

cc 9/22/15

J.M. Kjelisen -

FCMAT conversation with Anthony Bridges, Deputy Executive Officer (661) 706-0561

(Date ?)

What we talked about:

### **What does FCMAT do?**

"We do everything that is on this chart (Steve Crow's). We hire CBT and SSCAL when we need them to perform any particular part of the project." Upon probing, he revealed that they can help establish scope, do the analysis in every required area of the district, plus they include recommendations on implementation and can even guide us through implementation if that is what we require. The service includes a 6-month follow up visit to assist in any implementation needs.

### **How does FCMAT ensure objectivity and independence?**

FCMAT is a government agency and receives considerable funding from the state, and only partial funding from client organizations. They do not need the work to stay in business, but they are happy to do the work as part of their mission.

FCMAT does work closely with leadership and involved parties in the studied organization. The President and administrative team is involved in establishing the scope of the project but does not have the ability to screen the outcomes of the project.

He claims that the outcomes in their reports are objective and neutral, not designed to support any particular perspective or position.

### **How do FCMAT's rates compare to CBT and other consultant firms?**

Since the fixed costs of FCMAT are covered by their state revenue, they only pass along the direct costs of consulting to client organizations. This results in costs that are about 1/2 of CBT typically. FCMAT is limited by statute to charge no more than \$500 per person per day. FCMAT does call in consultants from CBT and SSCAL to perform certain aspects of projects. When they do this, these other organizations bill FCMAT at \$800 per day and FCMAT only recovers \$500 of that rate. Once the scope of the contract is set a firm price is established and will not be exceeded. Costs are tracked and if less is expended than the quote, then we pay the lower amount of actual or quote.

### **How does FCMAT compare to CBT?**

Collaborative Brain Trust is a collection of specialty contractors called in to work on projects requiring their expertise. This is a fairly small core organization paid directly by the studied clients. FCMAT is a governmental organization funded by the state and by charging a cost-recovery rate to clients. FCMAT works with CBT and SSCAL when outside expertise is required. CBT is smaller and works mainly with Community Colleges. FCMAT is larger and works with K-14 which includes Community Colleges. Both have high expertise in Community Colleges.

### **What other projects should we review that might be similar to our situation?** (provided brief history of MPC's financial performance since Fort Ord closed)

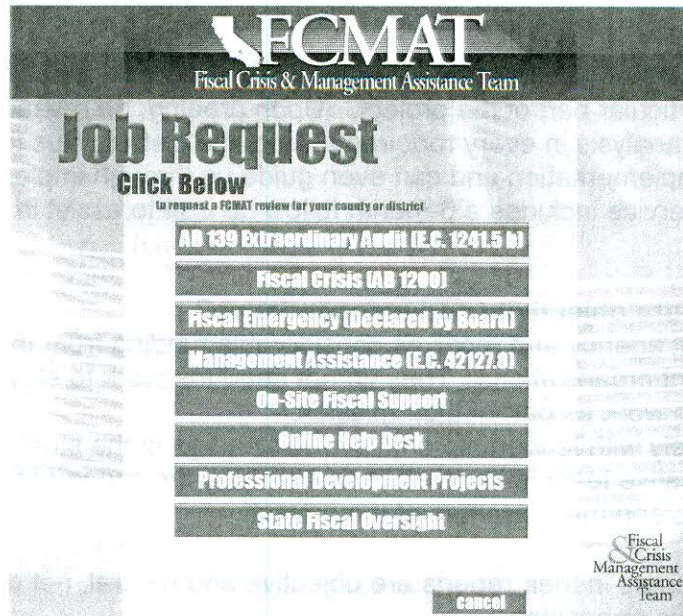
Imperial Valley Community College (Used CBT consultants in this project)

Compton CC (not because it is similar to ours, but it was a very well-known large scale project)

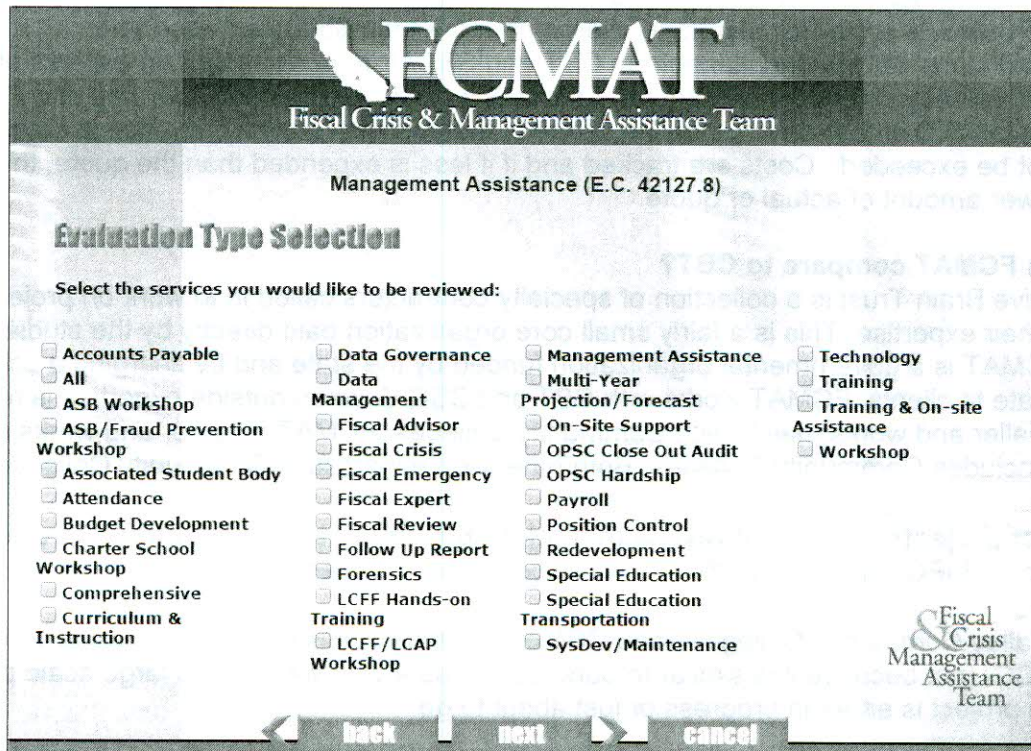
Evergreen project is either in progress or just about to go.

(MPUSD experience provides on-tap resource to learn how to work effectively with FCMAT)

FCMAT's general service area menu:



FCMAT's service matrix under the sub heading of Management Services:



# FCMAT'S Services

## Fiscal & Management Assistance

FCMAT's primary mission is to help California's local educational agencies and institutions identify, prevent and resolve financial challenges. FCMAT's services are used not just to help avert fiscal crises, but to promote sound financial practices and effective and efficient operations.

FCMAT's services may be requested by a school district, charter school, community college, county office of education, the state, the Community College Chancellor's Office, Superintendent of Public Instruction, or the Legislature.

When a request or assignment is received, FCMAT assembles a study team that works closely with the local educational agency to define the scope of the study, conduct a review and provide a written report with detailed findings and realistic recommendations to help resolve issues, overcome challenges and successfully plan for the future. This approach, combined with a high level of professionalism and service, has resulted in consistently high ratings on clients' post-study evaluations.

### Study Teams

FCMAT study teams are led by one or more experienced full-time staff members and include highly qualified consultants with demonstrated expertise in their respective fields. Most consultants are actively working in a school agency, institution or JPA, or are retired from a successful career in the specific area to be reviewed.

### Fiscal Advisor Services

FCMAT staff members occasionally serve as short-term fiscal advisors to districts and county offices that are in a fiscal or leadership transition or that require additional fiscal expertise.

## Fiscal Tools

### Budget Explorer Software

FCMAT's free online Budget Explorer software provides school districts and county offices of education with a streamlined and intuitive tool for creating multiyear financial projections.

### Fiscal Health Risk Analysis

FCMAT's Fiscal Health Risk Analysis uses a simple question-and-answer format to help school districts gauge their overall fiscal and operational health in 17 key areas. The analysis document is available at no charge on FCMAT's website.

## Professional Development

### CBO Mentor Program

FCMAT's Chief Business Official (CBO) Mentor Program is a year-long experience that provides in-depth training, peer review and one-to-one mentoring for current and prospective chief business officials in educational agencies statewide. The depth of information, analysis, feedback and individual assistance make this program one of the strongest of its kind. More than 90% of participants are subsequently promoted to CBO or other positions of increased fiscal responsibility.

### ASB and Charter School Workshops

FCMAT's ASB and charter school workshops are provided upon request and are designed to help California's school agencies and institutions understand and comply with the numerous complex financial and legal requirements for administering and overseeing student body organizations and charter schools.

## Technical Assistance

### Online Help Desks

FCMAT's website features free online Help Desks for fiscal and management questions, and for assistance with FCMAT's Budget Explorer software and the Local Control Funding Formula. Answers are usually provided within 48 hours. Archived questions and answers are also available for reference.

## E-mail Lists

FCMAT maintains several peer email lists to help administrators in school districts and county offices of education share information.

## Publications

All of these publications are available as free downloads from FCMAT's website, [www.fcmat.org](http://www.fcmat.org):

### ASB Manual

The ASB Accounting Manual, Fraud Prevention Guide and Desk Reference provides guidance for associated student body organization, governance, finance and accounting.

### Fiscal Oversight Guide

This publication is a resource for county offices of education to use in oversight of school districts. It outlines the responsibilities and provides guidance related to budget adoption and approval processes and the review of interim reports, including sample letters for various situations.

### COE Fiscal Procedural Manual

The manual assists COE business officials in performing their required duties related to evaluating the operation of school district finances and developing consistent and common practices for reviewing and responding to various fiscal requirements of the California Education and Government codes.

### Charter School Annual Oversight Checklist

This document is designed to help charter schools and their authorizing agencies evaluate their operations and practices against industry-standard best practices.

### Annual Report

FCMAT's Annual Report is published each fall and summarizes the year's work and the direction of the organization.

## CSIS

California School Information Services is managed by FCMAT and maintains the largest known K-12 educational data collection system. CSIS helps districts use this data to track and transfer student information statewide. More information is available at the CSIS website, [www.csis.k12.ca.us](http://www.csis.k12.ca.us).

For more information or to request services, visit [www.fcmat.org](http://www.fcmat.org) and click on "request our services," or call (661) 636-4611.

# About FCMAT

The Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) was created by legislation in 1992 as an independent and external state agency. FCMAT's mission is to provide proactive and preventive fiscal, business and management review services that help local educational agencies comply with fiscal accountability standards and incorporate best practices.

FCMAT has performed more than 1,000 reviews for K-12 school districts, county offices of education, community colleges and charter schools. Management assistance requests represent approximately 75% of FCMAT's work. Areas of review include budgets and multiyear financial projections, reviews of business services, organizational effectiveness, special education, transportation services, maintenance and operations, and technology. Approximately 5% of FCMAT's work is on reviews assigned by the state Legislature or county superintendents and involves assisting with averting the need for emergency state loans. Assembly Bill 139, extraordinary audits, which review possible fraud or misuse of funds and are requested by county offices of education, also comprise approximately 5% of FCMAT's work.

The remaining 15% of FCMAT's work includes developing and providing numerous publications, software tools, workshops and professional development opportunities to help local educational agencies operate more effectively and fulfill their oversight responsibilities. FCMAT manages the California School Information Services (CSIS) database, the largest known K-12 educational data collection system.

## Funding

FCMAT is funded through appropriations in the state budget and modest fees to client agencies.

## FCMAT

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## CSIS

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# FCMAT

FISCAL CRISIS & MANAGEMENT  
ASSISTANCE TEAM

CSIS California School Information Services



Management & Technical Assistance  
Professional Development  
Software & Publications  
Data Management