

**SOUTHERN COLUMBIA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
CATAWISSA, PENNSYLVANIA**

**MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS (MD&A)
Required Supplementary Information (RSI)
June 30, 2003**

The discussion and analysis of Southern Columbia Area District's financial performance provides an overall review of the District's financial activities for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2003. The intent of this discussion and analysis is to look at the District's financial performance as a whole; readers should also review the notes to the basic financial statements and financial statements themselves to enhance their understanding of the District's financial performance.

The Management Discussion and Analysis (MD&A) is an element of the new reporting model adopted by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) in their Statement No. 34 Basic Financial Statements – and Management's Discussion and Analysis – for State and Local Governments issued June 1999. Certain comparative information between the current year and the prior year is required to be presented in the MD&A. However, because this is the first year of implementing the new reporting model, certain necessary comparative information of the previous year was not prepared. Considering the financial resources necessary to prepare this information for the prior year, and that the GASB Statement No. 34 permits the omission of the comparative information in the first year of adoption of the new reporting model, the District has elected to exclude the information in this report. Subsequent reports, however, will include the comparative information.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

In November 2001, the electorate of the Southern Columbia Area School District approved a referendum implementing the provisions of Act 50 of 1998. Under Act 50 the District may not increase total local budgeted tax revenue (Real Estate, Earned Income, and Realty Transfer taxes) by a percentage greater than the increase in the Statewide Average Weekly Wage as determined by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry.

Implementation began with this fiscal year and required the repeal of the Per Capita, Occupational Assessment, and Occupational Privilege taxes. In addition, the Earned Income Tax rate was increased from 0.5% to 1.5%. Employers located outside the District's boundaries have been slow to withhold the additional earned income tax as it impacts their payroll systems and complicates payroll processing for their employees. We estimate that as of December 31, 2002, only 56% of employers were withholding the full amount from employee's wages and remitting it to the District's appointed tax collector causing somewhat unpredictable cash flows. The District was able to rely on unrestricted net asset reserves to even out the cash flow needs throughout the fiscal year. Going forward, operating under the Act 50 local tax system will continue to be a challenge as revenues are limited, whereas many expenditures are dictated by state or federal regulations.

Overall, revenues were greater than expected due primarily to higher reimbursement for pupil transportation services the District provides. Expenditures were less than anticipated in areas of instruction, administration and student activities. At the time of budget adoption, the District anticipated utilizing approximately \$600,000 of unrestricted net assets for governmental

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activities during the fiscal year. Due to higher revenues and limited expenditures, only \$265,000 was utilized.

OVERVIEW OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Government-wide Statements

The government-wide statements report information about the District as a whole using accounting methods similar to those used by private-sector companies. The statement of net assets includes all of the government's assets and liabilities. All of the current year's revenues and expenses are accounted for in the statement of activities regardless of when cash is received or paid.

The two government-wide statements report the District's net assets and how they have changed. Net assets, the difference between the District's assets and liabilities, are one way to measure the District's financial health or position.

Over time, increases or decreases in the District's net assets are an indication of whether its financial health is improving or deteriorating, respectively. The proper amount of unrestricted net assets held by school districts is the subject of current debate within the Pennsylvania General Assembly. The Southern Columbia Area School District has set targets for unrestricted net assets over the next three years that will be in line with current legislation likely to be adopted.

The government-wide financial statements of the District are divided into two categories:

- Governmental activities – All of the District's basic services are included here, such as instruction, administration and community services. Property taxes and state and federal subsidies and grants finance most of these activities.
- Business type activities –The District operates a food service operation and charges fees to staff, students and visitors to help it cover the costs of the food service operation.

Fund Financial Statements

The District's fund financial statements provide detailed information about the most significant funds – not the District as a whole. Some funds are required by state law and by bond requirements.

Governmental funds – Most of the District's activities are reported in governmental funds, which focus on the determination of financial position and change in financial position, not on income determination. They are reported using an accounting method called modified accrual accounting, which measures cash and all other financial assets

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that can readily be converted to cash. The governmental fund statements provide a detailed short-term view of the District's operations and the services it provides. Governmental fund information helps the reader determine whether there are more or fewer financial resources that can be spent in the near future to finance the District's programs. The relationship (or differences) between governmental activities (reported in the Statement of Net Assets and the Statement of Activities) and governmental funds is reconciled in the financial statements.

Proprietary funds – These funds are used to account for the District activities that are similar to business operations in the private sector; or where the reporting is on determining net income, financial position, changes in financial position, and a significant portion of funding through user charges. When the District charges customers for services it provides – whether to outside customers or to other units in the District – these services are generally reported in proprietary funds. The Food Service Fund is the District's proprietary fund and is the same as the business-type activities we report in the government-wide statements, but provide more detail and additional information, such as cash flows.

Fiduciary funds - The District is the trustee, or fiduciary, for some scholarship and student activity funds. All of the District's fiduciary activities are report in separate Statements of Fiduciary Net Assets. We exclude these activities from the District's other financial statement because the District cannot use these assets to finance its operations.

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FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF THE DISTRICT AS A WHOLE

The District's total net assets were \$6,498,571 at June 30, 2003 as detailed in Table A-1 below.

Table A-1
Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2003
Net Assets

	<u>Governmental</u> <u>Activities</u>	<u>Business-type</u> <u>Activities</u>	<u>Total</u>
Current and other assets	\$3,823,122	\$107,330	\$3,930,452
Capital assets	<u>10,858,748</u>	<u>55750</u>	<u>10,914,496</u>
Total assets	\$14,681,870	\$163,080	\$14,844,950
Current and other liabilities	1,627,935	18,407	1,646,342
Long-term liabilities	<u>6,695,807</u>	<u>4,230</u>	<u>6,700,037</u>
Total Liabilities	\$8,323,742	\$22,637	\$8,346,379
Net Assets			
Invested in capital assets, net of related debt	4,173,748	55,750	4,229,498
Restricted	843,738	--	843,738
Unrestricted	<u>1,340,642</u>	<u>84,693</u>	<u>1,425,335</u>
Total Net Assets	<u>\$6,358,128</u>	<u>\$140,443</u>	<u>\$6,498,571</u>

Most of the District's net assets are invested in capital assets (buildings, land, and equipment). The restricted net assets are those set aside for future capital purchases or projects planned by the District. The remaining unrestricted net assets are available for future purchases or as reserves to enhance the financial strength of the District.

The results of this year's operations as a whole are reported in the Statement of Activities. All expenses are reported in the first column. Specific charges, grants, revenues and subsidies that directly relate to specific expense categories are represented to determine the final amount of the District's activities that are supported by other general revenues. The two largest general revenues are the Basic Education Subsidy provided by the State of Pennsylvania, and the local taxes assessed to community taxpayers.

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Table A-2 takes the information from that Statement, rearranges it slightly, so you can see our total revenues for the year.

Table A-2
Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2003
Changes in Net Assets

	<u>Governmental Activities</u>	<u>Business- type Activities</u>	<u>Total</u>
Revenues			
Program revenues			
Charges for services	\$49,553	\$294,138	343,691
Operating grants and contributions	2,789,783	136,954	2,926,737
General revenues			
Property & other taxes	6,069,151	--	6,069,151
Grants, subsidies and contributions, unrestricted	3,424,211	--	3,424,211
Other	<u>320,027</u>	<u>1,279</u>	<u>321,306</u>
Total revenues	<u>\$12,652,725</u>	<u>\$432,371</u>	<u>\$13,085,096</u>
Expenses			
Instruction	\$8,128,960	--	\$8,128,960
Instructional student support	1,017,895	--	1,017,895
Administrative and financial support	1,047,296	--	1,047,296
Operation and maintenance of plant	1,043,677	--	1,043,677
Pupil transportation	938,254	--	938,254
Student activities	342,708	--	342,078
Community services	92,749	--	92,749
Interest on long-term debt	306,148	--	306,148
Food Services	--	<u>450,270</u>	<u>450,270</u>
Total expenses	<u>\$12,917,687</u>	<u>\$450,270</u>	<u>\$13,367,957</u>
Increase (decrease) in net assets	<u>(\$264,962)</u>	<u>\$(18,899)</u>	<u>(\$282,861)</u>

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The tables below present the expenses of both the Governmental Activities and the Business-type Activities of the District.

Table A-3 shows the District's eight largest functions - instructional programs, instructional student support, administrative, operation and maintenance of plant, pupil transportation, student activities, community services, food service as well as each program's net cost (total cost less revenues generated by the activities). This table also shows the net costs offset by the other unrestricted grants, subsidies and contributions to show the remaining financial needs supported by local taxes and other miscellaneous revenues.

Table A-3
Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2003
Governmental Activities

<u>Functions/Programs</u>	<u>Total Cost of Services</u>	<u>Net Cost of Services</u>
Instruction	\$8,128,960	\$6,563,887
Instructional student support	1,017,895	987,850
Administrative	1,047,296	1,026,347
Operation and maintenance	1,043,677	1,029,547
Pupil transportation	938,254	189,797
Student activities	342,708	292,306
Community services	92,749	(6,541)
Interest on long-term debt	<u>306,148</u>	<u>(4,842)</u>
Total governmental activities	\$12,917,687	\$10,078,351
Less:		
Unrestricted grants, subsidies		<u>3,424,211</u>
Total needs from local Taxes and other revenues		<u>\$6,654,140</u>

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Table A-4 reflects the activities of the Food Service program, the only Business-type activity of the District.

Table A-4
Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2003
Business-type Activities

<u>Functions/Programs</u>	<u>Total Cost of Services</u>	<u>Net Cost of Services</u>
Food Services	\$450,270	\$19,178
Less:		
Investment earnings		<u>1,279</u>
Total business-type activities		<u>\$17,371</u>

The Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Fund Net Assets for this proprietary fund will further detail the actual results of operations.

THE DISTRICT FUNDS

At June 30, 2003, the District governmental funds reported a combined fund balance of \$2,741,748, which is a decrease of \$207,597.

General Fund Budget

During the fiscal year, the Board of School Directors (The Board) authorizes revisions to the original budget to accommodate differences from the original budget to the actual expenditures of the District. A schedule showing the District's original and final budget amounts compared with amounts actually paid and received is provided in the Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance, Budget and Actual.

The District applies for federal, state, and local grants and these grants cannot always be anticipated in the budgeting process. Budgeted revenues increased \$505,190 as a result of additional approved grants.

Budgeted expenditures also increased this same amount to compensate for the additional approved grants. Transfers between specific categories of expenditures/financing uses occur during the year. The most significant transfers occur from the budget reserve category to specific expenditure areas.

The Budgetary Reserve includes amounts to be used to fund unforeseen expenditures or to take advantage of financial opportunities that may present themselves during the year.

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Capital Reserve Fund

The District does not formally adopt a budget for the Capital Reserve Fund but maintains and annually updates a list of capital and major maintenance projects anticipated over the next five years. Except for major construction projects, the District utilizes the Capital Reserve Fund to pay for these needs. The primary source of funds for the Capital Reserve Fund is a budgeted transfer from the General Fund on an annual basis.

CAPITAL ASSET AND DEBT ADMINISTRATION

Capital Assets

At June 30, 2003, the District had \$10,858,748 invested in a broad range of capital assets, including land, site improvements, infrastructure, buildings and furniture and equipment. This amount represents a net decrease (including additions, deletions and depreciation) of \$332,105.

Table A-5
Governmental Activities
Capital assets - net of depreciation

	2002	2003
Land	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
Site Improvements	164,972	163,297
Infrastructure	149,811	145,187
Buildings	9,824,659	9,471,424
Furniture & Equipment	1,026,412	1,053,840

The District did not have any significant additions in capital assets.

Debt Administration

As of July 1, 2002, the District had total outstanding bond principal of \$7,100,000. During the year, the District paid principal in the amount of \$605,000 and, in addition, refinanced the Series of 1998 in order to obtain present value savings of \$164,113 over the life of the Issue. The outstanding bonded debt as of June 30, 2003 is \$6,685,000.

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Outstanding Debt

	2002	2003
General Obligation Bonds:		
- Bonds, Series of 1998	\$3,865,000	-
- Bonds, Series of 2001	3,235,000	2,635,000
- Bonds, Series of 2003	-	\$4,050,000

Other obligations include accrued vacation pay and sick leave for specific employees of the District. More detailed information about our long-term liabilities is included in Note 9 to the financial statements.

ECONOMIC FACTORS AND NEXT YEAR'S BUDGET AND RATES

The District experiences slow but steady growth in both property assessments and residents. The 2003-04 General Fund Budget, adopted in June 2003, increases budgeted expenditures 4.0% over the 2002-03 fiscal year. Budgeted revenue increases 5.5% including the maximum permitted increase under the Act 50 local tax system. The budget "gap" or difference between expenditures and revenues is \$449,039 and consists of contingencies, one-time expenditures and a portion of operational costs that are covered through the use of the District's unrestricted net assets.

Historically, the actual financial results of a given fiscal year show higher revenues than forecast and lower expenditures than budgeted. Given this fact, the Board Finance Committee established the following goals for the budget gap over a 3-year period. Achieving these goals will stabilize the District's unrestricted net assets at a level that will ensure a strong financial position for the future. The targets are as follows:

Target for 2003-04	\$586,085	(target met for 2003-04)
Target for 2004-05	\$411,085	
Target for 2005-06	\$236,085	

CONTACTING THE DISTRICT FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Our financial report is designed to provide our citizens, taxpayers, parents, students, investors and creditors with a general overview of the District's finances and to show the Board's accountability for the money it receives. If you have questions about this report or wish to request additional financial information, please contact Joseph Springer, CPA, Business Manager, at Southern Columbia Area School District, 800 Southern Drive, Catawissa, PA 17820, (570) 356-2331.