0	\$178,237	0.49
2000	16.0	6.0	\$174,589	0.51

Source: Bureau of Workers' Compensation

As shown in **Table 3-30**, Strongsville CSD’s medical claims, lost time claims, premium costs and experience modifiers have remained relatively stable. Based upon this analysis, it would appear that Strongsville CSD will be able to maintain its group status rating which will allow it to maintain its group experience rating status.

Contractual and Employment Issues

Certain contractual and employment issues that have been assessed and compared to the peer districts are illustrated on the following pages. Because contractual and employment issues directly affect the operating budget, many of the issues have been assessed to show the financial implication on Strongsville CSD. The implementation of any of the following recommendations would require union negotiations.

F3.31 The certificated staff are represented by the Strongsville Education Association (SEA). The current negotiated agreement is set to expire July 31, 2002. **Table 3-31** compares some key contractual issues for the certificated staff at Strongsville CSD and the peer districts.

Table 3-31: Strongsville CSD Certificated Contractual Comparison with Peers

	Strongsville	Brecksville-Broadview Heights	Mason	Solon
Length of work day	7 ½ hours (includes a 30-minute duty free lunch)	Not specifically stated in the contract	7 ½ hours (includes a 30-minute duty free lunch)	7 ¾ hours (includes a 30-minute duty free lunch)
Maximum class size	Not stated in contract	Not specifically stated in the contract	Not specifically stated in the contract	Not specifically stated in the contract
Number of contract days	186.5 days	186.0 days	185.0 days	186.0 days
Instructional days	180.0 days	180.0 days	180.0 days	182.0 days
In-service days	3.5 days	5.0 days	4.0 days	3.0 days
Parent/teacher conferences	2.0 days	1.0 day	1.0 day	1.0 days
Professional development	1.0 day	0.0 day	0.0 day	0.0 day
Maximum number of sick days accrued	Unlimited	Unlimited	220 days	Unlimited
Maximum number of sick days paid out at retirement (percentage of payout)	<u>Retirement:</u> 30% of accumulated sick leave up to 115 days <u>Resignation:</u> 30% of accumulated sick leave up to either 115 or 135 days, depending up years of service ¹	28% of accumulated sick leave up to 77 days and either a \$1,000 lump-sum payment or \$1,000 tax-sheltered annuity	<u>Less than 10 years of service</u> - prorated percentage based upon the number of years <u>After 10 years of service</u> - 25% of accumulated sick leave up to 55 days	100% of accumulated sick leave up to 75 days
Number of years required for severance pay	Retirement: Eligibility under STRS Resignation: Minimum of 15 years (10 years with Strongsville CSD) ¹	Eligibility requirements under STRS	Eligibility requirements under STRS	Eligibility requirements under STRS

Number of personal days	3 days	3 days	3 days	2 days
Notice required	72 hours notice must be given to use any personal leave	120 hours notice must be given to use any personal leave	48 hours notice must be given to use any personal leave	Written notice must be submitted as soon as possible
Number of leave days for association business	7 days per year for OEA/NEA meetings; 4 days for SEA meeting or association business ²	19 days each year for meetings and association business ³	3 days total for annual association meeting and 5 days for the association president	No maximum number of days stated in contract
Sabbatical/Professional leave	May receive one year without pay after five years of service and must return to the district for one year	May receive one year with partial pay after five years of service and must return to the district for one year	May receive one year with partial pay after five years of service and must return to the district for one year	May receive one year with partial pay after five years of service and must return to the district for one year
Number of days to file a grievance	30 calendar days	20 calendar days	30 calendar days	30 school days
Voluntary Professional Growth Program	Yes	No	No	No
Pick-up of Employee STRS Portion by District	Yes	No	No	No
Cost of living increases each year of the contract	FY 1997: 0.00% FY 1998: 3.90% FY 1999: 2.90% FY 2000: 2.90% FY 2001: 3.90% FY 2002: 3.15%	FY 2002: 3.20% FY 2003: 3.30%	FY 2001: 3.00% FY 2002: 3.60% FY 2003: 4.00% FY 2004: 5.00%	FY 2000: 2.50% FY 2001: 3.20% FY 2002: 3.40%
Past practice clause	None stated	None stated	None stated	None stated

Source: Strongsville CSD and peer school district negotiated agreements, interviews and documentation

¹ A certificated employee can also receive a lump-sum severance payment upon resignation if the certificated employee has a minimum of 15 years of service (10 years with Strongsville CSD). See F3.33 for further information regarding the percentages paid upon resignation for a certificated employee’s severance pay.

² In addition, the association can receive an additional three days of leave for association business if it uses all of the seven days and four days already allotted; however, the association is responsible for paying all related substitute costs.

³ In addition, the association can receive an additional five days of leave for association business; however, the association is responsible for paying all related substitute costs.

F3.32 According to the negotiated agreement between Strongsville CSD and the certificated employees, teachers may use sick leave in a variety of circumstances when the circumstance impacts either the teacher or the teacher’s immediate family. The negotiated agreement defines the teacher’s immediate family as the following: spouse, son (in-law), daughter (in-law), sister (in-law), brother (in-law), father (in-law), mother (in-law), grandparent (in-law), grandchild, any individual who raised the teacher in lieu of natural parents and any individual living in the teacher’s house who is related by blood or by marriage. Under the definition, a teacher may use sick leave if a circumstance impacts the teacher or if it impacts one of 20 other relations through blood or marriage.

In comparison, the negotiated agreement with the teachers at Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD does not include any brothers, sisters, in-laws or grandparents in the immediate family definition. However, it permits its employees to use up to five days of sick leave in any one school year for these additional individuals.

R3.10 During future negotiations, Strongsville CSD should consider renegotiating the number of individuals which are included in the immediate family definition. As stated in **F3.22**, the certificated employees appear to use a higher number of sick leave days than Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD and other school districts which have had performance audits. An excessive number of sick leave days used by employees impacts the operations of an organization as well as increases administrative costs. Decreasing the number of individuals in the immediate family definition could decrease sick leave usage within Strongsville CSD, thereby increasing operational efficiencies and decreasing administrative costs. See **R3.7** for a financial implication for the reduction in sick leave.

F3.33 Certificated employees who retire from Strongsville CSD receive severance pay in the amount of 30 percent of total accumulated but unused sick leave at the time of retirement up to a maximum of 115 days. The number of days paid out at the time of retirement is greater than the number paid out by the peer school districts and the minimum standards stated in Ohio Revised Code (ORC) §124.39.

Certificated employees who terminate their employment with Strongsville CSD after 10 years of service with Strongsville CSD and a minimum of 15 years of overall teaching experience will receive severance payment equal to 30 percent of accumulated but unused sick leave up to a maximum of 115 days. However, certificated employees who terminate their employment with a minimum of 15 years of service with Strongsville CSD will receive 30 percent of accumulated sick leave days up to a maximum of 135 days which is more than an employee who retires from Strongsville CSD receives. The peer school districts only give severance pay to those employees who retire.

While ORC §124.39 allows a public entity to pay severance at percentages greater than 25 percent, for more than 30 days and for years of service to be less than 10 at the time of retirement, there is no requirement for a public entity to pay severance pay to an employee who has terminated their employment without retiring.

R3.11 Because the severance pay of a retired employee has a significant effect on a district's overall budget, Strongsville CSD should seek to renegotiate the maximum number of days paid out at retirement for its certificated employees. According to the negotiated agreement, Strongsville CSD employees who retire will receive up to 115 days of severance payment which is greater than the minimum standards stipulated in ORC §124.39 (30 days). Decreasing the number of days could lessen the financial burden on Strongsville CSD. During future negotiations, Strongsville CSD should also negotiate the elimination of the clause which provides severance pay to employees who terminate their employment with Strongsville CSD without retiring.

F3.34 The negotiated agreement between certificated employees and Strongsville CSD includes an early retirement incentive (ERI). Under this program, a teacher can request that Strongsville CSD purchase service credit in the amount of one-fifth of the individual's total service credit or three years of service, whichever is less. The negotiated agreement was offered in the previous four years prior to FY 2002. The **financial systems** section of this report will examine the estimated costs to Strongsville CSD for offering these ERIs.

Under the terms of the ERI, Strongsville CSD must determine if it is "financially feasible" to offer the ERI based upon the number of individuals who want to take part in it. However, the negotiated agreement does not define what is financially feasible, and Strongsville CSD personnel state that it also has not defined what is financially feasible.

R3.12 During future negotiations, Strongsville CSD should consider eliminating any ERI language. While ERIs may generate long-term savings for school districts, districts are often required to expend significant cash outlays at times when they can least afford them.

However, should Strongsville CSD decide to include an ERI in future contracts, it should define what constitutes financially feasible. A clear and concise definition of financial feasibility will ensure that there are no differing opinions between Strongsville CSD and the Strongsville Education Association. In addition, it will assist Strongsville CSD in assessing the costs and benefits and ensuring sufficient financial resources are available for future operations.

F3.35 In an effort to encourage voluntary professional growth among its teachers, Strongsville CSD has implemented a voluntary professional growth program. According to the assistant superintendent, the voluntary professional growth program was first introduced in Strongsville CSD in 1969. The following is the purpose of the voluntary professional growth program, as stated in the negotiated agreement:

"The Voluntary Professional Growth Program seeks to encourage all teachers of the Strongsville City Schools to advance in professional growth beyond those standards set by the State and local school system in ways that provide a benefit to the educational program and students of Strongsville City Schools."

There is no minimum time restriction which limits when a teacher can receive the first voluntary professional growth reward. However, after each reward has been received, subsequent growth periods require a minimum of four consecutive years. No employee can be eligible for more than five professional growth rewards. In order for an employee to receive a professional growth reward, an employee must receive nine points in any one calendar year. **Table 3-32** details the ways which an employee can obtain the professional growth points, a brief description of the area and the maximum number of points which can be obtained within each area.

Table 3-32: Professional Growth Point Activities

Activity	Description	Maximum Points
Professional growth courses, workshops, seminars and meetings	These courses, workshops, seminars and meetings can not be taken for college credit and must be of direct professional benefit to the teacher, students or the school system.	6 points
Professional growth and/or civic activities	Points may be awarded for responsible activities in a professional and/or civic organization if the activities are of direct professional benefit to the teacher or the school system. Civic activities must be undertaken in the City of Strongsville or have demonstrable benefit to the City of Strongsville.	3 points
Instructional and curriculum improvement	No description given within the negotiated agreement.	6 points
Professional writing and individual research	Points may be awarded for published professional writing or for individual research which has been published or has been put to professional use by the school system.	3 points
Educational travel	Points may be awarded for educational travel if it is of substantial and direct benefit to the teacher in the teacher’s subject area.	3 points
Student teacher supervision	One point will be awarded for the supervision of each full-time student teacher.	2 points
Other activities	Points may be awarded if the activities are of direct professional benefit to the teacher, students or the school system.	6 points

Source: Strongsville CSD certificated negotiated agreement

The negotiated agreement indicates that one point is awarded for 15 or more hours spent in approved activities. An evaluation committee was established to evaluate activities and award points; however, the evaluations take place after the activity has been completed. According to Strongsville CSD personnel, the committee only makes approval based upon whether the activity meets the outlined criteria, not based upon if there is any value received by Strongsville CSD from the activity.

Once a professional growth award has been received, the employee continues to receive that reward and any additional rewards for as long as the individual is an employee at Strongsville CSD. During FY 2001, a total of 131 employees received voluntary professional growth rewards. The total amount of compensation paid for voluntary professional growth in FY 2001 was \$385,141 which is an average of \$2,940 per employee who received a reward.

R3.13 Although the concept of a voluntary professional growth program could be beneficial because it encourages involvement in the community, there are certain parameters of the program which should be strengthened in order to meet its objectives. During future negotiations, Strongsville CSD should seek to renegotiate the voluntary professional growth program.

While the purpose of the voluntary professional growth program is to provide a benefit to Strongsville CSD, there appears to be no mechanism in place to ensure that the activities are providing a benefit since the activities are being approved after the fact. Therefore, employees who are wanting to participate in an activity towards credit in the voluntary professional growth program should be required to submit an application for approval. The application should detail a description of the activity; the proposed benefit to the teacher, Strongsville CSD or students; and the estimated length of time spent in each activity. After the activity has been completed, the teacher should be required to submit a report to the evaluation committee detailing the benefit obtained from participation in the activity as well as how involvement in this activity will assist the teacher, Strongsville CSD or students. Should Strongsville CSD renegotiate the voluntary professional growth program, the make-up of the evaluation committee may also need to be addressed to give Strongsville CSD personnel more representation.

Strongsville CSD should also limit the number of activities which can be completed in order to obtain professional growth program points. Activities which should not be considered include, but are not limited to the following:

- Continuing education credit classes or seminars which would qualify for renewal of a teachers' licence but does not qualify for teachers to move on the salary schedule;
- Community or civic activities that do not align with the educational goals of Strongsville CSD; and
- Educational travel.

Limiting the number of activities which can be completed will increase the likelihood that a direct benefit will be received by teachers, Strongsville CSD and students.

F3.36 **Table 3-33** indicates the contractual provisions pertaining to the evaluation process for Strongsville CSD and the peer districts.

Table 3-33: Peer Comparison of Evaluation Processes

	Strongsville ¹	Brecksville-Broadview Heights ²	Mason ¹	Solon
Frequency of Evaluations				
Limited Contract Teachers	Annually	Annually	Each year when the teachers contract expires	Annually
Continuing Contract Teachers	Every other year	Annually	Every three years	Annually
Is there a process for poor performing teachers other than the steps required by the ORC as part of the non-renewal process?	No formal process	No formal process	No formal process	No formal process
Are unannounced observations permitted?	Yes	Not stated in the contract	No	Not stated in the contract
Are evaluation forms included in the contract?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source: Strongsville CSD and peer district negotiated agreements; interviews

¹ Each evaluation process at Strongsville CSD and Mason CSD includes at least two observed evaluations.

² Each evaluation process at Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD includes a combination of observations and written evaluations.

While Strongsville CSD appears to have adequate procedures in place for evaluating its certificated employees, there is no formal process in place to assist poor performing teachers. Springfield Local School District in Summit County has developed and implemented a program called Teacher Performance Assistant Procedures (TPAP). The TPAP program is a tool that is used by Springfield Local School District to help teachers with areas where they have deficiencies. It consists of a volunteer group of teachers and an administrative staff member who will assist the teacher in the areas where they need improvement.

R3.14 Strongsville CSD should consider developing and implementing a program such as the TPAP program at Springfield Local School District. Not only does this type of program let a teacher now know where their deficiencies exist, but it also assists them in correcting the deficiency. Strongsville CSD should also consider contacting personnel at Springfield Local School District for assistance in developing, implementing and using the TPAP program in order to gain the optimal benefits. The District may also want to consider the Path Wise teaching domains in its efforts to improve teacher performance.

F3.37 Article 14 (K) in the certificated negotiated agreement states that a teacher may be required to serve as a substitute during the planning/conference period for no more than two times per year. After the first two occurrences of serving as a period substitute, the teacher will be compensated at the rate of .0027 of the bachelors degree base salary for each 20 minute increment or portion thereof.

R3.15 During future negotiations, Strongsville CSD should clarify the intent of the language within Article 14 (K). Based upon the language of the contract, it is difficult to understand if a “period” is a class period or if a “period” is each 20 minute increment. The current language could lead to confusion between Strongsville CSD management and certificated personnel.

F3.38 Article 14 (L) states that “all teachers will be required to have their classrooms open and ready to receive pupils” at least 15 minutes prior to the start of the school day. The contract further states that teachers may leave at the conclusion of their regular day. If all teachers were to leave at the end of the regular school day, Strongsville CSD may not have adequate adult supervision after school.

R3.16 Strongsville CSD should review the language within Article 14 (L) and determine if it should be addressed during future negotiations. Failure to require teachers to stay for a period of time at the end of the day could result in Strongsville CSD not having adequate adult supervision for those students who are still at school.

F3.39 In Article 14 (N), Strongsville CSD has the right to assign teachers to supervisory duties. Article 14 (N) specifically states certain times of the day when a teacher cannot be assigned supervisory duties; however, the current language does not specifically state when a teacher can be assigned the additional supervisory duties.

R3.17 During future negotiations, Strongsville CSD should address and clarify the language within Article 14 (N). The language of this article should be clarified to state when a teacher can be assigned supervisory duties and ensure that the language precludes a teacher’s regular classroom duties from being interrupted.

F3.40 Strongsville CSD offers an attendance incentive to its certificated employees for having “exemplary attendance” during each quarter. According to the negotiated agreement, “exemplary attendance” is defined as no use of sick leave or personal leave. For each quarter which a certificated employee has perfect attendance, the employee will receive a merit incentive award of \$150. A part-time employee who has perfect attendance will receive a merit-incentive award of \$75 for each quarter.

R3.18 Strongsville CSD should perform an analysis on the costs and benefits of continuing its current attendance incentive. As illustrated in **F3.22**, the leave usage for certificated employees is higher than the leave usage of certificated employees at Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD which would indicate that the attendance incentive is not effective. Strongsville CSD should ensure that the attendance incentive offered to its certificated employees provides a savings to Strongsville CSD while continuing to provide an incentive to the employees to limit their leave usage. Strongsville CSD should use the information from the cost-benefit analysis as part of the negotiation process for renewal of the negotiated agreement with its certificated employees.

F3.41 The classified staff are represented by the Ohio Association of Public School Employees (OAPSE), Local 290 and Local 028. The current negotiated agreement is set to expire July 31, 2002. **Table 3-34** compares some key contractual issues for classified staff at Strongsville CSD and the peer districts.

Table 3-34: Strongsville CSD Classified Contractual Comparison with Peers

	Strongsville	Brecksville-Broadview Heights	Mason ¹	Solon
Evaluations required	No	Yes	Yes	No
Minimum call-in hours paid to employees for emergencies	Minimum of 2 hours	Minimum of 2 hours	Not stated in contract	Minimum of 2 hours
Vacation time to accumulate	1-6 years: 10 days 7-12 years: 15 days 12-19 years: 20 days 20+ years: 25 days	1-4 years: 10 days 5-9 years: 15 days 10-11 years: 17 days 12-14 years: 19 days 15-17 years: 21 days 18-19 years: 22 days 20-21 years: 23 days 22-23 years: 24 days 24-29 years: 25 days 30+ years: 30 days	1-9 years: 10 days 10-19 years: 15 days 20+ years: 20 days	10 months: 10 days 57 months: 15 days 141 months: 20 days 237 months: 25 days
Sick/personal leave incentive	\$100 per quarter that an employee has perfect attendance	An employee will receive a semi-annual attendance incentive based upon the hours worked and the number of sick days used per 6-month period.	None	An employee who uses three sick leave days or less each calendar year will receive one day of unrestricted personal leave
Maximum number of sick days accrued	320 days	Unlimited	224 days	Unlimited

	Strongsville	Brecksville-Broadview Heights	Mason ¹	Solon
Maximum number of sick days paid out at retirement (percentage of payout)	30% of accumulated days up to 96 days plus a retirement incentive	28% of accumulated sick leave up to 83 days and either a \$1,000 lump sum payment or a \$1,000 tax-sheltered annuity	25% of accumulated days up to 56 days	100% of accumulated days up to 100 days plus an additional 25% of accumulated days up to a maximum of 150 days
Number of years required for severance pay	Eligibility requirements of SERS	Eligibility requirements of SERS	10 or more years with the district	Eligibility requirements of SERS
Number of personal days	3 days	3 days	3 days	3 days
Notice required	72 hours notice must be given to use any personal leave	120 hours notice must be given to use any personal leave	48 hours notice must be given to use any personal leave	120 hours notice must be given to use any personal leave
Number of holidays paid for 12-month employees	11 holidays ²	12 holidays	11 holidays	13 holidays
Number of holidays paid for less than 12-month employees	8 holidays	9 holidays	7 holidays	10 holidays
Number of days to file a grievance	14 calendar days	No minimum number of days stated in contract	No minimum number of days stated in contract	5 work days after informal meeting with supervisor
Labor-Management Committee	Yes	Yes	No	No
Pick-up of Employee SERS Portion by District	Yes	No	No	No
Cost of living increases each year of the contract	FY 1998: 3.1% FY 1999: 3.9% FY 2000: 2.9% FY 2001: 2.9% FY 2002: 3.9%	CY 2000: 3.0% ³ CY 2001: 3.0% ³ CY 2002: 4.0% ³ CY 2003: 4.0% ³	FY 2000: 3.0% FY 2001: 3.0% FY 2002: 4.0% FY 2003: 4.0% FY 2004: 5.0%	FY 2000: 2.7% FY 2001: 2.7% FY 2002: 2.7%

Source: Strongsville CSD and peer school district negotiated agreements, interviews and documentation

¹ Mason CSD had a classified staff handbook rather than a negotiated agreement with its classified personnel.

² Strongsville CSD pays its 11- and 12-month employees 11 paid holidays each year.

³ The negotiated agreement for the classified employees at Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD is for calendar years rather than fiscal years.

F3.42 The negotiated agreement between the classified employees and Strongsville CSD does not require evaluations to be conducted on the classified employees. However, Strongsville CSD personnel stated that evaluations are conducted on all classified employees while they are on probation as well as on an annual basis for all other classified employees.

F3.43 As indicated in **Table 3-34**, Strongsville CSD offers an attendance incentive to its classified employees for having “exemplary attendance” during each quarter. According to the negotiated agreement, “exemplary attendance” is defined as no use of sick leave or personal leave and no occurrences of unpaid absences. For each quarter which a classified employee

has perfect attendance, the employee will receive a merit incentive award of \$100. A part-time employee who has perfect attendance will receive a merit-incentive award of \$50 for each quarter.

R3.19 Strongsville CSD should perform an analysis on the costs and benefits of continuing its current attendance incentive. As illustrated in **F3.23**, the leave usage among classified employees appears to be comparable with the leave usage at Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD. However, Strongsville CSD should ensure that the attendance incentive offered to classified employees provides a savings to Strongsville CSD while continuing to provide an incentive to classified employees to limit their leave usage. Strongsville CSD should use the information from the cost-benefit analysis as part of the negotiation process for renewal of the negotiated agreement with its classified employees.

F3.44 According to the negotiated agreements, Strongsville CSD classified employees receive 30 percent of total accumulated and unused sick leave days. The total number of accumulated, unused sick leave days which a classified employee can accumulate is 320 days. Therefore, assuming an employee retires with an accumulated basis of 320 days, a Strongsville CSD classified employee would receive 96 days of severance pay. This is the second highest when compared to the maximum number of days paid by the peer districts. Furthermore, ORC §124.39 stipulates that the minimum number of days which a public entity should pay for severance should be 30 days.

R3.20 Because the severance pay of a retired employee has a significant effect on a district's overall budget, Strongsville CSD should seek to renegotiate the maximum number of days paid out at retirement for its classified employees. According to the negotiated agreement, Strongsville CSD employees who retire will receive up to 96 days of severance payment which is greater than the minimum standards stipulated in ORC §124.39 (30 days) and greater than the maximum number of days paid at Brecksville-Broadview Heights CSD and Solon CSD. Decreasing the number of days could lessen the financial burden on Strongsville CSD.

F3.45 The negotiated agreement with the classified employees establishes a labor management committee to meet on a monthly basis to "discuss matters of common interest." Strongsville CSD personnel have indicated that the labor management committee meets every month and is very effective in functioning as a problem-solving committee.

C3.3 An effective labor management committee creates an avenue of open communication between employees and management. Furthermore, it assists in having a positive effect on the general morale of Strongsville CSD, informs management of potential contractual problems and involves bargaining unit members in managerial discussions when developing Strongsville CSD policies.

F3.46 In addition to the contractual issues for classified staff which were identified in **Table 3-34**, there are certain contractual issues which apply specifically to facilities personnel and transportation personnel. **Table 3-35a** compares some key contractual issues for the facilities personnel at Strongsville CSD and the peer districts.

Table 3-35a: Comparison of Custodial and Maintenance Contract Provisions

Issue	Strongsville	Brecksville-Broadview Heights	Mason	Solon
Work Day Schedule	Monday-Friday; Start and end times determined by district management Net work hours: 8	Monday-Friday; Supervisor determines the start and end times Net work hours: 8	Schedule of working hours and days determined by Supervisor Net work hours not available	Monday-Friday; Contract states times for each shift Net work hours: 7.5 - 8, depending on shift
Lunch and Breaks	Contract silent	Lunch: unpaid 30 minutes Breaks: 2 paid 15 minute breaks	Handbook silent.	Lunch: unpaid 30 minutes if start time is before 12 noon. After 12 noon, 30 minute paid lunch Breaks: contract silent
Calamity Day Work Requirement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Calamity Day Compensation	8 hours at regular rate of pay plus straight time for all hours worked	regular hourly rate plus an additional amount equal to 1.5 times the regular hourly rate for hours worked.	Regular rate of pay	Time and one-half plus the hourly rate.
Overtime Eligibility	Hours worked in excess of 40 hours/week.	All hours worked in excess of 8 hours/day OR 40 hours/week	Hours worked in excess of 40 hours/week.	Hours worked in excess of 40 hours/week.
Overtime Rates	Weekdays and Saturday: 1.5 times regular hourly rate Sunday: 1.5 times regular hourly rate paid whether or not the employee exceeds 40 hours in that week	Week days and Saturday: 1.5 times regular hourly rate Sunday: 2 times regular hourly rate Holidays: 1.5 times regular hourly rate plus pay received for the holiday	1.5 times the hourly wage for overtime worked anytime	Week days and Saturday: 1.5 times regular hourly rate Sundays: 2 times the regular hourly rate Holidays: 2 times the regular hourly rate
Minimum Call In Pay	2 hours paid at applicable rate except for building checks (1 hour at the applicable rate)	2 hours pay at straight time, unless eligible for overtime pay	Handbook silent	2 hours paid at the appropriate rate.
Filling Vacancies and Granting Promotions	The most senior and most qualified employee applicant: final decision reserved to administration	Superintendent makes the final decision Consideration is based on qualifications, skills, ability to perform work and prior job performance	Position will be filled with the most qualified applicant	Seniority, qualifications
Ability to Subcontract	Contract silent	Contract Silent	Handbook silent	Yes

Source: Strongsville CSD and peer district negotiated agreements; interviews

F3.47 Based on **Table 3-35a**, there does not appear to be any contractual provisions in place that would have significant, adverse effects on custodial and maintenance operations at Strongsville CSD. Many of the negotiated terms are in line with the peers, while some contractual provisions augment Strongsville CSD's ability to appropriately manage its workforce, including the following:

- **Overtime:** Two of the three peer districts award overtime compensation in a manner consistent with Strongsville CSD. Awarding overtime compensation only for hours worked in excess of 40 per week ensures that special circumstances such as department meetings or custodial/maintenance emergencies do not necessarily incur additional expenses.
- **Filling Vacancies:** Although seniority is a factor in filling vacancies, final hiring decisions are reserved to Strongsville CSD's administration, which allows for informed decisions based on qualifications in relation to job requirements.
- **Calamity Day Work Requirement:** Strongsville CSD requires its custodial and maintenance employees to work on calamity days, which ensures that appropriate custodial and preventive maintenance tasks can be performed when school buildings are not occupied by teachers and students. However, Strongsville CSD pays straight time on top of an automatic eight hours of pay for employees working calamity days. This may incur additional costs for Strongsville CSD.

Although it appears that no provisions of the contract would have significant, adverse effects on custodial and maintenance operations at Strongsville CSD, the District should be cognizant of potentially problematic areas. For example, Strongsville CSD requires its custodial and maintenance employees to work on calamity days, which ensures that appropriate custodial and preventive maintenance tasks can be performed when school buildings are not occupied by teachers and students. However, Strongsville CSD pays straight time on top of an automatic eight hours of pay for employees working calamity days, which may incur additional costs. Strongsville CSD should consider establishing all custodial and maintenance personnel as essential employees and only paying straight time for actual hours worked on calamity days.

F3.48 In addition to the contractual issues for classified staff which were identified in **Table 3-34**, there are certain contractual issues that apply specifically to transportation personnel. **Table 3-35b** compares some key contractual issues for the transportation personnel at Strongsville CSD and the peer districts.

Table 3-35b: Comparison of Transportation Contract Provisions

	Strongsville	Brecksville-Broadview Heights	Mason	Solon
Number of Guaranteed Hours				
Bus Drivers	2-2.5 hours per run, depending on seniority ¹	4 hours; 6 hours for drivers with midday run	Not stated	4 hours; 6 hours for drivers with midday run
Monitors/Aides	2 hours per run	2 hours per run	Not stated	None
Substitutes	2 hours per run	None	Not stated	None
Pre-trip, fueling and cleaning	15 minutes plus 10 minutes per additional session (morning, afternoon, midday)	15-30 minutes, included in guaranteed hours	Not stated	15 minutes, included in guaranteed hours
Overtime	Hours worked in excess of 40 hours week	Hours worked in excess of 8 per day or 40 per week	Hours worked in excess of 40 hours week	Hours worked in excess of 40 hours week
Route Bidding				
Annual	Seniority	Seniority	Seniority	Seniority
Vacancy	Seniority	Seniority	Seniority	Seniority
Trips	Rotating based on seniority	Rotating based on seniority	Not stated	Rotating based on seniority
Number of Guaranteed Benefit Hours				
Sick Leave	1.25 days per month, prorated on hours worked per week	1.25 days per month	1.25 days per month, prorated on hours worked per week	1.25 days per month, prorated on hours worked per week
Personal Leave	3 days	3 days	3 days	3 days
Vacation	None	None	None	None
Miscellaneous				
Use of Vans	Teachers or coaches can drive 1 van to an event. If more than 1 van is required, a bus will be used.	Can be used for 7 or fewer passengers, no more than 1 van	Not stated	Can be used for 7 or fewer passengers, no more than 1 van
Probation Period	12 months	6 months	90 days	90 days
Employment Forum	Transportation Advisory Council, Labor Management Committee	Communications Forum	None	Labor Management Committee
Ability to Sub-contract	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated	No

Source: Strongsville CSD and peer district negotiated agreements; interviews

¹ Regular drivers with seniority in the top 50 percent are guaranteed 2.5 hours. Regular drivers with seniority not in the top 50 percent are guaranteed two hours. All midday routes are guaranteed 2 hours regardless of seniority.

F3.49 Based on **Table 3-35b**, there are no contractual provisions in place that would have a significant, adverse effect on transportation operations at Strongsville CSD. Most of the provisions in the classified contract governing transportation are directly in line with the peers. Some of the provisions in the contract allow Strongsville CSD to appropriately manage its workforce, including the following:

- **Overtime:** Two of the three peer districts award overtime compensation in a manner consistent with Strongsville CSD. Awarding overtime compensation only for hours worked in excess of 40 per week ensures that special circumstances such as department meetings and field trips do not necessarily incur additional expenses.
- **Probation Period:** Strongsville CSD's classified contract establishes a longer probationary period for new employees than the peer contracts. A longer probationary period provides ample time for new employees to learn job functions while allowing management to adequately assess the performance of new employees.
- **Employment Forum:** Strongsville CSD's use of the Transportation Advisory Council to address non-contractual employee issues in transportation allows management to foster better relations with bargaining unit staff while developing and maintaining consensus on problems and solutions.

Although no provisions of the contract have significant, adverse effects on transportation operations, Strongsville CSD should be cognizant of potentially problematic areas within the contract. For example, although the average bus driver at Strongsville CSD works approximately 5.8 hours per day, which is more than the guarantee for most drivers, the practice of guaranteeing hours could potentially incur additional costs. Transportation managers should continue to monitor actual hours worked by bus drivers and aides to ensure that employees are not inappropriately compensated.

Another area of potential concern is the time allotment for fueling and cleaning. Strongsville CSD bus drivers receive between 25 - 35 minutes for fueling, cleaning, pre-trip inspections and other miscellaneous functions. Although such an allowance is not uncommon, there are management controls or contract language that could potentially be used to ensure that these functions are fulfilled.

Financial Implications Summary

The following table is a summary of estimated annual savings from the above recommendations. Strongsville CSD should consider reallocating a portion of the **Estimated Annual Cost Savings** to cover the **Estimated Implementation Costs** related to hiring additional teachers. Although this would reduce the total amount of cost savings that could be realized by Strongsville CSD, it could assist the District in meeting its educational goals. The financial implications are divided into two groups: those that are not subject to negotiations and those that are. Implementation of those recommendations subject to negotiation would require agreement of the affected bargaining units.

Summary of Financial Implications Not Subject to Negotiations

Recommendation	Estimated Annual Cost Savings	Estimated Implementation Costs
R3.2 Reduction in clerical personnel	\$372,000	
R3.3 Reduction in teaching aide personnel	\$624,000	
R3.3 Reduction in student-to-teacher ratio by hiring additional teachers		\$697,000
R3.7 Reduction in certificated sick leave usage	\$74,460	
Total	\$1,070,460	\$697,000

Summary of Financial Implications Subject to Negotiations

Recommendation	Estimated Annual Cost Savings
R3.8 Renegotiation of dental insurance premiums	\$151,700
R3.9 Increasing employee insurance co-pay	\$348,100
R3.9 Increasing co-pay on generic and brand-named drugs	\$214,000
Total	\$713,800

Conclusion Statement

The overall staffing levels at Strongsville CSD are comparable to or lower than the peer school districts, lower than the peer average, and lower than the statewide average. However, there are two classifications, clerical and teaching aides, which have higher staffing levels when compared to the peer districts and the peer averages. The ratios of clerical personnel per 1,000 ADM and clerical personnel to total administrative personnel are higher than the peer districts and the peer average. Also, the ratio of total district personnel to total clerical personnel is the lowest when compared to the peer districts and the peer average. These three ratios would indicate that Strongsville CSD could make reductions in the clerical classification. However, Strongsville CSD's student-to-teacher ratio is above the State average. If clerical and aide reductions are made, Strongsville CSD may be able to reallocate resources from these classifications to its regular teaching classification to increase staffing in that area and be more in line with the State average.

Under the current negotiated agreements, middle and high school teachers are only required to have five class assignments each day. Middle school teachers have one team planning period and two planning/conference periods while the high school teacher have two planning/conference periods. Duty periods are supervised by teaching aides. During future negotiations, Strongsville CSD should consider increasing the number of class periods for middle and high school teachers to six periods per day. This will allow Strongsville CSD to increase the amount of student contact time spent in the classroom educating students. In addition, Strongsville CSD may also be able to use some of its teachers to supervise a duty period each day which could allow Strongsville CSD to potentially reduce the number of teaching aides it uses.

A review of the medical insurance premiums at Strongsville CSD indicates that the monthly premiums are higher than the average premiums reported by SERB; however, the monthly premiums are lower than the peer districts. Strongsville CSD's monthly dental insurance premiums are higher than the monthly premiums reported by SERB and higher than the peer districts. Some full-time employees at Strongsville CSD are required to pay a fixed monthly co-pay each month towards the monthly medical and dental insurance premiums. Strongsville CSD should consider requiring all employees to contribute at least 10 percent for medical and dental insurance premiums. This will assist Strongsville CSD in dealing with rising health care costs as well as reducing its operating costs. It should also examine the current benefits offered in its dental and prescription insurance plans and determine if the current high level of benefits should be renegotiated. Offering a level of benefits more consistent with the peers would decrease Strongsville CSD's premiums as well as overall operating costs.

During future negotiations, Strongsville CSD should consider renegotiating some of its contractual provisions. Some of the issues which Strongsville CSD should address during future negotiations are as follows: the number of individuals included in the immediate family definition when using sick leave; the total number of days allowed to be accumulated and paid for certificated and

classified employees' severance pay; the policy of giving severance pay to employees who resign without retiring; the language of the early retirement incentive and the parameters of the voluntary professional growth program. Addressing these contractual provisions will assist Strongsville CSD in either reducing operating costs or implementing additional controls and procedures over its operating costs