

TRANSMITTAL LETTER

May 22, 2003

The Honorable Rick Perry, Governor
The Honorable David Dewhurst, Lieutenant Governor
The Honorable Thomas R. Craddick, Speaker of the House
Commissioner Felipe T. Alanis, Ph.D.

Fellow Texans:

I am pleased to present my performance review of the Rosebud-Lott Independent School District (RLISD).

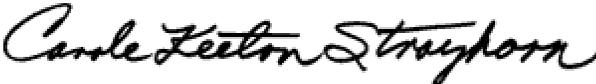
This review is intended to help RLISD hold the line on costs, streamline operations, and improve services to ensure that more of every education dollar goes directly into the classroom with the teachers and children, where it belongs. To aid in this task, I contracted with Capital Linkages, Inc.

I have made a number of recommendations to improve RLISD's efficiency. I also have highlighted a number of "best practices" in district operations-model programs and services provided by the district's administrators, teachers, and staff. This report outlines 31 detailed recommendations that could save RLISD more than \$1.4 million over the next five years, while reinvesting \$147,356 to improve educational services and other operations. Net savings are estimated to reach nearly \$1.3 million that the district can redirect to the classroom.

I am grateful for the cooperation of RLISD's board, staff, parents, and community members. I commend them for their dedication to improving the educational opportunities for our most precious resource in RLISD? our children.

I am also pleased to announce that the report is available on my *Window on State Government* Web site at <http://www.window.state.tx.us/tspr/rosebudlott/>.

Sincerely,



Carole Keeton Strayhorn
Texas Comptroller

c: Senate Committee on Education

House Committee on Public Education

The Honorable Kip Averitt, CPA, State Senator, District 22

The Honorable Stephen E. Ogden, State Senator, District 5

The Honorable Dianne White Delisi, State Representative, District 55

The Honorable James R. Dunnam, State Representative, District 57

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In October 2002, Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Strayhorn announced her intention to review the Rosebud-Lott Independent School District (RLISD) as part of a larger project to review all of the Falls County school districts including Chilton, Marlin and Westphalia. In November 2002, Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Strayhorn began a review of the Rosebud-Lott Independent School District (RLISD). Based upon more than six months of work, this report identifies RLISD's exemplary programs and suggests concrete ways to improve district operations. If fully implemented, the Comptroller's 31 recommendations could result in net savings of nearly \$1.3 million over the next five years.

Improving The Texas School Performance Review

Soon after taking office in January 1999, Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Strayhorn consulted school district officials, parents and teachers from across Texas and carefully examined past reviews and progress reports to make TSPR more valuable to the state's school districts. With the perspective of a former teacher and school board president, the Comptroller has vowed to use TSPR to increase local school districts' accountability to the communities they serve.

Recognizing that only 51 cents of every education dollar is spent on instruction, Comptroller Strayhorn's goal is to drive more of every education dollar directly into the classroom. Comptroller Strayhorn also has ordered TSPR staff to share best practices and exemplary programs quickly and systematically with all the state's school districts and with anyone else who requests such information. Comptroller Strayhorn has directed TSPR to serve as a clearinghouse of the best ideas in Texas public education.

Under Comptroller Strayhorn's approach, consultants and the TSPR team will work with districts to:

- Ensure students and teachers receive the support and resources necessary to succeed;
- Identify innovative ways to address the district's core management challenges;
- Ensure administrative duties are performed efficiently, without duplication, and in a way that fosters education;
- Develop strategies to ensure the district's processes and programs are continuously assessed and improved;
- Challenge any process, procedure, program or policy that impedes instruction and recommend ways to reduce or eliminate obstacles; and

- Put goods and services to the "Yellow Pages Test": government should do no job if a business in the Yellow Pages can do that job better and at a lower cost.

Finally, Comptroller Strayhorn has opened her door to Texans who share her optimism about the potential for public education. Suggestions to improve Texas schools or the school reviews are welcome at any time. The Comptroller believes public schools deserve all the attention and assistance they can get.

For more information, contact TSPR by calling (512)475-3676, or see the Legislative Budget Board's Website at www.lbb.state.tx.us.

TSPR In Rosebud-Lott ISD

Comptroller Strayhorn announced Rosebud-Lott for a review in October 2002 and began onsite work in November 2002. The Comptroller's office selected Capital Linkages, Inc., an Austin-based firm to assist the agency with the review at a cost of \$67,000. The review team interviewed district employees, board members, parents, business leaders and community members and held a public forum at Rosebud-Lott High School on November 4, 2002, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

To obtain additional comments, the review team conducted focus group sessions with teachers, principals, parents and community members. To ensure that all stakeholder groups had an opportunity for input, TSPR sent surveys to students, parents, teachers, campus and central administrators and support staff.

A total of 193 respondents answered surveys. Thirty-two administrative and support staff; 25 teachers; 47 parents and 89 students completed written surveys as part of the review. Details from the surveys and public forums appear in **Appendices A** through **E**.

The review team also consulted two Texas Education Agency (TEA) databases of comparative educational information, the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) and the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS).

RLISD selected peer districts for comparisons based on similarities in student enrollment, student performance and community and student demographics. The selected peer districts were Corrigan-Camden, Franklin, Mart and Rogers ISDs. TSPR also compared RLISD to district averages in TEA's Regional Education Service Center XII (Region 12), to which Rosebud-Lott ISD belongs, and to the state as a whole.

During its seven-month review, TSPR developed 31 recommendations to improve operations and save taxpayers more than \$1.4 million by 2007-08. Cumulative net savings from all recommendations (savings minus recommended investments or expenditures) would reach nearly \$1.3 million by 2007-08.

A detailed list of costs and savings by recommendation appears in **Exhibit 4**. Many TSPR recommendations would not have a direct impact but would improve the district's overall operations.

Acknowledgements

The Comptroller's office and Capital Linkages, Inc. wish to express appreciation to the RLISD Board of Trustees, Superintendent Dr. Glenn Hambrick, Ms. Marla Wallace and Ms. Tanya Holschrem. The Comptroller's office also thanks all district employees, students, parents and community residents who helped during the review.

Rosebud-Lott ISD

RLISD covers 302 square miles and serves 19 communities in the southwest quadrant of Falls County, more than 30 miles from Waco. Students from RLISD attend pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12 in four schools and one alternative center. In 2001-02, the district served 968 students in a primary school, one elementary school, an intermediate school and a junior high/high school.

RLISD also serves high school students from the neighboring district of Westphalia Independent School District (WISD). WISD is a small district that geographically encompasses nearly 40 square miles to the southwest of RLISD and only serves students in grades K-8.

RLISD's 2002-03 operating budget exceeded \$6.5 million, and the district has budgeted expenditures of \$6,693 per student. RLISD's students are 58.3 percent Anglo, 21.7 percent Hispanic, 19.4 percent African American and 0.5 percent Other. The district has 44.8 percent economically disadvantaged students, compared to the state's average of 49.0 percent.

Exhibit 1 details the demographic characteristics of RLISD, its selected peer school districts, Region 12 and the state.

Exhibit 1
Demographic Characteristics
RLISD, Peer School Districts, Region 12 and State
2002-03

District	Student Enrollment	Racial/Ethnic Percentage				Percent Economically Disadvantaged
		Percent African American	Percent Hispanic	Percent Anglo	Percent Other	
Corrigan-Camden	1,142	25.2%	31.1%	43.2%	0.5%	66.6%
Franklin	945	9.0%	8.5%	82.2%	0.3%	38.2%
Mart	678	24.8%	5.6%	69.6%	0.0%	51.6%
RLISD	953	19.4%	21.7%	58.3%	0.5%	49.0%
Rogers	863	2.9%	17.6%	79.3%	0.2%	39.6%
Region 12	139,468	23.2%	22.0%	52.6%	2.2%	49.9%
State	4,239,911	14.3%	42.7%	39.8%	3.2%	51.9%

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2002-03.

RLISD served 953 students during 2002-03, a decrease of 10.9 percent over the last six years (Exhibit 2).

Exhibit 2
RLISD Student Enrollment History
1997-98 through 2002-03

School Year	Actual Student Enrollment	Percent Change from 1997-98
1997-98	1,070	N/A
1998-99	1,045	(2.3%)
1999-2000	1,022	(4.5%)
2000-01	1,041	(2.7%)
2001-02	968	(9.5%)
2002-03	953	(10.9%)

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1997-98 through 2001-02 and PEIMS 2002-03.

In 2001-02, TEA rated RLISD as a *Recognized* district. All of the district's schools were also rated *Recognized* except for Lott Elementary and Rosebud Intermediate that were rated *Exemplary*. The district's overall

Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) passing rate of all students passing all tests taken was 88.0 percent in 2001-02 exceeding the state average of 85.3 percent. TAAS passing rates in 2001-02 are as follows: reading 95.5 percent, mathematics 95.6 percent and writing 89.4 percent. In 2001-02, RLISD spent 55.2 percent of its dollars on classroom instruction, which exceeded the state average of 51.0 percent.

At \$0.902 per \$100 valuation, RLISD has one of the lowest tax rates in the state, all of which is for maintenance and operations as the district has no debt service. In addition to its maintenance and operations tax, the district generates revenues through a personal property tax on automobiles and items such as farm equipment.

The greatest challenges facing RLISD include:

- improving its planning processes;
- maintaining a strong academic program;
- improving operating efficiencies;
- instituting a strong system of financial controls; and
- strengthening governance and leadership.

Improve Planning Processes

Develop a formal strategic planning process. RLISD does not have a formal strategic planning process. While the district has some planning documents, including a District Improvement Plan (DIP), Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs) and a Technology Plan, there does not appear to be clear links among the plans or the budget nor are these plans long-term in nature. In addition, these plans are primarily for instructional purposes and do not address operational areas such as facility planning, food services, transportation and student enrollment. The district experienced a 10.9 percent declining enrollment from 1997 through 2003 indicating a need to make specific adjustments in staffing levels, facility planning and other operational programs. Strategic planning will help the district develop goals to guide planning and decision-making processes in the coming years.

Maintain Strong Academic Program

Develop and update curriculum guides for all courses and grade levels. The district does not have curriculum guides for any courses at any grade level. School principals said that in the absence of formal guides, teachers use copies of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for each subject and grade level. Developing and subsequently updating curriculum guides over the course of three years will assist the district in focusing its efforts on further improving student performance for all demographic

groups, but more importantly assist the district to meet the challenge of the new more rigorous Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test that replaces the TAAS.

Develop a comprehensive staff development plan. RLISD does not have a formal staff development plan. The district does not monitor teacher-training hours, and the district's training program does not address specific aspects of curriculum delivery. The superintendent said that from 1999 to 2003 professional development has focused on the use of TEKS in the classroom. By developing a comprehensive plan for professional staff development, the district will be better able to address areas of specific need on a districtwide basis.

Develop a long-range facilities master plan. RLISD does not have a long-range facilities planning process or a facilities master plan. School principals make most facility assessments and present their needs to the superintendent, who in turn presents the district's facility needs to the board. By developing a comprehensive long-range facilities master plan with input from both district staff and the community along with using enrollment projections, the district could budget necessary funds, apply for facility grants and have available existing options for maximizing facility usage.

Improve Operating Efficiencies

Design and implement strategies to increase the number of students eligible for free and reduced-price meal benefits. The district under-identifies students eligible for free and reduced-price breakfast and lunch meal benefits in three of its five schools. Although economically disadvantaged students are evenly distributed across the district, two schools identify more than 65 percent of their students as eligible for free and reduced-price meal benefits while three schools identify less than 50 percent. Compensatory education funds for a district are tied to the number of students eligible for free and reduced-price meals. By identifying all students who are eligible for these benefits, the district can increase the amount of compensatory education available for district use by more than \$500,000 over five years.

Implement an automated preventive maintenance program for all facilities and equipment. RLISD does not systematically track preventive maintenance on equipment or facilities. Preventive maintenance records are handwritten, and in 1997-98, vehicle and grounds equipment records were lost making it difficult to gauge what had been performed on existing equipment. Instituting an automated preventive maintenance program will help the district to preserve adequate records and avoid excessive costs for

breakdowns or major repairs. This will also provide the superintendent and board a method to accurately gauge budget needs.

Purchase a point-of-sale system for each school. The district counts all breakfasts and lunches manually, which requires extensive staff time. A March 2002, TEA audit of RLISD's Food Service operations showed errors in the meal counts, thereby reducing the number of meals the district can claim for federal reimbursement. Implementing an electronic point-of-sale (POS) system would decrease staff time spent on manual counts, provide the district with accurate counts on meals served and supply the district with reports that could be used by management to improve the Food Services operations. RLISD could install a POS system in each cafeteria throughout the district for a total cost of nearly \$10,600.

Institute Strong System of Financial Controls

Develop a districtwide financial management policies and procedures manual. RLISD lacks a consolidated procedures manual for the district's business and financial processes. Currently staff conduct financial functions by following handwritten notes or verbal instructions. Creating a comprehensive procedures manual provides staff members with current and detailed procedures to perform critical accounting and reporting functions and ensure that multiple personnel share institutional knowledge.

Immediately correct inaccuracies in RLISD's current and prior audited financial statements, send corrected schedules to TEA and create procedures to ensure future submission schedules are accurate. RLISD has errors in its audited financial statements for 2000-01 and 2001-02 because the external auditors did not use TEA's prescribed methodologies in determining two items on the Schedule of Delinquent Taxes Receivable. The errors led to incorrect information for the net assessed/appraised value for school tax purposes and the current year's total levy. While school funding was not affected, the reported tax collection rates are also incorrect because the wrong methodology was applied. By correcting inaccuracies to the current and prior audited financial statements and providing the information to TEA, RLISD will be in compliance with its legally mandated obligations to the state.

Establish a general fund balance management policy and plan to meet TEA guidelines. In 2001-02, RLISD's general fund balance was 74.3 percent of its operating expenditures. The district does not follow TEA's guidelines for designation of excess funds. Consequently, RLISD is misstating its actual financial position. By establishing a fund balance management policy, the board and district administration will not only have a better idea of the district's financial condition, but more

importantly, direct more dollars into programs that will continue to assist its students in their academic success.

Strengthen Governance and Leadership

Ensure that board members complete their required hours of continuing education. Some board members are not taking the annually required training hours and have reported limited training hours since 1998. Board members are required by law to obtain 8 hours of continuing education each year, and newly elected board members must complete 16 hours of training within their first year of service. Ensuring that board training is up-to-date will not only assist members in becoming familiar with their responsibilities as policy makers but will help the board make better informed decisions, especially in financial matters.

Establish and communicate expectations for the superintendent and provide measurable performance criteria. The board has not provided expectations or a strategic vision for the superintendent. The lack of expectations, goals and objectives can lead to misunderstandings about what is expected of the superintendent and what areas of concern or improvement the board would like to see as a priority. RLISD has had two superintendents in the last two years, including the current superintendent. By providing the superintendent with goals and expectations, the superintendent will be focused on meeting the board's objectives.

Exemplary Programs and Practices

TSPR identified a number of "best practices" in RLISD. Through commendations in each chapter, the report highlights RLISD's model programs, operations and services provided by RLISD administrators, teachers and staff. Other school districts throughout Texas are encouraged to examine these exemplary programs and services to see if they could be adapted to meet their local needs. TSPR's commendations include the following:

- ***RLISD takes a proactive role in preparing its students for a college education.*** The district is one of a select group of Texas districts that participates in the EXPLORE & PLAN programs that are two curriculum-based assessments associated with the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), or college reading tests. The programs consist of four achievement tests (English, math, reading and science reasoning) along with a career-planning component. The district gives these achievement tests to RLISD students in Grades 8 and 10. The EXPLORE & PLAN programs allow students to build an informed educational and career analysis plan,

which helps them gauge their strengths as they prepare for their college admission process.

- ***RLISD efficiently allocates custodial staff among schools to optimize cleaning coverage.*** The district employs 10 custodial staff to clean its more than 208,000 square feet spread among five campuses housed in four district owned facilities. RLISD exceeds the industry standard of one custodian per 20,000 square feet. Each RLISD custodian maintains nearly 21,000 square feet.
- ***RLISD in collaboration with Region 12 overhauled the district's computer infrastructure and upgraded its instructional computers.*** RLISD is aggressively implementing technology in administration and in the classroom by putting together a committee to determine what are the district's technology needs and developing a plan on how to meet those needs. This process is more common in larger districts than in small districts like RLISD. The RLISD Technology Committee developed a comprehensive districtwide technology plan and has outfitted all classrooms with up-to-date Pentium computers that include Windows 2000, wired the district and installed computer labs at each RLISD school. The district also worked closely with Region 12 to upgrade its technology infrastructure.
- ***RLISD uses cameras on all school buses to ensure student safety, monitor student discipline and prevent bus vandalism and theft.*** The district has purchased and is using cameras for all buses. The Transportation director reviews the bus tapes weekly to evaluate student behavior, bus and bus driver performance and reported vandalism and theft on buses. The district leaves cameras operating at night to deter vandalism and theft.

Savings and Investment Requirements

Many of TSPR's recommendations would result in savings and increased revenue that the district could use to improve classroom instruction. The savings opportunities identified in this report are conservative and should be considered minimums. Proposed investments of additional funds usually are related to increased efficiencies or savings, or improved productivity and effectiveness.

TSPR recommended 31 ways to save RLISD more than \$1.4 million in gross savings over a five-year period. Reinvestment opportunities will cost the district \$147,356 during the same period. Full implementation of all recommendations in this report could produce net savings of nearly \$1.3 million by 2007-08.

	document and communicate specific goals, objectives and standards of performance for the superintendent. p. 21							
3	Develop and implement a comprehensive district strategic plan. p. 24	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$4,000)
4	Implement a staffing allocation formula based on fluctuations in student enrollment. p. 30	\$57,014	\$114,027	\$114,027	\$114,027	\$114,027	\$513,122	\$0
5	Develop a policy and long-term plan for recruiting and hiring qualified, ethnically diverse teachers to better match the district's student demographics. p. 32	(\$1,000)	(\$1,000)	(\$1,000)	(\$1,000)	(\$1,000)	(\$5,000)	\$0
6	Develop an operating procedures manual for human resources functions and	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	cross-train an additional staff member to perform human resources duties. p. 33							
7	Develop and use multiple avenues of communication to enhance outreach to the community. p. 35	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Totals-Chapter 1		\$56,014	\$113,027	\$113,027	\$113,027	\$113,027	\$508,122	(\$4,000)
Chapter 2 Educational Service Delivery								
8	Develop and update curriculum guides for all courses and grade levels on a five-year schedule and include corresponding language in the District Improvement Plan.p. 44	(\$13,500)	(\$13,500)	(\$13,500)	(\$13,500)	(\$13,500)	(\$67,500)	(\$3,000)
9	Align the district curriculum vertically and establish vertical alignment teams that report to principals.p. 46	(\$4,000)	(\$4,000)	(\$4,000)	(\$4,000)	(\$4,000)	(\$20,000)	\$0
10	Develop and implement a comprehensive	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	district. p. 70							
Totals-Chapter 2		(\$17,500)	(\$17,500)	(\$17,500)	(\$17,500)	(\$17,500)	(\$87,500)	(\$3,000)
Chapter 3 Facilities Use and Management								
15	Develop a formal facilities planning process, update and expand the 2001 capital projects feasibility planning list. p. 79	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$7,500)
16	Offer annual training for maintenance and custodial staff. p. 82	(\$5,460)	(\$5,460)	(\$5,460)	(\$5,460)	(\$5,460)	(\$27,300)	\$0
17	Develop an automated work order system and use labor and cost data to monitor productivity and track costs. p. 84	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
18	Adopt a preventative maintenance program that provides regularly scheduled reviews on all facilities and equipment. p. 87	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
19	Request an energy management	\$0	\$13,240	\$13,240	\$13,240	\$13,240	\$52,960	\$0

	Education Agency and create procedures to ensure future submission schedules are accurate. p. 109							
24	Improve current and delinquent tax collection rates by working with the Falls County Tax Assessor-Collector and delinquent tax collector to remove properties that qualify for deactivation from the tax rolls.p. 112	\$42,197	\$42,197	\$42,197	\$42,197	\$42,197	\$210,985	\$0
25	Create and effectively use cash flow forecasts. p. 116	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Totals-Chapter 4		\$42,197	\$42,197	\$42,197	\$42,197	\$42,197	\$210,985	\$0
Chapter 5 Operations								
26	Develop and test a disaster recovery plan. p. 133	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
27	Document maintenance performed on each vehicle. p. 141	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

28	Purchase an automated bus routing system.p. 144	\$10,953	\$10,953	\$10,953	\$10,953	\$10,953	\$54,765	(\$2,500)
29	Adopt strategies to increase breakfast and lunch participation in RLISD's Food Service Program. p. 152	\$1,588	\$3,176	\$4,764	\$6,352	\$7,940	\$23,820	\$0
30	Purchase point-of-sale software for each school. p. 155	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$10,556)
31	Design and implement strategies to increase the number of students identified for free and reduced-price meal benefits. p. 158	\$115,732	\$115,732	\$115,732	\$115,732	\$115,732	\$578,660	\$0
Totals- Chapter 5		\$128,273	\$129,861	\$131,449	\$133,037	\$134,625	\$657,245	(\$13,056)
TOTAL SAVINGS		\$227,484	\$299,325	\$300,913	\$302,501	\$304,089	\$1,434,312	\$0
TOTAL COSTS		(\$23,960)	(\$23,960)	(\$23,960)	(\$23,960)	(\$23,960)	(\$119,800)	(\$27,556)
NET SAVINGS (COSTS)		\$203,524	\$275,365	\$276,953	\$278,541	\$280,129	\$1,314,512	(\$27,556)

5 Year Gross Savings	\$1,434,312
5 Year Gross Costs	(\$147,356)
Grand Total	\$1,286,956

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the district organization and management of the Rosebud-Lott Independent School District (RLISD) in the following sections:

- A. Governance, Policies and Procedures
- B. District Management and Planning
- C. Personnel Management
- D. Community Involvement Initiatives

When a school district operates effectively, the school board governs and the superintendent administers the school district. The distinction, though simple, is sometimes overlooked and unclear, which can lead to educational and system inefficiencies.

Elected by constituents, school board members collectively set priorities, establish policies and evaluate outcomes of the district's operations. The superintendent implements board policies, provides leadership and manages personnel and daily operations districtwide. The superintendent also consults with the board on any educational issues affecting the district and serves as the board's technical advisor. The superintendent provides the board with sufficient information to make decisions and objectively evaluate results. The board and superintendent work together to improve district educational and administrative performance.

BACKGROUND

RLISD serves the towns of Rosebud and Lott, along with 17 other communities within the district. According to the 2000 census, Rosebud has a population of 1,638. Rosebud's main employers include RLISD, a medical clinic, a nursing home, 13 churches, a city-manager system of government and the Rosebud Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture. The primary industry is agriculture and several agribusinesses serve farmers and ranchers. Settled in 1878, Rosebud was originally known as Pool's Crossing or Greer's Horse Pen. The settlement and post office which opened in 1884, eventually moved east several miles to the present location. Lott, which has a population of 724, sits 10 miles northwest from Rosebud on State Highway 77. Lott's demographics are similar to Rosebud's.

One of four school districts in Falls County, RLISD served 968 students in 2001-02. The other Falls County school districts are Chilton ISD (382 students, one school), Marlin ISD (1,621 students, three schools) and

Westphalia ISD (122 students, one school.) RLISD covers about 302 square miles in the southwest quadrant of Falls County. Westphalia ISD is actually located within RLISD's boundaries and spans approximately 40 square miles in the west central part of RLISD. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) classifies RLISD as a "non-metro stable community district" based on the district's size, growth rates, student economic status and proximity to urban areas. TEA classifies districts on a scale ranging from major urban to rural. The non-metro stable designation is in contrast to non-metro fast growing.

RLISD has four education facilities, including a combined high school/junior high school, intermediate school, elementary school, primary school and a learning center in the high school/junior high buildings. Lott Elementary is the only elementary school in RLISD and the only school located in Lott. The Learning Center is located in the neighboring school district of Marlin. RLISD administration offices are located in Travis, which is one of 13 area communities. The school district belongs to Regional Education Service Center XII (Region 12) in Waco. **Exhibit 1-1** shows the number of students by school.

Exhibit 1-1
Number of Students by RLISD Campus
2002-03

School	Grades	Students	Percent of Total
Rosebud-Lott High School	Grades 9-12	330	34.6%
Rosebud-Lott Junior High	Grades 7-8	160	16.8%
Rosebud Intermediate	Grades 4-6	113	11.9%
Lott Elementary	Grades K-6	156	16.4%
Rosebud Primary	Grades PreK-3	189	19.8%
Rosebud-Lott Learning Center		5	0.5%
Total		953	100.0%

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2002-03.

In 2002-03, the district ethnic enrollment breakdown consisted of 58.3 percent Anglo, 21.7 percent Hispanic, 19.4 percent African-American and 0.5 percent Other. In addition 49.0 percent of the student population is classified as economically disadvantaged.

The district experienced a 96 percent attendance rate in 2000-01. The same year it had a 0.4 percent dropout rate. A year prior, in 1999-2000, the dropout rate was only 0.2 percent.

RLISD received a recognized rating from TEA in both 2000-01 and 2001-02. The district had 88 percent of its students pass the TAAS in 2001-02.

Over the past five years, RLISD enrollment decreased by 9.5 percent from 1,070 students in 1997-98 to 968 students in 2001-02. **Exhibit 1-2** illustrates RLISD's decline in enrollment.

**Exhibit 1-2
RLISD Enrollment
2002-03**

District	Student Enrollment	Racial/Ethnic Percentage				Percent Economically Disadvantaged
		Percent African American	Percent Hispanic	Percent Anglo	Percent Other	
Corrigan-Camden	1,142	25.2%	31.1%	43.2%	0.5%	66.6%
Franklin	945	9.0%	8.5%	82.2%	0.3%	38.2%
Mart	678	24.8%	5.6%	69.6%	0.0%	51.6%
RLISD	953	19.4%	21.7%	58.3%	0.5%	49.0%
Rogers	863	2.9%	17.6%	79.3%	0.2%	39.6%
Region 12	139,468	23.2%	22.0%	52.6%	2.2%	49.9%
State	4,239,911	14.3%	42.7%	39.8%	3.2%	51.9%

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2002-03.

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

A. GOVERNANCE, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Policy development is one of a school board's essential functions. The board's policies establish and define its vision for the district, allowing the administration to implement and manage daily operations. The process should be collaborative, even though the roles of the board and the superintendent clearly vary.

The board also hires the superintendent, approves the budget, monitors expenditures, sets the tax rate and calls bond elections. The board also considers and integrates community expectations when setting policies that guide district administration. Through its governance, a school board is ultimately responsible for the effectiveness of the school district. Education consultant James Wickenden describes exemplary governance in context of a school board's responsibility:

...The best boards are constructive agents for change. They anticipate future demands and require the school's employees to meet them. They ask hard questions; they challenge the status quo. They set broad policies to accomplish the stated mission and then demand evidence that the policies are being followed. In short, a school board is accountable to parents, taxpayers, and the community for the district's effectiveness and efficiency.

Section 11.151 of the Texas Education Code (TEC) also delineates specific powers and duties of a school board, including:

- govern and oversee the management of the district's public schools;
- adopt such rules, regulations and bylaws as the board may deem proper;
- approve a district-developed plan for site-based decision-making and provide for its implementation;
- publish an annual report describing the district's educational performance, including school performance objectives and the progress of each school toward these objectives; and
- receive bequests and donations or other money coming legally into its hands in the name of the district.

By law, a district must post public notices for all board meetings. Board meetings are held to transact the business of the district and are open to the

public in accordance to the state's Open Meetings Act. A district may close board meetings to the public only during executive sessions to discuss personnel matters, student hearings, real estate transactions and other specific legal matters.

FINDING

With the exception of one board member, most RLISD board members do not meet the minimum number of continuing education training hours required by law under the Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 19, Part 2, Chapter 61, Rule 61.1. Individual board members acknowledged in interviews that they have not earned the minimum continuing education hours required by law for the reporting periods from January 1998 through November 2002. **Exhibit 1-3** shows each RLISD board member's earned training hours and length of service. Despite the fact the average tenure of RLISD board members exceeds nine years, most have not complied with the state's training mandate.

**Exhibit 1-3
RLISD Board of Trustees
1997-98 through 2002-03**

Title	Training hours 1997-98	Training hours 1998-99	Training hours 1999-2000	Training hours 2000-01	Training hours 2001-02	Training hours 2002-03*	Total Training hours required	Additional training hours required to comply with TAC
President	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.75	8.0	0.0
Vice-President	N/A	N/A	15.0	10.75	11.0	3.75	8.0	4.25
Secretary	N/A	N/A	0.0	0.0	25.5	0.0	8.0	8.0
Member 1	21.0	0.0	0.0	4.5	8.5	0.0	8.0	8.0
Member 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	10.0	3.0	0.0	8.0	8.0
Member 3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3.0	5.0	16.0	11.0
Member 4	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	11.0	2.5	16.0	13.5

Source: RLISD Board Secretary, November 2002.

** Note: Reflects board member training only through Fall of 2002-03.*

The RLISD board consists of seven members elected at-large who serve alternating three-year terms. The board meets for regular meetings on the third Tuesday of each month starting at 8:00 p.m. in the Rosebud-Lott High School and 7:30 p.m. during winter months. The board also schedules special meetings and work sessions as needed. As required by law, closed sessions are recorded in minute form. School board elections are held annually with either two or three members elected at-large for three-year terms.

TEA considers all district files as the official records of board member training. RLISD also is required to report board member training hours to the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB), which is done by the RLISD superintendent's secretary. TAC Chapter 61, subchapter A, reads: "Annually, at the meeting at which the call for election of board members is normally scheduled, the current president of each local board of trustees shall announce the name of each board member who has *completed* the required continuing education, who has *exceeded* the required hours of continuing education and who is deficient in the required continuing education. The president shall cause the minutes of the local board to reflect the information and shall make this information available to the local media." TASB also maintains a Continuing Education Credit reporting Service (CECRS) online for all non-TASB sponsored events.

Exhibit 1-4 provides an overview of TAC-required minimum annual continuing education requirements for new and experienced board members. TAC requires new board members to obtain a total of 16 hours of training annually. Under the same law, experienced board members must obtain eight hours of training annually.

Exhibit 1-4
TAC Continuing Education Requirements
for School Board Members

Category of Continuing Education	First-Year Board Member	Experienced Board Member
Local District Orientation	Required within 60 days of election or appointment	Not required
Orientation to the Texas Education Code	Three hours	Not required
Update to the Texas Education Code	Incorporated into Orientation to the Texas Education	After legislative session and of "sufficient length" to

	Code	address major changes
Team-building Session/Assessment of Continuing Education Needs of the Board-Superintendent Team	At least three hours	At least three hours
Additional Continuing Education, based on assessed need and Framework for School Board Development	At least 10 hours	At least five hours
Total Minimum Number of Hours	Sixteen hours, plus local district orientation	Eight hours, plus update to the Texas Education Code

Source: TAC, Title 19, Part 2, Chapter 61, Rule 61.1.

Recommendation 1:

Obtain the required amount of board training mandated by state law.

Each year, the superintendent and board president should survey individual board members to obtain input about the types of continuing education training they would like to attend to improve their effectiveness as board members. The administration should seek training tailored to specific training needs.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent and board president survey individual board members to obtain input about the types of continuing education training they would like to attend to improve their effectiveness as board members.	June 2003 and Annually Thereafter
2.	The superintendent provides the board with a list of training opportunities for board members.	June 2003
3.	The board meets and agrees to obtain the required training necessary to comply with the TAC.	June 2003
4.	Each board member attends training relevant to school district governance, team-building and other topics of interest.	June 2003 and Ongoing
5.	The superintendent coordinates 78th Legislative Session training for board members to coincide with the end of the session.	July 2003

6.	All board members attend 78th Legislative Session update "of sufficient length" (TAC) to address any legislative changes.	August 2003
7.	The superintendent informs board members of specific training opportunities relevant to individual board member requests and needs.	September 2004 and Quarterly Thereafter
8.	Board members continue to obtain training, including online offerings of interest to them and required to meet TAC requirements.	Ongoing per TAC

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The RLISD board has not formally clarified its expectations, goals and objectives for the superintendent. The current superintendent started employment with the district in April 2002, following resignations of two superintendents who had served the district in a combined 18-month period. The two former superintendents resigned with little advance notice to the board. The current superintendent's annual contract is limited in content and does not offer specific guiding principles or expectations. For example, the contract includes a miscellaneous clause that "encourages" the superintendent to participate in community and civic affairs, including the chamber of commerce. However, there is no specific requirement for which the superintendent's performance may be measured by the board. In addition, the superintendent does not have performance goals.

The superintendent and the board participated in a retreat held in August 2002. However, there were no actionable outcomes from the retreat, nor were identified key issues subsequently communicated. During the review team's interviews, most board members did not communicate any superintendent expectations. One board member said he would like to see Latin introduced as a subject and have more essays required of students. However, the board member said that he had never communicated those preferences to the superintendent.

The superintendent said he had been focusing on improving the district's technology programs and daily operations; these are just some of the aspects of his job. Without strategic direction from the board or a defined vision, the superintendent can not ensure he is meeting board expectations.

Other districts meet with newly hired superintendents to discuss and agree upon expectations, which are then incorporated into the superintendent's

contract. While a board should not interfere with a district's daily operations and management, a board's vision statement, expectations and comprehensive goals for the superintendent do enhance district efficiency and operations.

The Texas Business and Education Coalition promotes positive and productive board relationships with superintendents so that together they can be strong advocates of education in the community and work to obtain the resources necessary for the district to accomplish its mission.

Recommendation 2:

Develop, document and communicate specific goals, objectives and standards of performance for the superintendent.

Under state law, the superintendent should be evaluated annually by the board. Prior to the evaluation date, the board should develop and communicate specific standards of performance to the superintendent and board expectations.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board president and other board members develop goals, objectives and standards of performance for the superintendent.	June 2003
2.	Board members meet with the superintendent to discuss and implement the new standards for the superintendent.	August 2003
3.	The superintendent reviews and signs acknowledging receipt and understanding of assigned goals, objectives and performance standards.	August 2003
4.	Board members evaluate the superintendent's performance and the board president provides regular progress updates to the superintendent.	February 2004 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

B. DISTRICT MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

TEC 11.251(c) requires a school board to ensure the annual development, implementation and revision of a district improvement plan (DIP) and campus improvement plan (CIP) for each school to improve student performance. If used properly the DIP and CIPs serve as planning tools. Section 11.252 of the TEC describes the requirements for district-level planning and decision-making. The TEC requirements are also included in the TASB policy series, or the "Blue Book," as it is known in RLISD.

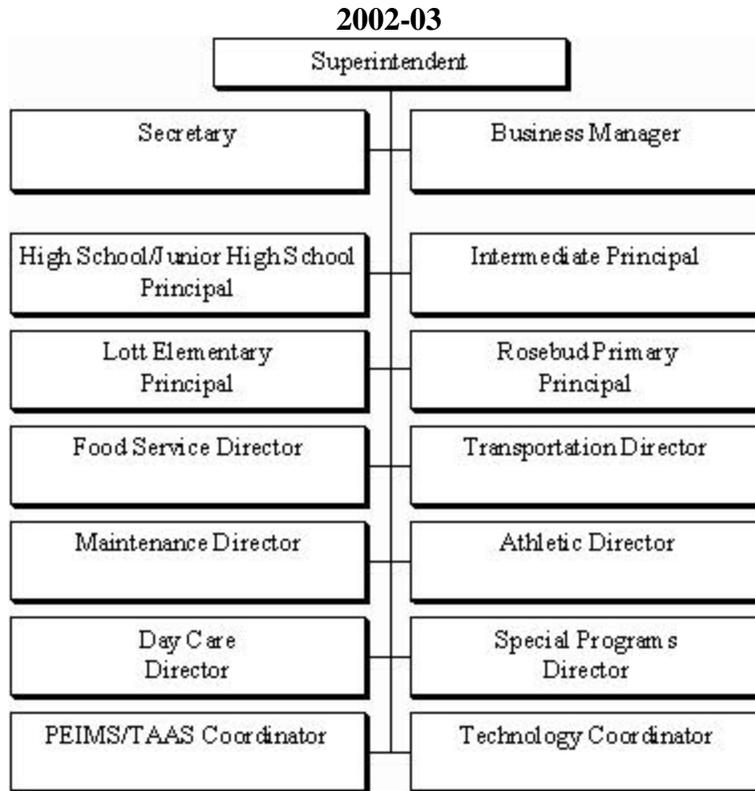
The RLISD superintendent directly supervises 14 positions as listed below:

- four school principals - junior high/high school, intermediate, elementary and primary;
- six directors - Food Services, Transportation, Maintenance, Athletics, Day Care and Special Programs; and
- three administrators and one support position - business manager, PEIMS/TAAS coordinator, technology coordinator and secretary.

The superintendent directs all district functional areas, including personnel management, facilities use and management, financial management, purchasing, technology, Transportation and Food Service. The superintendent delegates responsibility to four principals; the directors of Food Service, Transportation, Maintenance, Athletics, Special Programs and the Day Care; the business manager; and coordinators for PEIMS and Technology.

A secretary supports the superintendent and performs many of the administrative tasks associated with personnel issues. Principals oversee recruiting and hiring activities for the campuses. The board has final approval for the selection of recommended contracted employees. The district's business office handles payroll and employee benefits enrollment and administration functions. The assistant business manager oversees the payroll and benefits functions and reports to the business manager. The assistant business manager enters and updates employee information in the financial information system. The superintendent's secretary performs criminal history and background checks. **Exhibit 1-5** shows the most recent RLISD organizational chart as communicated to the review team.

Exhibit 1-5 **RLISD Organization**



Source: TSPR interviews at RLISD, 2002-03.

FINDING

Although the district has a DIP, CIPs and Technology Plan for 2002-03, RLISD does not have an overall strategic planning process.

While the district has other planning documents, including enrollment reports, nothing indicates that they are linked to each other or how any of them affect the district budget and long-term planning. For example, the DIP is primarily instructional and academically driven. It does not address broader district issues. The district and campus improvement plans have broad goals, but very limited strategies that are not linked and do not appear to reinforce one another or provide the means of achieving the broader objectives. The district does a good job of focusing on academic achievement in its plans, primarily through the measurement of TAAS scores. However, the documents, reports and information do not tie to each other or the budget planning process.

RLISD's DIP and CIP reporting complies with the TEC, but neither of the planning tools are strategically linked. Based on review team interviews with some of the stakeholders and applicable reports, some of the issues facing the district include:

- a declining enrollment of 10.9 percent from 1997 to 2003;
- new administrative staff, including the superintendent, business manager, high school principal, assistant high school principal and technology coordinator;
- recruiting new teachers to support workforce diversity;
- planning for the use of surplus ending balance funds;
- planning for the maintenance, expansion, rehabilitation and replacement of school district facilities;
- increasing revenue for key areas, including food services; and
- recognizing the increase in minority students.

Any of these issues identified by RLISD stakeholders serve as prime targets for strategic planning, since they are directly related to the district's operational trends. Elements of a strategic plan include: action steps, start and end dates, responsible parties and estimated costs or cost benefit analyses.

Although RLISD's student enrollment has steadily declined, no evidence exists to show that the district has done long-term planning related to its declining enrollment and the associated impacts to other areas of operation, such as transportation, construction of schools and food service. In fact, the district does not have a Master Facilities Plan, which is another standard school district long-range planning tool.

In 1998 *Lone Star* newsletter, TASB identified the importance of strategic planning as follows, "Strategic planning is the process by which the guiding members of an organization envision its future and develop the necessary procedures and operations to achieve that future." (*Adapted from Applied Strategic Planning, University Associates, Inc.*) *Administrative Behavior: A Study of Decision-Making Processes in Administrative Organizations* affirms that decision-making processes become easier if based on a rigorous review of data and information related to engineering and scientific processes. Decisions about personnel and budget allocations should be made after a thorough review of data relating to the district's enrollment trends, student academic performance, effectiveness of academic programs and long-term facility use.

For example, Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD's (CFBISD) DIP for 2002 includes board-adopted long-range goals for a four-year period and a strategic process and plans section. At the time that this report was being finalized, the CFBISD strategic plan was available online at <http://www.cfbisd.edu/district.htm>. In February 2001, the board and administration of La Pryor ISD updated its strategic plan and linked it to the DIP and CIP. The plan was sent to the board and employees within the district in 2000-01. Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD, which has 25,000 students, and La Pryor ISD, which has 420 students, serve as examples of

large and smaller school districts that use strategic planning methods and practices. Some districts use strategic planning as an effective management practice regardless of district size.

In August 2001, TSPR recommended that Wall ISD develop a long-range strategic plan and link the plan to the budget and other district planning documents. In October 2001, Wall ISD successfully developed and now uses a long-range strategic plan for land, facilities, finance, personnel and the curriculum.

Recommendation 3:

Develop and implement a comprehensive district strategic plan.

The district should expand the legally-mandated improvement planning process to develop a comprehensive strategic planning process. For example, declining enrollment should be directly linked to technology and facilities spending and planning, as well as budget forecasts. DIP and CIP goals for RLISD should have total costs associated with implementing individual strategies reflected. Those total costs should also be reflected in the budget, so that the plan links to resource allocation.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent develops an action plan to expand the district's improvement planning process into a strategic plan and assigns a facilitator.	June - July 2003
2.	The superintendent and the board hold public forums to elicit community involvement and input for developing the strategic vision of the district.	August 2003
3.	The board president obtains nominations from the board and the superintendent for potential members of a strategic planning and steering committee.	August 2003
4.	The board reviews the names recommended for the committee and ensures that the district and all segments of the RLISD community are represented, including board members, central administrators, principals, teachers, parents and members of the Site-Based Decision-Making Committee.	August - September 2003
5.	The board approves the composition and diversity of the district's strategic planning and steering committee.	September 2003
6.	The committee designates a chairperson.	September 2003

7.	The board president gives the committee its charge and communicates specific goals.	September 2003
8.	The strategic planning and steering committee uses surveys, interviews, working sessions and public meetings to gather information and perceptions necessary to develop a comprehensive and effective strategic plan.	September - November 2003
9.	The strategic planning and steering committee presents the initial draft of the strategic plan to the board for review and comments.	November 2003
10.	The board discusses and approves the district's strategic plan.	December 2003
11.	The superintendent directs implementation of the board's strategic vision.	January 2004 and Ongoing
12.	The superintendent and board update the strategic plan.	August - September 2004 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

Strategic planning facilitator fees range from \$1,000 to more than \$9,000. RLISD should be able to obtain a facilitator experienced in strategic planning for no more than a one-time \$4,000 fee to help start its strategic planning process. It may also be possible for RLISD to seek assistance from a larger and more experienced district, such as Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD, perhaps at a significantly reduced or nominal cost. Prior to making any commitment, RLISD should consult with both of the identified resources for technical advice and input.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Develop and implement a comprehensive district strategic plan.	(\$4,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Payroll costs	\$5,116,536	79.0%	\$4,992,814	79.5%	\$4,920,948	77.9%	\$5,110,022	78.4%
Professional and contracted services	\$386,942	6.0%	\$415,953	6.6%	\$440,290	7.0%	\$429,215	6.6%
Subtotal - payroll costs and professional and contracted services	\$5,503,478	85.0%	\$5,408,767	86.1%	\$5,361,238	84.9%	\$5,539,237	85.0%
Supplies and materials	\$599,931	9.3%	\$582,005	9.3%	\$602,084	9.5%	\$640,864	9.8%
Other operating costs	\$186,554	2.9%	\$186,805	3.0%	\$208,971	3.3%	\$219,419	3.4%
Debt service	\$0	0.0%	\$0	0.0%	\$0	0.0%	\$0	0.0%
Capital outlay	\$188,400	2.9%	\$101,402	1.6%	\$141,525	2.2%	\$115,248	1.8%
Total	\$6,478,363	100.0%	\$6,278,979	100.0%	\$6,313,818	100.0%	\$6,514,768	100.0%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1999-2000 through 2001-02 and PEIMS, 2002-03.

While the district's payroll costs have slightly decreased from 79 percent of the budget in 1999-2000 to 78.4 percent in 2002-03, its budget spending for professional and contracted services has increased from 6.0 to 6.7 percent for the same period. RLISD's professional and contracted services include Region 12 services, including an internet access interlocal agreement; and payment to the Falls County tax assessor for tax collection.

As part of its school performance review, the Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) asks districts to select several other school districts as peer districts. TSPR compares the district against the selected peer districts to identify the district's strengths and areas in need of improvement. For comparison purposes, RLISD selected Rogers, Mart, Franklin and Corrigan-Camden as peer districts. **Exhibit 1-7** compares RLISD's budget to selected peer districts for payroll and professional and

contracted services. Among its peers, RLISD has the highest percentage of its budget dedicated to payroll costs and professional and contracted services.

Exhibit 1-7
Budgeted Payroll Costs and Professional and Contracted Services
RLISD and Peer Districts
2002-03

District	Enrollment	Payroll Costs and Professional and Contracted Services	Total Budget	Percent of Budget
RLISD	953	\$5,539,237	\$6,514,768	85.0%
Rogers	863	\$4,697,061	\$5,814,512	80.8%
Mart	678	\$4,452,889	\$5,530,135	80.5%
Franklin	945	\$6,184,948	\$7,608,100	81.3%
Corrigan-Camden	1,142	\$7,044,680	\$8,839,638	79.7%

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2002-03.

Exhibit 1-8 shows that the average number of years of experience for RLISD teachers was below the state's average from 1997-98 through 1999-2000, but exceeded the state average from 2000-01 to 2002-03.

Exhibit 1-8
Average Years of Teaching Experience
RLISD and State
1997-98 through 2002-03

Entity	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
RLISD	10.9	11.6	11.2	12.8	14.1	13.0
State	11.8	11.8	11.9	11.9	11.9	11.0

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1997-98 through 2001-02 and PEIMS, 2002-03.

School districts require adequate staffing levels to provide quality education to students. TEA categorizes school district staff into six groups including teachers, professional support, campus administration, central administration, educational aides and auxiliary staff.

The state mandates the minimum base salary that school districts must pay classroom teachers, full-time librarians, full-time counselors and full-time nurses. There is no state minimum salary for any other position classification. **Exhibit 1-9** provides the state base salary schedule for 2002-03 for teachers, librarians, counselors and full-time nurses only.

Exhibit 1-9
State Minimum Salary Schedule
2002-03

Years of Experience Credited	Monthly Salary	Annual Salary (10 month contract)
0	\$2,424	\$24,240
1	\$2,481	\$24,810
2	\$2,539	\$25,390
3	\$2,596	\$25,960
4	\$2,717	\$27,170
5	\$2,838	\$28,380
6	\$2,959	\$29,590
7	\$3,072	\$30,720
8	\$3,178	\$31,780
9	\$3,279	\$32,790
10	\$3,373	\$33,730
11	\$3,464	\$34,640
12	\$3,549	\$35,490
13	\$3,628	\$36,280
14	\$3,705	\$37,050
15	\$3,776	\$37,760
16	\$3,844	\$38,440
17	\$3,908	\$39,080
18	\$3,968	\$39,680
19	\$4,026	\$40,260
20 and more	\$4,080	\$40,800

Source: TEA, Division of State Funding, November 2002.

Exhibit 1-10 displays RLISD averaged salary trends by employee classification. Average salaries have increased for teachers and school administration and have decreased for professional support and central administration from 1998-99 through 2002-03.

Exhibit 1-10
RLISD Average Salaries (Regular Duties Only)
1998-99 through 2002-03

Classification	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	Percent Change from 1998-99 through 2002-03
Teachers	\$30,879	\$33,784	\$34,082	\$35,390	\$35,421	14.7%
Professional Support	\$40,077	\$41,582	\$35,753	\$37,014	\$37,115	(7.4%)
School Administration	\$43,618	\$46,473	\$47,500	\$48,024	\$49,700	13.9%
Central Administration	\$59,200	\$56,230	\$50,097	\$42,220	\$46,875	(20.8%)

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1998-99 through 2001-02 and PEIMS, 2002-03.

Exhibit 1-11 shows RLISD's teacher turnover rate exceeded the state average by 6 to 7 percentage points in 1997-98 and 1998-99; however, the district fell below the state average in 2000-01 and 2002-03.

Exhibit 1-11
Turnover Rate for Teachers
RLISD, Peer Districts and State
1997-98 through 2001-02

District	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
RLISD	20.7%	21.9%	16.1%	12.0%	15.1%
Mart	17.3%	7.4%	16.7%	21.6%	41.7%
Corrigan-Camden	12.8%	18.3%	14.4%	15.6%	21.3%
Rogers	8.0%	41.5%	15.7%	7.5%	12.2%

Franklin	7.4%	4.5%	11.3%	8.6%	12.1%
State	13.3%	15.5%	15.0%	16.0%	15.7%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1997-98 through 2001-02.

Exhibit 1-12 presents a comparison of RLISD's average salaries to its peer districts and the state in 2002-03. RLISD teachers earned the second highest salaries among its peers, though less than the state average. Professional support positions, school administrators and central administrators earned less than selected peers and the state.

Exhibit 1-12
Average Staff Salaries
RLISD, Peer Districts and State
2002-03

District	Teachers	Professional Support	School Administration	Central Administration
Corrigan-Camden	\$34,964	\$39,415	\$52,712	\$58,568
Franklin	\$40,792	\$39,748	\$55,089	\$59,633
Mart	\$34,802	\$42,613	\$61,291	\$64,892
Rogers	\$35,268	\$39,710	\$58,190	\$56,379
RLISD	\$35,421	\$37,115	\$49,700	\$46,875
Peer Average	\$36,457	\$40,372	\$56,820	\$59,868
State	\$39,972	\$47,640	\$61,214	\$64,259

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2002-03.

FINDING

The district has not adjusted its staffing levels to be proportionate with the decline in its student enrollment. RLISD has experienced a steady decline over a six-year period, except for 2000-01 when the district had a slight enrollment increase of 1.8 percent from the previous year. Since 1997-98 the district's student enrollment has declined 10.9 percent while staffing levels have dropped 6.0 percent. In addition, the district has reduced staff in the classroom and in the campus administrative level while central administrative positions and support staff have increased.

Exhibit 1-13 shows enrollment and staffing trends.

Exhibit 1-13
RLISD Enrollment Decline and Staffing Allocation
1997-98 through 2002-03

School Year	Enrollment Count	Percent Change From Previous Year	Total Staff	Percent Change From Previous Year
1997-98	1,070	N/A	162.2	N/A
1998-99	1,045	(2.4%)	155.7	(4.0%)
1999-2000	1,022	(2.3%)	156.9	1.0%
2000-01	1,041	1.8%	147.1	(7.0%)
2001-02	968	(7.5%)	155.7	6.0%
2002-03*	953	(1.6%)	152.5	(2.1%)

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1997-98 through 2001-02 and PEIMS, 2002-03.

Based on AEIS and PEIMS information reported by RLISD in 1997-98, the district had one position in central administration. In 2002-03, with nearly a 10.9 percent decrease in student enrollment the district filled three additional positions in its central administration staffing; a 200 percent increase. The district also increased its professional support ranks from 2.9 positions to five during the same period; a 72.4 percent increase. Conversely, RLISD decreased its number of teachers by 7.4 percent from 1997-98 to 2002-03. At the same time, the district cut educational aides by 16.4 percent and reduced campus administration by 19.4 percent.

Exhibit 1-14 summarizes the district's staffing levels from 1997-98 through 2002-03.

Exhibit 1-14
RLISD Staffing
1997-98 through 2002-03

Staff/Enrollment Classification	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	Percent Change
Teachers	82.4	81.0	79.2	79.4	81.0	76.3	(7.4%)
Professional Support	2.9	4.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	5.0	72.4%
Campus Administration	6.2	5.5	5.3	5.0	4.5	5.0	(19.4%)
Central	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	3.0	3.0	200.0%

Administration							
Educational Aides	25.0	25.4	24.5	23.7	21.0	20.9	(16.4%)
Auxiliary	44.7	41.4	42.9	33.0	42.2	42.3	(5.4%)
Total Staff	162.2	158.3	156.9	147.1	155.7	152.5	(6.0%)
Total Student Enrollment	1,070	1,045	1,022	1,041	968	953	(10.9%)

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1997-98 through 2001-02 and PEIMS 2002-03.

Some districts use staffing allocation formulas to project the number of teachers, administrators and other positions that are needed to operate the district. These formulas and workforce planning strategies help districts maintain control of staffing levels and staffing equity across schools while taking enrollment levels into consideration. Elgin Independent School District (EISD) is in the process of implementing a staffing allocation formula that ties directly to student enrollment in order to reduce its non-teaching positions. EISD has recognized a \$99,000 savings just in the initial year of its implementation.

Recommendation 4:

Implement a staffing allocation formula based on fluctuations in student enrollment.

The district should establish staffing allocation formulas and calculate the appropriate staffing levels for each school and department as enrollment trends dictate.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent implements a hiring freeze and directs campus administrators to only fill critical positions.	June 2003
2.	The superintendent and the business manager develop staffing allocations for each school and department based upon enrollment projection and analyses.	June - July 2003
3.	Staffing allocation formulas are presented to the board for approval.	July 2003
4.	The superintendent uses the staffing allocation formulas and enrollment projections in the 2003-04 budget process.	August 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

RLISD's total district staffing has decreased by 6 percent along with the 10.9 percent decrease in its student enrollment. In order for RLISD staffing levels to mirror student enrollment the district will need to adjust its staffing levels by another 5 percent (152.5 employees x 0.05 reduction = 7.6 positions) or 7.6 positions. To be conservative, the review team estimates only reducing that number by half or 3.8 total positions. The average salary of an RLISD employee is \$26,792 adding a benefit rate of 12 percent (\$26,792 average salary x 1.12 benefit rate = \$30,007 average salary plus benefits) equals \$30,007. This totals an annual savings estimate of \$114,027 (3.8 positions x \$30,007 average salary = \$114,027 in total savings). TSPR assumes that only half the savings will be realized in the first year.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Implement a staffing allocation formula based on fluctuations in student enrollment.	\$57,014	\$114,027	\$114,027	\$114,027	\$114,027

FINDING

RLISD does not recruit minority teachers to better reflect the demographic make-up of its students. **Exhibit 1-15** shows the minority composition of the teaching staff is 2.6 percent and does not mirror the 41.1 percent composition of the district's minority student population. RLISD does not have a recruitment plan, nor does it have a minority recruitment strategy.

**Exhibit 1-15
RLISD Teachers and Students by Ethnicity
2002-03**

Ethnicity	Ethnic Percent Distribution of Teachers	Ethnic Percent Distribution of Students
African-American	1.3%	19.4%
Hispanic	1.3%	21.7%
Anglo	97.4%	58.3%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.0%
Native American	0.0%	0.5%

Total	100.0%	100.0%
--------------	---------------	---------------

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2002-03.

There were two minority teachers at RLISD in 2002-03. **Exhibit 1-16** shows that there were no Hispanic teachers in the district from 1997-98 through 2000-01. In addition, the number of African-American teachers on staff declined from 2.5 in 1997-98 to 1.0 in 2002-03.

Exhibit 1-16
Number of Teachers by Ethnicity
1997-98 through 2002-03

Teachers by Ethnicity	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
African-American	2.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%
Hispanic	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	1.0%
Anglo	79.9%	79.5%	76.7%	77.4%	79.0%	74.3%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Native American	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total Teachers	82.4%	81.0%	79.2%	79.4%	81.0%	76.3%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1997-98 through 2001-02 and PEIMS, 2002-03.

In interviews, the superintendent said the district hopes to increase the ethnic diversity of its teaching staff. However, the district has no plan to target recruiting efforts toward minority teachers who have ethnic backgrounds similar to some of RLISD's students. The superintendent said that the district has had a hard time just ensuring that it has certified teachers in the classroom. He added that the district does not receive many minority applicants. Currently, the district relies on the effort and initiative of qualified minorities who may apply, as opposed to districtwide recruitment strategies to target qualified minorities.

According to a collaborative study conducted by TEA, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, State Board for Educator Certification and the Texas Center for Education research, strong recruitment is one half of the equation to increase the supply of good teachers. There is not a strong effort by RLISD to market for minority teachers even though RLISD has a sizable minority student population.

Several other districts promote cultural diversity in staffing programs and practices by exploring collaborative opportunities to target and recruit qualified minority teachers. For example, Glen Rose ISD (GRISD) holds an annual joint job fair with Somervell County that provides an opportunity for mutual benefit. This small community pools resources in marketing its area. Teachers who would require relocation to accept a position in GRISD can simultaneously have spouses interviewed at the county for employment opportunities.

Recommendation 5:

Develop a policy and long-term plan for recruiting and hiring qualified, ethnically diverse teachers to better match the district's student demographics.

If the district hired additional qualified minority teachers, it could provide its minority students with additional role models and enable teachers to communicate with students based on shared cultural backgrounds.

RLISD needs to take steps to target and recruit qualified minority teachers, including using current minority teachers as technical advisors in developing a sound recruitment strategy, enlisting local and regional media to publicize the minority teacher shortage; providing incentives to teachers who are currently working toward certification; and developing a college recruitment and relations program with predominantly minority institutions of higher education as well as other teacher training instructions. Other resources are available through TEA.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent creates a team of school administrators and teachers to develop a comprehensive teacher workforce diversity plan.	July 2003
2.	The workforce diversity team sets goals for recruiting qualified ethnic minority teachers including long-range staffing requirements.	October 2003
3.	The workforce diversity team develops and recommends internal processes to increase diversity in minority retention using elements such as mentoring, task force assignments, community outreach to minority parents and other special assignments.	October 2003
4.	The workforce diversity team presents the proposed workforce diversity teacher recruitment plan to the superintendent and board for approval.	December 2003
5.	The superintendent implements the workforce diversity teacher	January

	plan.	2004
6.	The workforce diversity team continuously monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of the minority teacher recruitment plan and suggests any improvements to the superintendent, as appropriate.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost of developing a workforce diversity teacher plan includes recruiting at colleges and universities that produce qualified minority candidates. The cost of attending at least two career fairs at predominately minority institutions of higher education can be estimated at \$500 per event, annually, including registration and travel costs. The suggested media releases should not cost the district and should include special news features, district releases and stories of local interest. The district could also use free mediums, such as the Internet, to recruit minority candidates.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Develop a policy and long-term plan for recruiting and hiring qualified, ethnically diverse teachers to match the district's student demographics	(\$1,000)	(\$1,000)	(\$1,000)	(\$1,000)	(\$1,000)

FINDING

The district does not have written, standard operating procedures for human resources administrative procedures, functions and processes. RLISD does not have an operating procedures manual that reflects board policies and provides day-to-day instructions for staff.

The secretary to the superintendent performs most of the administrative tasks related to personnel activities and operations, including:

- posting job vacancies; maintaining personnel files;
- verifying employment references; and
- preparing special employment reports.

Staff members who were interviewed said the district does not have a systematic method or practice for communicating internal policies or procedural changes. They said that they often do not learn about revised procedures until after-the-fact. During focus group interviews, support staff expressed a high level of dissatisfaction and said they felt "kept in the

dark" about performance expectations. Some staff interviewed said that performance expectations are not always made clear.

Recommendation 6:

Develop an operating procedures manual for human resources functions and cross-train an additional staff member to perform human resources duties.

A manual will provide standardized procedures and keep staff informed on processes and expectations. Each area should develop desk manuals to ensure continuity of work during absences and vacancies. The manual should contain goals, organizational structure and detailed procedures for carrying out the functions of the human resources. The superintendent should also require cross training of an additional position in human resources processes as a backup to his secretary.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent identifies an administrative staff person to handle human resources duties.	June 2003
2.	The secretary to the superintendent documents operating procedures and compiles these procedures into a human resources manual.	June - September 2003
3.	The secretary to the superintendent presents the completed manual to superintendent for approval.	October - November 2003
4.	The secretary to the superintendent uses the manual to cross-train the individual designated to perform back-up human resources duties.	November 2003
5.	The secretary to the superintendent and the designated backup updates the human resources manual as needed.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT INITIATIVES

School districts must be responsive to the needs of their community, including students, parents, non-parent residents, taxpayers, businesses and other political subdivisions and political interest groups. In its *Annual Synthesis, A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family and Community Connections on Student Achievement* released in 2002, the National Center for Family and Community Connections with Families and Schools reported, "When schools, families and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer and like school more." A high level of community involvement enables districts to partner with the community to accurately and efficiently gain public input from all resident stakeholders.

FINDING

RLISD does not have an effective communication strategy for parents and community stakeholders. The only newsletter published by the district, *Update*, targets parents of special needs students.

A TSPR parent survey shows that a majority of parents do not feel that the district regularly communicates with them. Additionally, parents do not think district facilities are available and/or open for community use and are not aware of the district's need for volunteers to help students or to participate in various school programs. The district lacks a structured and strategic two-way communication with residents, civic organizations, businesses and area churches. Some board members who were interviewed said that it has been historically difficult to obtain input from some community segments. District newsletters or other forms of communication sent to area organizations help districts publicize important school events.

In addition, the district's Web site does not post news, board minutes, upcoming events or volunteer opportunities. Several school personnel appeared unaware of RLISD's Web site when interviewed by the review team. The district has recently made a sizable investment in technology but does not maximize its Web site to become an interactive and accessible communication medium for the community.

RLISD has relied exclusively on local newspaper coverage to promote district events and activities. The district also uses informal channels of

communication, such as exist in smaller communities, to convey information and concerns on district performance or receive information.

Recommendation 7:

Develop and use multiple avenues of communication to enhance outreach to the community.

By becoming involved in the surrounding communities, the superintendent will engage stakeholders in RLISD's successes and progress. The district should use different avenues of communication including the district's Web site, a district newsletter and periodic community involvement forums.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent designates a community involvement coordinator from existing staff to handle communication responsibilities, including promoting district events and activities and soliciting input from community members.	August 2003
2.	The superintendent attends community meetings in Rosebud, Lott and other communities in the district to engage stakeholders and groups in the success of the district.	May 2003 and Ongoing
3.	The community involvement coordinator for the district establishes a Web-based method of capturing public input and markets the district Web site to stakeholders.	September 2003
4.	The community involvement coordinator publishes a web-based newsletter with hardcopies mailed to stakeholders who may not have computer access.	October - November 2003
5.	The community involvement coordinator provides timely and more diverse information in the district newsletter, as well as on the Web site.	December 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

This chapter reviews the educational service delivery of the Rosebud-Lott Independent School District (RLISD) in the following sections:

- A. Instructional Program Delivery
- B. Student Performance
- C. Special Programs
- D. Safety and Security
- E. Co-curricular and Extracurricular Programs

School districts must provide high quality educational services in the most effective and efficient manner. This requires that districts have adequate processes in place to identify student educational needs, provide programs to meet those needs and measure student performance as a result of these programs. These functions represent the most vital mission for every school district. Effective delivery of educational services requires a school district to make optimum use of its human and financial resources. School districts also must adopt relevant, up-to-date board policies that direct the management of the instructional process. Effective districts ensure allocation of adequate resources to support the design and ongoing maintenance of appropriate curricular programs. Districts must also use results of state assessment tests to evaluate and monitor educational programs.

BACKGROUND

RLISD, located in Falls County, serves 953 students in 2002-03 in five schools as well as in a special education cooperative and an alternative education and a disciplinary alternative education program. Regional Education Service Center XII (Region 12) located in Waco, Texas serves RLISD. Region 12 spans 12 counties in Central Texas, which include 78 school districts.

For comparison purposes, RLISD selected Corrigan-Camden, Franklin, Mart and Rogers Independent School Districts as its peer districts.

Exhibit 2-1 shows RLISD's schools, the grades the schools serve and their enrollment for 2002-03.

Exhibit 2-1
RLISD Schools and Enrollment
2002-03

School	Grades	Students	Percent of Total
Rosebud-Lott High School	Grades 9-12	330	34.6%
Rosebud-Lott Junior High	Grades 7-8	160	16.8%
Rosebud Intermediate	Grades 4-6	113	11.9%

Lott Elementary	Grades K-6	156	16.4%
Rosebud Primary	Grades PreK-3	189	19.8%
Rosebud-Lott Learning Center		5	0.5%
Total		953	100.0%

Source: Texas Education Agency, Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) 2002-03

RLISD budgeted instructional expenditures of \$3,628 for each student in 2001-02. **Exhibit 2-2** shows that RLISD's expenditures per student were higher than the state average and third in its peer group. RLISD spent a larger portion of its instructional expenditures on career and technology education (CATE) than the state average and its peer districts. Additionally, the district ranked second highest among its peers in the percent of instructional expenditures devoted to regular education and budgeted more than the state average for compensatory education. RLISD, however, spent less than the state average for its special education, Gifted and Talented (G/T) and Bilingual/English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. RLISD's percent of instructional expenditures for career and technology education and compensatory education were higher than the state average.

Exhibit 2-2
Budgeted Instructional Expenditures
RLISD, Peer Districts, Region 12 and State
2002-03

District	Total Instructional Budgeted Expenditures	Instructional Expenditures Per Student*	Bilingual/ESL Programs	CATE	Comp Education	G/T Programs	Regular Educational Programs	Special Education Programs
Corrigan-Camden	\$4,542,778	\$3,978	3.9	4.6	16.9	3.3	53.7	17.4
Franklin	\$4,334,129	\$4,586	0.1	3.8	7.5	1.8	77.3	9.5
RLISD	\$2,654,018	\$3,914	0.0	7.2	6.6	2.8	68.1	15.3
Mart	\$2,819,476	\$3,267	0.0	6.7	0.4	1.0	79.2	12.7
Rogers	\$3,591,222	\$3,768	1.6	7.0	8.5	0.5	70.9	11.5
Region 12	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
State	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2002-03.

*Includes instruction and instructional leadership expenditures.

Exhibit 2-3 shows the ethnicity of the students in RLISD. students are 58.3 percent Anglo, 21.7 percent are Hispanic, 19.4 percent are African American and 0.5 percent are Native American.

Exhibit 2-3
RLISD Student Population Demographics
2002-03

District	Student Enrollment	Racial/Ethnic Percentage				Percent Economically Disadvantaged
		Percent African American	Percent Hispanic	Percent Anglo	Percent Other	
Corrigan-Camden	1,142	25.2%	31.1%	43.2%	0.5%	66.6%
Franklin	945	9.0%	8.5%	82.2%	0.3%	38.2%
Mart	678	24.8%	5.6%	69.6%	0.0%	51.6%
RLISD	953	19.4%	21.7%	58.3%	0.5%	49.0%
Rogers	863	2.9%	17.6%	79.3%	0.2%	39.6%
Region 12	139,468	23.2%	22.0%	52.6%	2.2%	49.9%
State	4,239,911	14.3%	42.7%	39.8%	3.2%	51.9%

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2002-03

Exhibit 2-4 shows the district's property value per student and the percent of students passing the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) in 2001-02 for RLISD, its peer districts, Region 12 and the state.

Exhibit 2-4
Percent of All Students Passing All TAAS Tests
RLISD, Peer Districts, Region 12 and State
2001-02

District Name	Percent of Students Passing TAAS	Rank by Performance
Rogers	96.8%	1
Franklin	90.8%	2
RLISD	88.0%	3
Corrigan-Camden	81.9%	4
Mart	80.7%	5

Region 12	85.2%	N/A
State	85.3%	N/A

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

In its peer group, RLISD has the second lowest property value per student. But the district ranks third in its peer group in student TAAS test scores. Franklin-the only district in the peer group with a property value per student higher than the state average-ranks second in performance. RLISD outperformed both Region 12 and state averages on overall TAAS passing rates.

Exhibit 2-5 indicates that RLISD has a better attendance rate than Region 12 and the state as well as a lower dropout rate. Both attendance and dropout rates are recorded for the year prior to the reporting year due to the availability of the finalized data.

Exhibit 2-5
Attendance Rate and Dropout Rate
RLISD, Peer Districts, Region 12 and State
2000-01

District	Attendance Rate	Dropout Rate
RLISD	96.0%	0.4%
Corrigan-Camden	95.9%	0.4%
Franklin	95.8%	0.9%
Mart	97.4%	0.0%
Rogers	96.6%	0.2%
Region 12	95.8%	1.1%
State	95.5%	1.0%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

A. INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM DELIVERY

A district that properly uses its resources can help students to achieve significant progress in their studies. TEA provides districts with annual reports from its Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) and its Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS). The reports contain the district's performance on statewide tests as well as demographic, staffing and financial data. Districts can use the reports as tools to evaluate the effectiveness of their educational programs.

Texas schools administer a series of criterion-referenced tests. Students must master 75 percent of the objectives for each criterion to pass the test. These tests are based on a statewide curriculum called the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS.) Until recently, Texas used the TAAS test to evaluate students' mastery of the TEKS. Texas schools will begin using a new test-the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)-in 2002-03. All districts will conduct the TAKS test during the spring of each school year. Districts and schools can choose to use additional tests to evaluate the effectiveness of their academic programs.

FINDING

RLISD does not have curriculum guides for courses at any grade level. The school principals reported that since they do not have curriculum guides, they give teachers copies of the TEKS according to subject and grade level as a basic guide. There is no mention of a plan to develop curriculum guides in either the 2001-02 or 2002-03 District Improvement Plan (DIP). None of the schools' most recent campus improvement plans (CIPs) offer plans to create curriculum guides. Schools updated their CIPs in 2000-01.

Curriculum guides serve as work plans for teachers to use in the classroom. They provide direction on student objectives, prerequisite skills, instructional materials, resources, classroom strategies and assessment methods. Texas school districts align their curriculum guides to the TEKS. This ensures that teachers present the information necessary for student success on the statewide testing program. Several principals said that they use the new TAKS guides that are available on the TEA Web site. The TAKS guides have scope and sequence documents that align the TEKS with corresponding TAKS objectives in suggested six-week timelines. However, the district does not centrally coordinate the principals' efforts.

TSPR survey results indicate that 28 percent of teachers disagree with the statement that the district provided curriculum guides for all grades and subjects. The same percentage indicated that the curriculum guides are not appropriately aligned and coordinated. A large number of the teachers, 40 percent, also disagreed that the district had curriculum guides that clearly outlined what to teach and how to teach it. Since the district does not provide curriculum guides, principals at each school said that teachers use TEKS to create their lesson plans.

The Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA) publishes established goals and guidelines to prepare administrators and teachers for districtwide curriculum development and alignment efforts. **Exhibit 2-6** lists the TASA goals.

Exhibit 2-6
TASA Curriculum Leadership Cooperative Goals for Curriculum Development

1. The curriculum development process will allow for the input and interaction of classroom teachers with those serving in developmental roles. This interaction will allow teachers to integrate ideas and materials into planning and teaching so that they will have ownership of the guides.
2. The development process will be open-ended so that curriculum documents can be refined and updated as needed and can become more comprehensive. Curriculum development will align the written, the taught and the tested curricula to insure a high percentage of learner outcomes.
3. The curriculum for a course or grade level subject will define that course in a finite set of objectives which will be few in number, broad in scope and aimed at developing in students an integrated understanding of that course or subject.
4. The curriculum documents (resource packets) will be a mechanism for collecting, organizing and sharing teachers' effective classroom practices and ideas related to accomplishing course objectives.
5. The curriculum documents will address the development of students' cognitive thinking skills. They will define the course or subject for teachers and students and will include the development of student thinking as a priority.
6. The curriculum documents will be designed to reduce teachers' paperwork in linking daily lesson plans; student instructional activities; student performance assessments to instructional objectives; and the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and in documenting mastery of curriculum objectives.
7. Curriculum documents will be as comprehensive as possible to provide teachers with quality information to help in the election of instructional activities, strategies, resources and assessment alternatives.
8. Curriculum documents will address the TEKS in a format that is easy for

- classroom teachers to use.
9. Curriculum documents will be differentiated to meet the needs of special population learners.

Source: TASA, Texas Center for Curriculum Management Audits, 2002.

Kerrville ISD (KISD) has curriculum guides for each grade level and subject. KISD curriculum guides contain aligned student objectives, instructional strategies, instructional resources and assessments. The district aligned its curriculum with the ACT/SAT and PSAT objectives, national standards and TAAS objectives. KISD updates its curriculum guides regularly and has a *Curriculum Planning Five-Year Schedule*. The curriculum writers are master teachers in the district and align instructional materials based upon their classroom experience, certifications and previous training. KISD also aligns best practices for instruction with the Professional Development Assessment System (PDAS)-the system Texas public schools use to assess teacher performance-and posts them on the district's automated, Web-based program. This makes the information accessible to all teachers, staff and administrators. The district has update efforts in place to address the state's change to the TAKS and addresses curriculum development and updates in its annual district improvement plan (DIP).

Region 12 offers training to districts in creating curriculum guides using TEKS as a basic guide. Region 12 also offers training for teachers in developing lesson plans.

Most districts that use curriculum guides for all courses develop and update them according to an established calendar. Districts using curriculum guides report results such as improved student productivity; clear student objectives by subject matter; increased control of resources, programs and personnel; effective design and delivery practices; and the transformation of curriculum guides into usable management tools. Many of these districts use teams of teachers to develop new or updated guides during the summer and include districtwide curriculum development efforts in their annual DIPs and corresponding CIPs.

Recommendation 8:

Develop and update curriculum guides for all courses and grade levels on a five-year schedule and include corresponding language in the District Improvement Plan.

RLISD should identify and review curriculum guides and resources that other districts like KISD are using successfully. The district should hire a

consultant to provide help for curriculum training and assistance. Region 12 has consultants that can provide this expertise. The district should use the materials it finds in this process to develop and update its own curriculum guides. Region 12 also offers training in TEXSTAR, which is a coordinated system for teachers to use in planning lessons that include all of the TEKS objectives as minimum requirement. In addition, the district should establish a team of designated lead teachers, one from Rosebud Primary, two from Lott Elementary, two from Rosebud intermediate, two from Rosebud-Lott Junior High and two from Rosebud-Lott High school and train them to develop and update the curriculum.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs all principals to assign teachers to serve as lead teachers or curriculum specialists on a curriculum development and update team and requests a plan for professional training, curriculum development and update.	June 2003
2.	The superintendent instructs the principals and curriculum development team members to contact Region 12, KISD and outside curriculum specialists to obtain information on curriculum development training and curriculum guides.	June - July 2003
3.	The principals report their progress to the superintendent and request permission for curriculum training for the lead teachers.	July 2003
4.	The curriculum development team assesses and prioritizes districtwide courses for curriculum development and works with outside consultants to develop a three-year curriculum guide schedule that includes updates and selected curriculum guides for the first year of schedule implementation.	July - September 2003
5.	The principals submit the three-year schedule and curriculum plan to the superintendent and board for review and approval.	October 2003
6.	The principals monitor curriculum development, ensure that curriculum guides are developed and updated according to the established schedule and make any necessary revisions.	October 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This fiscal impact is based on the assumption that the district will provide curriculum development training and then pay an annual stipend of \$1,500 to lead teachers from each of the district's schools, one from Rosebud Primary, two from Lott Elementary, two from Rosebud Intermediate, two from Rosebud-Lott Junior High and two from Rosebud-Lott High school for a total of nine lead teachers to combine as a curriculum development and update committee (\$1,500 stipend x 9 lead teachers = \$13,500).

This fiscal impact also assumes initial consulting costs of \$3,000 to provide training to the lead teachers chosen for the curriculum development team. These teachers, in turn, will also then be able to provide in-house training to teachers at their respective schools.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
One-time cost of curriculum development training.	(\$3,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Develop and update curriculum guides for all courses and grade levels on a five-year schedule and include corresponding language in the District Improvement Plan.	(\$13,500)	(\$13,500)	(\$13,500)	(\$13,500)	(\$13,500)
Net (costs)/savings	(\$16,500)	(\$13,500)	(\$13,500)	(\$13,500)	(\$13,500)

FINDING

There is no districtwide vertical alignment between grade levels by subject area and between the junior high school and the high school. The district is not using strategies for improving student achievement by easing student transitions from junior high school to high school through vertical alignment and vertical teaming.

Vertical alignment is a technique that districts use to ensure that its curriculum and instruction are consistent from one grade level to the next. The technique helps districts teach their students everything they need in one grade level to succeed at the next grade level. Districts that practice vertical alignment team teachers and students at one grade level with teachers and students in the next grade level. To facilitate the process, districts form vertical teams of teachers and principals.

All of RLISD's existing efforts to transition students from one grade level to the next are informal efforts of individual teachers. The principal at Rosebud Intermediate School said that the intermediate teachers independently contact teachers at both the elementary and junior high schools during one of the four designated staff development days at the beginning of the year. But the district does not have any formal vertical alignment efforts. The principals said that there is a lack of organized vertical alignment between the schools involving administrators, teachers and guidance counselors. Without this alignment, there is little curriculum

connection for students as they transition from one grade to the next and from one school to the next.

Region 12 offers an Enhanced Curriculum Cooperative in which many of its districts participate. The cooperative provides curriculum alignment training and assistance to teachers and administrators. RLISD currently does not belong to this cooperative. Region 12 is available to work with the district to implement this effort for the next school year.

Ingram ISD (IISD) has established grade level and vertical teams to establish vertical alignment in its curriculum. All the teachers from each grade level work together to develop six-week plans. The teachers agree to teach certain objectives during a six-week period and test students on these objectives. Common planning of six-week instruction gives teachers better information on their students' performance. Vertical teams assist in coordinating instruction in a content area across grade levels. Vertical teams also assist with developing and updating the curriculum.

IISD has vertical teams for each content area as well. Each vertical team consists of team leaders from each grade level. For example, the vertical team for English/Language Arts defined a reading program for students from pre-Kindergarten to grade 8; developed and aligned a consistent vocabulary; developed consistent teaching strategies for teachers to use from pre-Kindergarten to grade 8; established specific criteria for selecting reading materials and resources; established specific criteria for selecting staff development activities; and established criteria for the district to use when selecting and assigning reading teachers. Region 20 assisted IISD with vertical team meetings. In addition, IISD elementary teachers have common planning times and meet by grade level on a daily basis and middle school teachers meet every other day for 1.5 periods. At the high school level, teachers meet once a month by department.

Recommendation 9:

Align the district curriculum vertically and establish vertical alignment teams that report to principals.

RLISD should use Region 12 to help them initially implement the vertical school alignment process.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent instructs all principals to collaborate with site-based decision-making (SBDM) committees and form grade-level and curricular vertical alignment teams.	September 2003
----	--	----------------

2.	Principals identify vertical team leaders to represent each grade level in the vertical teams.	October 2003
3.	Principals and SBDM committees meet and develop a plan including team members and common planning periods by grade level to present to the superintendent for approval.	December 2003
4.	Each vertical team leader defines programs for their respective area with assistance from Region 12.	January 2004 and Ongoing
5.	The superintendent monitors the plan.	January 2004 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This fiscal impact assumes that the district will appoint a lead teacher for the curricular areas of English/Language Arts, mathematics, science and social studies to coordinate districtwide alignment efforts and assume the role of vertical alignment specialist. Each of these vertical alignment specialists will receive an annual \$1,000 stipend for a total of \$4,000 annually (4 lead teachers x \$1,000 = \$4,000) or \$20,000 over five years.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Align the district curriculum vertically and establish vertical alignment teams that report to principals.	(\$4,000)	(\$4,000)	(\$4,000)	(\$4,000)	(\$4,000)

FINDING

RLISD does not have a formal staff development plan. The district does not monitor teacher training hours, and the district's training program does not address specific aspects of curriculum delivery as part of an overall plan.

The district offers four staff development days at the beginning of each year and one at the end of the year. Teachers can independently request approval from their principal for additional training during the school year. Principals forward the approved requests to the district's business manager for payment. If participating teachers receive training through Region 12 and receive a certificate of completion, the superintendent's secretary inserts the certificate into the teacher's personnel file upon receipt.

The business manager said that these certificates sometimes take months to arrive at the school district. RLISD teachers and staff attending training

keep copies of all documents or certificates for training and provide originals to the district for personnel file updates, but the district does not proactively monitor this activity to ensure compliance with its policies. District administrators said they did not have a formal list of training for each teacher readily available. The business manager tracks expenditures for professional development training as a separate category of expense.

The superintendent said that between 1999-2000 and 2002-03 the district has focused its professional development programs on TEKS. Principals and administrators said that teachers have been independently attending seminars offered by Region 12 to prepare for the state's transition from the TAAS test to the TAKS test.

The Texas Education Code (TEC) Subchapter J, Staff Development, Section 21.451, prescribes certain criteria for staff development in a Texas school district. Staff development must: include training in technology; include training in conflict resolution and discipline strategies; be predominantly school-based; be related to achieving performance objectives; and be developed and approved by the school SBDM committee.

According to TEA, an effective policy on staff development should include:

- specific training requirements;
- an explanation of how school-level staff development operates;
- a focus on staff development for student achievement;
- criteria for how the district will reimburse and compensate school staff for attending training on their own time;
- requirements for special programs training (for example, gifted and talented or students with disabilities); and
- administrator training policies.

TEA allows districts to apply for waivers in its instructional calendar that allow the districts to conduct staff development training for teachers throughout the school year. Many districts take advantage of this practice to reach their staff development training goals. Examples of programs these districts offer during the year include such activities as:

- planning together to enhance existing strategies;
- sharing effective strategies;
- reflecting on curricular and instructional issues;
- analyzing student achievement results;
- reflecting on means of student achievement;
- studying research;

- practicing new methods;
- identifying students' strengths and needs;
- developing meaningful programs for students;
- implementing site-based decision-making; and
- conducting action research.

Many districts base annual staff development on areas of need for the district or for specific schools. Other districts use teacher and administrator surveys to develop a yearly training calendar. Many of these districts also track individual teacher training hours using simple computer spreadsheets such as those available in Microsoft Excel. The districts assign teachers or a staff person to update the training spreadsheet as individual teachers complete any training.

Recommendation 10:

Develop and implement a comprehensive staff development plan.

RLISD should use the annual school calendar to implement effective staff development for teachers targeted to a plan that ensures student success.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent, principals and SBDM committees discuss ways to organize a comprehensive staff development plan for the district.	September 2003
2.	Principals and SBDM committees meet to discuss staff development needs at both the school and district level.	October - December 2003
3.	Principals and SBDM committees meet and develop a plan and submit the plan to the superintendent for approval.	October - December 2003
4.	The superintendent submits the plan to the board for approval.	December 2003
5.	The superintendent implements the plan and ensures that principals monitor all teacher training and make necessary adjustments.	January 2004 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

B. STUDENT PERFORMANCE

A key function of a school district leadership team is to design and implement a successful instructional delivery system. Because of the statewide assessment, Texas students were already operating in an accountability system when the federal government enacted the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002. This act requires every U.S. public school that receives federal funds to develop and implement an accountability system which measures and reports student achievement on tests.

Since 1993, Texas has rated and accredited districts and schools based upon specific performance measures. These performance measures include the reading, writing and math portions of the TAAS, dropout rates and attendance rates. TEA evaluates districts annually and reports the results of its evaluation to each district, school and to the general public. TEA also assigns an accreditation rating to each school and district that it bases on the performance of the school or district on the statewide assessment test.

TEA bases its school accountability ratings primarily on the percent of students in all grades passing the TAAS in reading, mathematics, writing and social studies. TEA also considers dropout rates in its accountability ratings. Districts and schools must meet specific TAAS performance standards and dropout rates to achieve different TEA ratings. TEA examines the TAAS performance standards and dropout rates in two ways before it awards a performance rating. First, the entire student body of the district or school must meet the TAAS performance standards and dropout rates. Then TEA examines the performance results and dropout rates of each demographic group-African American, Asian Pacific, Hispanic, Anglo and economically disadvantaged. Each demographic segment of the district or school must meet or exceed the TAAS performance standard and dropout rate to achieve a certain performance rating. If a single demographic group does not meet the performance expectations, TEA will award a lower accountability rating.

Students in grades 3-8 and 10 must take TAAS tests. The TAAS has tests in reading, mathematics, writing, science and social studies. Reading and mathematics are given in grades 3-8 and 10. Schools give the writing portion only in grades 4, 8 and 10. Students take the science and social studies portion in grade 8 only. TEA only considers the results of those students who enrolled in the district as of late October in the school year.

In 2002-03, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) replaced the TAAS as Texas' primary means of student evaluation. Districts administered the TAKS to students in grades 3-11. Students take the math portion of the test in grades 3-11. Districts administer the reading portion of the test to students in grades 3-9; they administer the English language arts test in grades 10 and 11. Students take TAKS writing tests in grades 4 and 7; social studies in grades 8, 10 and 11; and science in grades 5, 10 and 11. The exit-level examinations are administered in grade 11. The 2003 accountability system will provide a transition from the current accountability rating system that uses TAAS results and annual dropout rates to the new accountability rating system that will use TAKS results and longitudinal completion rates. TEA also assigns an accreditation rating to each school and district that it bases on the performance of the school or district on the statewide assessment test.

The Commissioner of Education will announce the final performance indicators and accountability standards that TEA will use to rate districts and schools in 2004. TEA cannot calculate TAKS improvement measures until it receives the results from the second year of statewide testing in the summer of 2004. TEA will base the 2004 ratings on performance results from the 2003-04 school year. When the Commissioner of Education announces the 2004 accountability decisions, TEA will apply those decisions to 2002-03 performance data to the extent possible. Accountability data that TEA provides to each district and campus with the December 2003 evaluations will identify any indicators and student groups for which 2002-03 performance falls below the 2004 accountability standard. Districts will receive the notification that 2003 student performance either meets or does not meet 2004 standards.

Exhibit 2-7 presents TEA's accountability ratings for districts and campuses.

Exhibit 2-7
TEA's Accountability Ratings
2001-02

Rating	Applicability/Explanation
Exemplary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District and campus: At least 90 percent passing (reading, writing and mathematics all students and each student group* and social studies all students only) and a dropout rate of 1 percent or less for all students and each student group. • District: At least 90 percent of all students

	only passing (social studies).
Recognized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District and campus: At least 80 percent passing (reading, writing and mathematics all students and each student group and social studies all students only) and a dropout rate of 2.5 percent or less for all students and each student group. • District: At least 80 percent of all students only passing (social studies).
Academically Acceptable/Acceptable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District/Campus: At least 55 percent passing (reading, writing and mathematics all students and each student group and 50 percent passing social studies all students only) and a dropout rate of 5 percent or less for all students and each student group. • District: At least 50 percent of all students only passing (social studies).
Academically Unacceptable/Low-performing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District/Campus: Below 55 percent passing (reading, writing and mathematics all students and each student group and below 50 percent passing social studies all students only) and a dropout rate above 5 percent or less for all students and each student group. • District: Below 50 percent all students only passing (social studies).
Alternative Education (AE): Commended, AE: Acceptable, AE: Needs Peer Review, or AE: Not Rated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campuses that applied and were identified as eligible to be evaluated under alternative education procedures.
Charter schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the district level, open-enrollment charter schools receive the label Charter School. At the school level, they are given one of the four rating categories listed above, based on the regular accountability system.
Not rated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These campuses include those that do not

	serve students within the 1st- through 12th-grade span, such as pre-Kindergarten centers and early education through Kindergarten schools.
Unacceptable: Special Accreditation Investigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts have undergone an investigation as mandated in Chapter 39 of the Texas Education Code.
Suspended: Data Inquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District and campus: serious errors in data reporting that affected one or more of the base indicators used for determining accountability ratings. The errors were of such magnitude that the results were deemed unsuitable for ratings purposes.

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

**Student groups are African American, Hispanic, Anglo and Economically Disadvantaged.*

In 2002, TEA changed the ratings evaluation criteria. TEA increased the TAAS standards for reading, writing and mathematics at the Academically Acceptable/Acceptable level to 55 percent passing for all students; evaluated TAAS social studies results at the "all students" level for grade 8; implemented more rigorous dropout rate standards for Recognized (from 3 percent to 2.5 percent); and made similar changes to the dropout rate standards for Academically Acceptable/Acceptable (from 5.5 percent to 5 percent).

In 2001, the Legislature enacted the Gold Performance Acknowledgment (GPA) system to acknowledge districts and campuses for high performance on additional indicators that do not affect accountability ratings. The GPA system replaces the system of Additional Acknowledgments that were part of the accountability system since 1994. The GPA is similar to the former acknowledgment system in that any district or campus rated Academically Acceptable/Acceptable or higher may be considered for acknowledgment under the GPA system.

All of the previous Additional Acknowledgment indicators are part of the GPA, although the standards for acknowledgment may have changed. The GPA also includes indicators that the state did not previously use for acknowledgments. In 2002, TEA awarded GPA to districts and campuses

that met the acknowledgment standard on one or more of nine measures. **Exhibit 2-8** lists the nine measures that qualify schools and districts for GPA recognition.

Exhibit 2-8
TEA Gold Performance Acknowledgment System
2002-03

Measure	Awarded to:
Attendance Rate for Grades 1 - 12	Districts and campuses
Campus Comparable Improvement: Mathematics	Campuses only
Campus Comparable Improvement: Reading	Campuses only
Algebra I End-of-Course Examination Results	Districts and campuses with grades 7 and above
Advanced Academic Course Completion	Districts and campuses with grades 9 and above
Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate Examination Results	Districts and campuses with grades 11 and 12
College Admissions Test Results	Districts and campuses with graduates
TAAS/TASP Equivalency	Districts and campuses with graduates
Recommended High School Program Participation	Districts and campuses with graduates

Source: TEA, Accountability Manual, Section IV 2002.

Exhibit 2-9 shows the current Accountability Rating System that TEA uses. This system will change because of the switch to the TAKS.

Exhibit 2-9
TEA Accountability Ratings 2001-02

Rating	Applicability/Explanation
Exemplary	District and school
Recognized	District and school

Academically Acceptable	District
Acceptable	School
Academically Unacceptable	District
Low Performing	School
Alternative Education (AE): Acceptable, AE: Needs Peer Review, or AE: Not Rated	Schools that applied and were identified as eligible to be evaluated under alternative education procedures.
Charter schools	At the district level, open-enrollment charter schools receive the label Charter School. At the school level, they are given one of the four-school rating categories listed above, based on the regular accountability system.
Not rated	These schools include those that do not serve students within the first through twelfth grade span, such as pre-Kindergarten centers and early education through Kindergarten schools.
Unacceptable: Special Accreditation Investigation	Districts have undergone an investigation as mandated in Chapter 39 of the TEC.
Unacceptable: Data Quality	District: serious errors in data reporting that affected one or more of the base indicators used for determining accountability ratings. The errors were of such magnitude that the results were deemed unsuitable for ratings purposes.
Unacceptable: Data Issues	School: serious errors in data reporting that affected one or more of the base indicators used for determining accountability ratings. The errors were of such magnitude that the results were deemed unsuitable for ratings purposes.

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

FINDING

RLISD prioritizes the educational growth of students at both the districtwide and campus levels as evidenced by an overall improvement in student performance on the statewide assessment. The 2001-02 and 2002-03 DIPs and the 2001-02 CIPs for all district schools state that the district's mission "is to create a supportive learning environment that

nurtures positive self-esteem and physical well-being while enabling students to reach their fullest academic and social potential." Both the updated DIP and the 2001-02 CIPs also prioritize increases in student performance on various assessment instruments. As a result of focusing administrative and staff efforts on overall student performance gains, the district received a *Recognized* rating while two of its schools-Lott Elementary and Rosebud Intermediate School- received *Exemplary* ratings in 2001-02. **Exhibit 2-10** presents the accountability rating that TEA gave each of the district's schools. RLISD raised TAAS percentage passing rates for all subtests and all tests taken for all students combined in grades 3, 4 and 6 from 2000-01 to 2001-02.

Exhibit 2-10
RLISD Schools and Accountability Ratings
2001-02

School	Grades Served	Percent African American Students	Percent Hispanic Students	Percent Anglo Students	2001-02 Rating
Rosebud-Lott High School	9-12	13.1%	14.6%	71.6%	<i>Recognized</i>
Rosebud-Lott Junior High School	7-8	20.3%	15.2%	64.6%	<i>Recognized</i>
Rosebud Intermediate School	4-6	17.1%	25.6%	56.4%	<i>Exemplary</i>
Lott Elementary School	Kindergarten-6	22.0%	16.8%	61.3%	<i>Exemplary</i>
Rosebud Primary School	Pre-Kindergarten-3	25.9%	29.2%	43.2%	<i>Recognized</i>

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

Exhibit 2-11 demonstrates that the district maintained the quality of its academic programs between 1997-98 and 2001-02. With the exception of an *Acceptable* rating for Rosebud Primary in 1996-97, TEA awarded RLISD schools either a *Recognized* rating or *Exemplary* rating from 1996-97 through 2001-02.

Exhibit 2-11
RLISD Schools and Accountability Ratings Report
1996-967 through 2001-02

School	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Rosebud-Lott High School	<i>Recognized</i>	<i>Recognized</i>	<i>Exemplary</i>	<i>Exemplary</i>	<i>Recognized</i>
Rosebud-Lott Junior High School	<i>Recognized</i>	<i>Recognized</i>	<i>Recognized</i>	<i>Recognized</i>	<i>Recognized</i>
Rosebud Intermediate School	<i>Recognized</i>	<i>Recognized</i>	<i>Exemplary</i>	<i>Recognized</i>	<i>Exemplary</i>
Lott Elementary School	<i>Recognized</i>	<i>Recognized</i>	<i>Recognized</i>	<i>Recognized</i>	<i>Exemplary</i>
Rosebud Primary School	<i>Recognized</i>	<i>Recognized</i>	<i>Exemplary</i>	<i>Recognized</i>	<i>Recognized</i>

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1997-98 through 2001-02.

The district also met TEA's standards for the 2002 Gold Performance Acknowledgements for College Admissions and Recommended High School Program. To receive the College Admission Gold Performance Acknowledgement, at least 70 percent of non-special education graduates from the class of 2001 must have taken the SAT I or the ACT and 40 percent or more of all students and each demographic group must have scored 1,110 on the SAT I or 24 on the ACT. To receive the 2002 Gold Performance Acknowledgement for the Recommended High School Program, 40 percent or more of the district's total 2001 graduates met or exceeded requirements for the Recommended High School Program or the Distinguished Achievement Program

Exhibit 2-12 shows RLISD's overall TAAS passing rates from 1997-98 through 2001-02.

Exhibit 2-12
RLISD Student TAAS Passing Scores Tests
1997-98 through 2001-02

TAAS All Tests Taken	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	Percentage Point Increase/(Decrease) 1997-98 through 2001-02

All Students	87.0%	85.7%	91.3%	88.9%	88.0%	1.0%
African American	66.2%	74.1%	84.1%	74.0%	71.1%	5.6%
Hispanic	94.5%	79.5%	85.3%	84.2%	91.1%	(3.4%)
Anglo	91.1%	90.3%	94.8%	94.3%	91.3%	0.2%
Economically Disadvantaged	79.9%	76.8%	84.1%	82.5%	84.4%	4.5%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

Exhibits 2-13 compares TAAS scores at Rosebud Primary School to state averages for 2000-01 and 2001-02. The primary school scored below the state average for all tests for both years.

Exhibit 2-13
TAAS Reading, Writing, Math and All Tests Taken
All Students Percent Passing
Rosebud Primary School and State
2000-01 and 2001-02

Test Description	Year	State Average	Rosebud Primary School
Reading	2001-02	91.3%	93.1%
	2000-01	88.9%	91.2%
Writing	2001-02	88.7%	-
	2000-01	87.9%	-
Math	2001-02	92.7%	86.2%
	2000-01	90.2%	84.6%
All Tests	2001-02	85.3%	80.0%
	2000-01	82.1%	80.0%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01 and 2001-02.

Exhibits 2-14 compares TAAS scores at Lott Elementary School to state averages for 2000-01 and 2001-02. The elementary school scored above the state average for all tests for both years.

Exhibit 2-14
TAAS Reading, Writing, Math and All Tests Taken

**All Students Percent Passing
Lott Elementary School and State
2000-01 and 2001-02**

Test Description	Year	State Average	Lott Elementary School
Reading	2001-02	91.3%	95.2%
	2000-01	88.9%	94.6%
Writing	2001-02	88.7%	95.0%
	2000-01	87.9%	94.4%
Math	2001-02	92.7%	96.6%
	2000-01	90.2%	93.5%
All Tests	2001-02	85.3%	91.0%
	2000-01	82.1%	89.8%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01 and 2001-02.

Exhibits 2-15 compares TAAS scores at Rosebud Intermediate School to state averages for 2000-01 and 2001-02. The intermediate school scored above the state average for all tests for both years.

**Exhibit 2-15
TAAS Reading, Writing, Math and All Tests Taken
All Students Percent Passing
Rosebud Intermediate School and State Average
2000-01 and 2001-02**

Test Description	Year	State Average	Rosebud Intermediate School
Reading	2001-02	91.3%	96.6%
	2000-01	88.9%	95.8%
Writing	2001-02	88.7%	97.1%
	2000-01	87.9%	87.9%
Math	2001-02	92.7%	98.9%
	2000-01	90.2%	94.6%
All Tests	2001-02	85.3%	94.6%
	2000-01	82.1%	88.5%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01 and 2001-02.

Exhibits 2-16 compares TAAS scores at Rosebud-Lott Junior High School to state averages for 2000-01 and 2001-02.

Exhibit 2-16
TAAS Reading, Writing, Math and All Tests Taken
All Students Percent Passing
Rosebud-Lott Junior High School and State
2000-01 and 2001-02

Test Description	Year	State Average	Rosebud-Lott Junior High School
Reading	2001-02	91.3%	94.6%
	2000-01	88.9%	94.1%
Writing	2001-02	88.7%	84.8%
	2000-01	87.9%	92.9%
Math	2001-02	92.7%	95.4%
	2000-01	90.2%	97.1%
All Tests	2001-02	85.3%	86.5%
	2000-01	82.1%	89.4%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01 and 2001-02.

Exhibits 2-17 compares TAAS scores at Rosebud-Lott High School to state averages for 2000-01 and 2001-02. The high school scored above the state average in 2001, while dropping below in 2002.

Exhibit 2-17
TAAS Reading, Writing, Math and All Tests Taken
All Students Percent Passing
Rosebud-Lott High School and State
2000-01 and 2001-02

Test Description	Year	State Average	Rosebud-Lott High School
Reading	2001-02	91.3%	97.1%
	2000-01	88.9%	97.3%
Writing	2001-02	88.7%	88.2%

	2000-01	87.9%	98.6%
Math	2001-02	92.7%	94.3%
	2000-01	90.2%	93.2%
All Tests	2001-02	85.3%	81.7%
	2000-01	82.1%	92.0%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01 and 2001-02.

RLISD raised TAAS percentage passing rates and, in particular, has met the standards for the school accountability ratings as a Recognized district as well as for Gold Performance Acknowledgements for College Admissions and a Recommended High School Program. Two campuses, Lott Elementary and Rosebud Intermediate, have also achieved Exemplary school accountability ratings.

COMMENDATION

RLISD prioritizes student achievement and uses a variety of instructional methods to improve students' academic performance on the statewide assessment instrument.

FINDING

RLISD is taking a proactive role in preparing its students for a college education. The district is one of a select group of Texas districts that participates in the EXPLORE and PLAN programs. These programs are two curriculum-based assessments associated with the SAT or college readiness tests. The programs consist of four achievement tests (English, math, reading and science reasoning) along with a career-planning component. RLISD students take these achievement tests in grades 8 and 10. The EXPLORE and PLAN programs allow students to build an informed educational and career analysis plan, and in essence, allow them to gauge their strengths as they prepare for the college admission process.

COMMENDATION

RLISD prepares students for college by participating in college preparation and assessment programs.

FINDING

RLISD is not including sufficient detail in its annual CIPs, although the board adopted the district's 2002-03 CIPs in January 2003. RLISD did not include funding or budget information linked to strategies included in the

district's CIPs for 2001-02 or 2002-03. State law requires schools to update CIPs each year with adequate financial detail for compensatory education expenditures and evaluation of the effectiveness of programs designed to improve the scores of underachieving demographic groups. TEA's Financial Accounting Resource System Guide (FASRG) has guidelines outlining how schools develop and approve an annual CIP.

Smithville ISD (SISD) ensures that funds are effectively documented in its DIP and CIPs and directed toward increasing student performance by using a sound planning process. The process ties budget allocation to its DIP and CIPs. The superintendent coordinates the district's improvement initiatives with the budget development process and requires principals to justify their budget requests in terms of campus improvement needs. SISD reports increased campus accountability and that budgeting falls in line with clearly developed school plans for increasing student performance.

Many districts also include sufficient financial detail in annual CIPs to adequately support updated districtwide student performance goals and individual school and program needs while complying with auditing requirements. By following FASRG annual update requirements, Texas districts are also able to adequately determine if programs addressed toward students who are at risk of dropping out of school were effective.

Recommendation 11:

Link the budgeting process to annual Campus Improvement Plans to include sufficient program and funding detail.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent, principals, the district improvement committee and campus site-based decision making committees (SBDM) develop annual goals.	June 2003
2.	The superintendent and principals tie budget allocations to the annual goals presented in CIPs.	June 2003
3.	The superintendent submits the district and campus annual goals and budget allocations to board.	July 2003
4.	The board approves the annual goals and budget allocations.	July 2003
5.	The superintendent, principals and SBDM committees develop district and campus improvement plans with detailed budget allocations and program information and submit them to the board for approval.	July 2003

6.	The superintendent, principals and SBDM committees implement plans, monitor results and report to the board.	Quarterly
----	--	-----------

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

C. SPECIAL PROGRAMS

School districts offer educational programs and services, in addition to the regular education curriculum, for students with a variety of educational needs. These programs include special education, Gifted and Talented (G/T) education, career and technology education (CATE), bilingual/English as a Second Language (ESL), counseling and guidance services, library services and health services. Federal and state programs provide districts with additional funding to offset the cost of delivering many special programs. The Legislature required all Texas school districts to undergo a mandatory audit of all compensatory education expenditures in 2002-03. Districts provided these initial audit results to TEA in January 2003.

All districts face the challenge of providing programs for students with special needs. These programs allow a district to provide the best education in light of instructional level, student interest and/or identified needs. Districts can combine many of these programs with regular classroom programs (based on individual needs) to provide for a more complete education and integration with other students.

Exhibit 2-18 shows RLISD's student participation rate in special programs. RLISD exceeds the state participation rate for CATE and special education and is below the state average for student participation in Bilingual/ESL and G/T programs.

Exhibit 2-18
Student Enrollment by Program
Number and Percent
2002-03

Program	RLISD Student Enrollment	Percent of Total Enrollment	State Student Enrollment	Percent of Total Enrollment
Bilingual/ESL Education	499	52.4	572,319	13.5
Career and Technology Education (CATE)	231	24.2	841,438	19.8
Gifted and Talented (G/T) Education	73	7.7	332,551	7.8

Special Education	182	19.1	492,973	11.6
-------------------	-----	------	---------	------

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2002-03.

Section 29.181 of the TEC requires school districts to provide a curriculum that affords each student an opportunity to "master the basic skills and knowledge necessary for managing the dual roles of family members and wage earner, and gaining entry-level employment in high-skill, high-wage jobs or continuing the student's education at the post-secondary level."

State Board of Education rules [Texas Administrative Code, Section 74.3(b)(2)(I)] require school districts to offer school-to-career education courses. Districts must offer education courses in at least three of eight career and technology educational areas: agricultural science and technology, business education, career orientation, health science technology, home economics, industrial technology, marketing and trade and industrial. CATE is a curriculum designed to prepare students to live and work in the future by providing training in areas such as health sciences and technology, marketing, industrial technology and trade and industrial occupations. The CATE curriculum is designed primarily for students who do not intend to enroll in college. CATE programs give students an opportunity to make informed occupational choices and develop marketable skills.

TEC Section 42.152 (c) defines accelerated or compensatory education as a program designed to improve and enhance the regular education program for students at risk of dropping out of school. In determining the appropriate accelerated or compensatory program, districts must use student performance data from state assessment instruments and other tests administered by the district. District and school staff uses the needs assessments to design the appropriate strategies for their students. Districts and schools should include these strategies in their DIPs and CIPs.

By law, the improvement plan must include the comprehensive needs assessment, measurable performance objectives, strategies for student improvement, resources and staff, timelines for monitoring each strategy and formative evaluation criteria. Each district is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the locally designed program.

Texas allocates state funding for compensatory education based on the number of economically disadvantaged students in the district. TEA calculates each district's compensatory education allotment from the number of district students that were eligible for free or reduced-price lunches in the preceding school year. This calculation only determines the

size of each district's allocation; districts enroll students in compensatory education programs according to need, not according to economic status.

RLISD classifies about 45 percent of its students as economically disadvantaged or eligible for receiving free or reduced-price meals. The district received \$305,582 in state compensatory funds in 2001-02. This represented 8.8 percent of its budgeted instructional expenditures.

TEA and the federal government provide specific guidelines to districts on how they can spend the compensatory education funds. RLISD submits an annual program evaluation for all its compensatory education funds to TEA. TEA reviews the data that schools submit through the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) to ensure equity. TEA also ensures that districts use their compensatory funds to supplement, not supplant, their regular education funds. TEA conducts a comprehensive audit of each district that receives compensatory funding every three years.

RLISD uses its compensatory funds to provide a variety of programs for students at risk of dropping out of school. The federal government bases its compensatory education allocations on the poverty level of the school district's geographic area. Title I, Part A funding is for helping disadvantaged children at risk of failure to meet high standards; Part C is for the education of migratory students. Title II, Part B is for the Dwight D. Eisenhower professional development program. Title IV is for safe and drug-free schools and Title VI is for innovative education program strategies. **Exhibit 2-19** shows that RLISD uses 75 percent of its compensatory education funds for Title I programs.

Exhibit 2-19
RLISD Compensatory Funding Uses
2001-02

Campus	Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Activities Related to Basic Services	Alternative Education Program Activities Related to Supplemental Costs for Compensation Education	Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Activities Related to Supplemental Costs for Compensatory Education	Title I, Part A Schoolwide Activities Related to State Compensatory Education on Campuses with 50 Percent or More Economically Disadvantaged Students	Other State Compensatory Education Activities
Rosebud Primary School	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$90,465	\$0
Lott Elementary School	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$97,779	\$0
Rosebud Intermediate School	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$47,144	\$0
Rosebud-Lott Junior High School	\$1,803	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$25,847
Rosebud-Lott High School	\$52,705	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$61,776
District Total	\$54,508	\$0	\$0	\$235,387	\$87,623

Source: Lott, Vernon and Company, PC, and RLISD, Special Report for State Compensatory Education, 2002.

Federal and state laws require school districts to provide bilingual/English as a Second Language (ESL) programs for students whose first language is not English. these programs to help Limited-English-Proficient (LEP)

students to become competent in comprehending, speaking, reading and writing the English language.

Texas mandates bilingual programs if the district has more than 20 LEP students in a particular grade level. RLISD does operate bilingual programs. The district uses the Idea Proficiency Test (IPT) to identify LEP students. RLISD used the IPT Reading and Writing tests and the TAAS test for grades 3 to 8 and grade 10 to judge the progress of students and to determine if the students are ready to exit the ESL program.

RLISD offers an ESL program for the LEP students that it identifies. The district classifies 27 of its students as LEP. The district serves these students in ESL classes in all grades. The district does not have the 20 or more LEP students in a single grade level that would require the district to provide a bilingual program.

The elementary ESL program is supplemental to the district regular reading and language arts classroom instruction. ESL teachers pull elementary ESL students out of class for an ESL session that lasts 30 to 45 minutes a day. The district sends an ESL progress report to each students' home every three weeks. Students use a language lab at least once a week with a bilingual educator. Regular classroom teachers use a translation Web site to communicate with students as needed.

RLISD's secondary ESL program is similar to its elementary program. Secondary students spend 50 minutes a day with a certified ESL teacher. The district sends parents a progress report every three weeks. Students use the language lab every week. RLISD bases the amount of time that ESL students in grades 7 to 12 spend in ESL interventions outside of regular classes on the language proficiency of each child.

Teachers participate in professional development for ESL as available. The superintendent said that ESL teachers strive for 12 training hours per year. They receive local staff development that includes strategies for working with LEP students. TEA completed a bilingual/ESL program audit of the district in January 2003 and found the district to be compliant.

FINDING

RLISD's director of Special Programs publishes and distributes a monthly newsletter, *Update*, to increase the availability of special education and special program information to the community. The director of Special Programs also uses the special education section on the district's Web site to promote communication with the community. In addition to information regarding the district's special programs, *Update* also includes some districtwide information such as new staff introductions. The director of

Special Programs and principals said that this effort has increased parents' awareness about the district's programs. Additionally, staff reported that the newsletter provides parents with general information about special services and programs reducing the number of routine questions asked of district and campus staff.

COMMENDATION

RLISD maximizes special programs' communication between district staff and the community through a monthly publication available electronically and in print.

FINDING

RLISD participates in the Falls Education Cooperative allowing the district to provide special education programs and services to its students that it would not otherwise be able to provide.

The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1975 requires districts to provide a free and appropriate public education for all children with disabilities regardless of the severity of their disabilities. Districts must provide this education in the least restrictive environment. The act also requires that states and districts include students with disabilities in their assessment programs. IDEA directs districts to develop an individual educational plan (IEP) for each child that receives special education services. The IEP must include input from regular education teachers and parallel educational plans for children without disabilities in regular education classrooms. Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) committees at each school handle student referrals, develop their IEPs and decide when if the student should be moved back into the regular education program.

The Falls Education Cooperative provides instructional, supplemental and diagnostic services to students of member districts that would otherwise be unavailable or unaffordable to the district. Marlin ISD serves as the fiscal agent that administers this contractual relationship; the Cooperative has existed for 20 years. The Cooperative serves approximately 800 students from six participating school districts. About 25 percent of the Cooperatives students are from RLISD. RLISD's superintendent and school principals supervise the district's program in conjunction with the Cooperative's director.

The Falls Education Cooperative furnishes the district with diagnostic personnel, speech pathologists, social work services, psychological services, occupational therapy services, physical therapy services, vision services, audiological services, medical services and other special

education administration functions. Each participating district hires special education teachers and ensures certification and, if needed, emergency teaching certificates. In 2002-03, RLISD employed two special education teachers under emergency certificates. The Falls Education Cooperative publishes its policies and procedures manual on the Internet and updates this manual as necessary.

The Falls Education Cooperative also provides special education staff development to all participating districts every two years during the summer. It also performs all administrative procedures for admission, review and dismissal meetings, child find requirements and reporting for state and federal funding outside of standard PEIMS reporting. The Cooperative furnishes aides for supplemental services noted in admission, review and dismissal meetings as well as needed for classes or life skills, behavior adjustment, alternative high school and special education transportation services. Cooperative staff handle preparation for these administrative requirements and many of the needed preparations for district effectiveness and compliance monitoring by TEA. Additionally, the Falls Education Cooperative participates in the School Health and Related Services (SHARS) reimbursement program and keeps all funds it receives from these reimbursements.

COMMENDATION

RLISD provides high quality educational programs to its special education students at a low cost by participating in an educational cooperative with surrounding districts.

FINDING

RLISD identifies and serves fewer overall and minority students in its G/T and Advanced Placement (AP) programs than the state and region.

RLISD defines gifted and talented students as those students "who perform at or show the potential for performing at a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared to others of the same age, experience or environment and who excel in a specific academic field." The district develops G/T programs in the areas of general intellectual ability and creative and productive thinking. RLISD reviews the placement of all G/T students at the end of grade 6 for the sole purpose of subject area identification at the secondary level. RLISD offers a generalized G/T program to students from kindergarten through grade 6. The district offers specialized gifted and talented subject areas to secondary students. RLISD had 67 students enrolled in its G/T programs in 2001-02.

RLISD requires its G/T teachers to attend at least 30 additional hours of training. The G/T teachers must take six hours of training annually. The district also requires that all administrators and counselors responsible for program decisions receive six hours of annual professional development. RLISD requires 30 hours of training in gifted and talented education from teachers who provide advanced placement instruction.

Minority student participation in RLISD's G/T program and AP courses, tests and passing rates for AP tests is low. RLISD minority students in these classes score lower in aggregate than all students taking AP tests. There is a significant disparity between the number of Anglo students and minority students taking and subsequently passing AP tests in RLISD.

In 2001-02, according to AEIS information 21.9 percent of the students who took AP exams were Anglo as compared to 8.5 percent African American and 9.1 percent Hispanic. Of those minority students taking AP courses, none took any AP exams as compared to 16.2 percent of Anglo students taking an exam. In 2001-02, 61.1 percent of those students received a score at or above the passing criterion. District officials said that Region 12 assisted them in re-writing the procedures for scoring students for placement in gifted and talented education programs.

Many districts with minority representation in G/T programs that is commensurate with the overall minority student demographics distribute enrollment and student performance data for all students on a districtwide level. These districts ensure that schools address any discrepancies in identification and service through specific reference in their CIPs. In an effort to increase minority student participation in G/T programs, Kerrville ISD (KISD) sends a note to teachers every January reminding them to review relevant information for minority students as they submit student nominations to the G/T program.

Several districts use alternative testing instruments to identify minority students who are qualified for the G/T program. One of these tests is the Aprenda, the Spanish equivalent of the Stanford Achievement Test. Alief ISD qualifies students by using a matrix that assigns graduated statistical points for student scores rather than a single qualifying mark or point for all students.

The State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students provides guidelines for student assessment. It also requires districts to "assure an array of learning opportunities that are commensurate with the abilities of gifted/talented students, and that emphasize content in the four (4) core academic areas." The Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented and Region 12 both provide assistance to districts regarding G/T student identification and implementation of services.

Recommendation 12:

Develop, implement and monitor a plan to increase overall and minority student participation in the Gifted and Talented and Advanced Placement education programs.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs principals and counselors to meet and prepare a plan in collaboration with Region 12 to increase overall and minority student participation in G/T, pre-AP and AP programs.	July 2003
2.	The principals and counselors assess successful G/T education, pre-AP programs and AP programs across the state and present their findings to the superintendent.	August 2003
3.	The superintendent presents the plan to the board for approval.	August 2003
4.	The district incorporates the goals of the plan in the annual District Improvement Plan (DIP) and Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs).	September 2003
5.	The superintendent directs principals, counselors and faculty to implement the plan to increase student participation in G/T, pre-AP and AP programs.	October 2003
6.	The superintendent directs principals and counselors to monitor, evaluate and modify the plan as necessary.	October 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

D. SAFETY AND SECURITY

Providing a safe and secure environment for students, teachers and other school district employees is a critical task in any district. Because of the priority placed on the safety and security of children by parents, educators, taxpayers and the community, the 1995 Legislature addressed school violence by establishing major safety and security-related revisions in the TEC.

According to the TEC, each school district must adopt a student code of conduct with the advice of a district-level committee. Additionally, districts must remove students who engage in serious misconduct from regular education settings and place these students in alternative education programs; school districts and law enforcement must share specific information concerning the arrest or criminal conduct of students.

To provide a safe and secure learning environment, safety and security programs must include elements of prevention, intervention and enforcement. The programs must also address cooperation with municipal and county governments. Discipline management and alternative education programs are key tools in this process.

Maintaining a safe and secure educational environment requires comprehensive planning, policies and programs that address all students' needs. Under the provisions of the TEC, each Texas school district must adopt a student code of conduct that outlines standards for student behavior that are categorized by level of offense. The code also outlines related disciplinary consequences, ranging from student-teacher conferences for minor offenses, to suspension or placement in an alternative education program (AEP) for more serious offenses.

The board adopted both student and faculty handbooks that outline codes of conduct. The board has also approved CIPs that address discipline management at each school. Each school has a crisis management plan. The Falls County Sheriff said that local area governments are preparing a disaster management plan to help the district cope with emergencies such as natural disasters or homeland security issues.

RLISD established a district safety committee. The superintendent, the four school principals and the assistant principals at the junior high and high school serve on the committee. The committee oversees districtwide

discipline management, including safety and security at co-curricular and extracurricular functions.

RLISD has a special education committee that decides disciplinary placements to the district's AEP. The committee's members include the superintendent, principals, faculty and staff. The special education committee meets with students and parents to discuss the placements. The AEP is located in a separate building near the junior high and high school. A director and staff aide administer the program. Two teachers rotate with the director to supervise the instruction of students the district assigns to the AEP.

The superintendent delegates safety and security responsibility to principals at their respective schools. The principals establish their own relationships with local law enforcement agencies. The district conducts unannounced, drug-search lockdowns at the junior high and high school six times per year. The district employs a private contractor that uses drug-sniffing dogs to perform the searches.

RLISD also participates in the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program that the federal Safe and Drug Free Program funds. A Falls County deputy sheriff makes presentations on drug and alcohol awareness and prevention at all school districts located in the county. School nurses also discuss drug-and health-related issues with students and parents.

The district schedules monthly fire and tornado drills, as required by state law. Each spring, RLISD hosts a Fire Prevention Day to inform students, parents and the community about prevention strategies and activities. The district invites health professionals, including emergency medical personnel, from surrounding hospitals to the event. The district depends on area volunteer fire departments for fire protection.

RLISD retains legal counsel that advises the district on student discipline. The board also relies on a handbook written by the district's contracted law firm for general guidance on other safety and security issues.

FINDING

RLISD revamped district policies and procedures on discipline, increased training and promoted parental and districtwide communication regarding discipline to address discipline problems at the junior high and high school levels.

The superintendent and several administrators collaborated and developed new student discipline policies and procedures in 2000-01. At that time,

the assistant principal at the high school assumed responsibility for student conduct and increased his personal campus monitoring efforts.

The new administration assessed each teaching department to determine how to increase communication with parents and teachers. School administrators decided to urge teachers to place more emphasis on conflict management and resolution rather than just applying punitive measures to student discipline issues.

Administrators worked closely with teachers to conduct workshops on classroom intervention strategies and positive disciplinary actions. Other strategies included a change in the district's tardy policy, more conferences with parents and teachers, counseling with students, school timeouts that include on-campus suspension, on-the-spot inspections of students to address dress code violations and increased monitoring of hallways.

The review team surveyed RLISD students, parents and staff about safety in the district's schools. The survey showed that 83 percent of parent's agreed or strongly agreed that RLISD students feel safe at school. A large number of parents, 68 percent, agreed or strongly agreed that school disturbances are infrequent. The survey found that 92 percent of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that school disturbances are infrequent and 84 percent agreed or strongly agreed that students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct. Most district administrators and support staff, 66 percent, also agreed or strongly agree to this statement. Student responses to the survey were similar.

The district had only four student disciplinary placements for the first semester in 2002-03.

COMMENDATION

RLISD reduced student discipline problems at the junior high and high school by re-evaluating its student discipline approach and implementing and managing more effective policies and procedures.

FINDING

RLISD expanded its video monitoring system to all schools to increase student and staff safety. The district operated a video monitoring system only at the junior high and high school between 1994-95 and 2002-03. The district changed from a black and Anglo, analog, video camera recording system to a color, digital, camera recording system in all school buildings in 2002-03.

The new cameras allow the district to record higher resolution pictures. The plant maintenance director said that the new system facilitates the tracking of students, staff, visitors and other activities since the digital cameras provide clearer recording and even-flow playback. The digital cameras also allow the district to make video recordings onto compact disks.

District administrators asked school principals to identify building and outside priority areas for video camera monitoring and placed the black and Anglo cameras in outside areas such as parking lots and playgrounds. The plant maintenance director and his staff installed wiring and eight cameras in each school. Principals and school staff monitor the security cameras as needed.

COMMENDATION

RLISD uses video cameras to enhance and monitor safety and security in all schools.

FINDING

RLISD does not coordinate relationships with law enforcement agencies at the district level. The district assigns safety and security responsibility for each school to individual principals. School principals, in turn, rely on local law enforcement agencies to provide needed support for safety and security efforts.

The Falls County Sheriff said that his department patrols the junior high and high school which are located in his jurisdiction on a daily basis, especially before and after school. The police departments in Rosebud and Lott follow similar routines for the schools in their jurisdictions.

A deputy sheriff also conducts outreach programs as part of the DARE Program in all county school districts, including RLISD. The Sheriff's Department also provides additional security support at the junior high and high school during extracurricular activities. School administrators at the junior high and high school call the Sheriff's Department when they need assistance.

The Rosebud Police Department performs comparable activities at the intermediate and primary schools including numerous speaking engagements for parents and students. The police chief said that he collaborates with RLISD administrators collaborate to solve problems as they arise. Principals visit or call the police chief about a variety of safety and security issues. The intermediate and primary schools invite the police chief to speak to students and parents.

In contrast, Lott police officers said that they are having difficulty in promoting safety and security awareness in the elementary school. One officer said that she had tried without success to have the elementary school participate in a program known as Yellow Dyno. Yellow Dyno is a program that provides age-appropriate videos and scripts for teachers on child abuse prevention. The program seeks to educate, protect and build the self-esteem of children. The Lott Police Department received a donation to purchase components of the Yellow Dyno Program. The police department planned to use the program to promote safety and security awareness with students at the elementary school. However, the elementary school is not actively using the program.

Another police officer said that the elementary school had avoided calling the department in an incident involving a student who displayed aggressive behavior toward a teacher. The officer said that she contacted the teacher after school because she felt the teacher's security was threatened. She subsequently discussed the incident with the school principal. The principal decided not to pursue further action.

Lott police officers have not conducted any outreach activities on safety and security at the elementary school in more than a year. The police officers said that parents whom they talk to want the police department to become more involved with their school.

A school official said that Lott Elementary addresses safety and security awareness through the Heart of Texas Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention and Child Assault and Prevention Project from the Advocacy Project in Waco. The administrator said that the school is working with the police department to fingerprint all students.

The Cedar Hill Community Resource Officer (CRO) offers Cedar Hill ISD (CHISD) students and staff a comprehensive series of educational safety programs. Programs target a variety of ages and grade levels and use age-appropriate material. The CRO offers most programs in class during the regular school day; the CRO may conduct other programs during evening hours. CHISD and Cedar Hill Police Department split the costs for the CROs. The CROs coordinate and conduct a variety of programs districtwide to ensure consistency and adequate safety for all students and staff at all schools.

Many districts develop board adopted policies and procedures that establish and govern working relationships with local law enforcement agencies. Using consistent policies and procedures ensures that these districts adhere to the same standards from school to school and when cooperating with more than one law enforcement agency at a time.

Recommendation 13:

Develop uniform policies and procedures for school administrators to establish working relationships with local law enforcement agencies.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent, principals and assistant principals assess current procedures for working with local law enforcement agencies.	September 2003
2.	The superintendent, principals and assistant principals meet with local law enforcement officials and governmental and community leaders to discuss current working relationships.	September 2003
3.	The superintendent assigns the principals and assistant principals to develop uniform procedures and drafted board policy for working relationships with local law enforcement agencies.	October 2003
4.	The principals and assistant principals present drafted policies and procedures to the superintendent and the board for approval.	November 2003
5.	The superintendent and the board approve the drafts, and the superintendent ensures that the policies and procedures are implemented districtwide.	December 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district does not employ strategies to address districtwide and community drug abuse concerns. Parents, teachers, district administrators, support staff and students agree that drug use is a problem in the district. The review team surveyed parents, students and staff about drug use in the district. The survey found that only 52 percent of parents, 44 percent of teachers, 56 percent of district administrators and support staff and 49 percent of students disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement that drugs are not a problem in the district.

The Rosebud Police chief said that a drug problem existed among high school students who attend RLISD from his community. The RLISD high school is located in Travis outside the jurisdiction of the Rosebud Police Department. He said that in 2001-02 school officials found marijuana in the locker of an intermediate school student.

The Falls County Sheriff said that drugs were not a problem in his jurisdictional area. He said that in 2001-02 RLISD, which is under the jurisdiction of the Lott police department, school officials reported a drug possession offense by one high school student. Police officers in Lott said drug use was not a problem in their city. The sheriff said that RLISD participates in the DARE Program and a deputy sheriff conducts outreach in all the county school districts as part of this program.

RLISD stages unannounced drug searches using trained dogs six times per year. The district contracts with an outside firm to conduct the searches at the junior high and high school. School officials said that the searches have not found any drugs.

Drug use by students has serious consequences and can negatively disrupt a school's educational program. The Support for Texas Academic Renewal (STAR) Center, a U.S. Department of Education-funded center at the University of Texas at Austin, has reviewed the Texas Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (SDFSCA) program data and materials and interviewed school staff, students, parents and community members. The STAR Center concluded that successful SDFSCA programs:

- focus on problems specific to the school and community;
- provide additional support for elementary school children dealing with alcoholism or other drug use in their families;
- employ more intense early intervention for middle and junior high school students;
- include mediation, conflict resolution and self-management elements;
- respond to special student needs in different environments;
- focus on recovery and redirection rather than punishment; and
- provide safety-net programs for high school students with special needs and a variety of activities and opportunities for academic and social involvement.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services offers guidelines for effective drug prevention programs based on recommendations from prevention planners and practitioners. These emphasize knowledge of the target population; the setting of clear and realistic goals; the active involvement of key decision-makers in program planning; program design that takes advantage of community concerns and builds on and supports related prevention efforts; and the gathering of feedback from program participants to help evaluate program successes.

A research project conducted by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) tested the effectiveness of various prevention approaches. Some of the most effective prevention principles NIDA identified include:

- targeting all forms of drug abuse, including tobacco, alcohol, marijuana and inhalants;
- strengthening personal commitments against drug use;
- including peer discussion groups in programs for adolescents;
- including program components for parents;
- continuing programs over an entire school career;
- adapting programs to each community's specific drug abuse problem; and
- ensuring that prevention programs are age-specific, developmentally appropriate and culturally sensitive.

Exhibit 2-20 presents the violence statistics that RLISD reported to TEA for 1999-2000 through 2001-02 as required by law. These statistics include drug-related incidents.

Exhibit 2-20
RLISD Violence/Incident Statistics
1999-2000 through 2001-02

Offense	1999-2000				2000-01				2001-02			
	Elem.	Middle/Jr. High	High School	Total	Elem.	Middle/Jr. High	High School	Total	Elem.	Middle/Jr. High	High School	Total
Conduct punishable as a felony	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0
Possessed, sold or used marijuana or other controlled substance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	3
Possessed, sold, used or was under the influence of an alcoholic beverage	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	1	0	1
Conduct occurring off campus while student is	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0

not in attendance at school related activity for felony offenses in Title 5													
Serious or persistent misconduct violating the student code of conduct while placed in alternative education program	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	3	0	3	
Violation of student code of conduct not included in codes 33 and 34*	0	1	0	0	76	245	2	323	0	287	0	319	
Criminal mischief	0	0	0	0	0	0	168	168	0	0	0	0	
Assault against a school district employee or volunteer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	
Possessed, purchased, used or accepted a cigarette or tobacco product (Code 33)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	
School-	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	1	0	1	

related gang violence (Code 34)												
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1999-2000 through 2001-02.

*Note: violations excluding codes 33 (tobacco related) and 34 (school gang-related violence).

Although the district reported only three drug-related incidents during this time, staff and community expressed a concern about this issue.

Recommendation 14:

Develop strategies that address drug use in the district.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent, principals and assistant principals identify innovative strategies and programs for prevention and awareness of drug, alcohol, violence and discipline problems.	August 2003
2.	The superintendent, principals and assistant principal select a variety of strategies and programs for implementation.	September 2003
3.	The superintendent presents the strategies and selected programs to the board for approval.	October 2003
4.	The superintendent directs the principals and assistant principals to initiate the strategies and programs.	October 2003
5.	The principals and assistant principals distribute information about strategies and programs to teachers and students.	November 2003
6.	The superintendent, principals and assistant principals meet with parents and community leaders to explain their strategies and programs and seek program referrals as needed.	December 2003
7.	The principals and assistant principals monitor the strategies and programs and their impact on drug, alcohol, violence and discipline problems.	January 2004 and Ongoing
8.	The principals and assistant principals prepare and present reports to the superintendent who informs the board about changes in drug, alcohol, violence and discipline problems.	June 2004 and Thereafter

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

E. CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRACURRICULAR PROGRAMS

Section 76.1001 of the Texas Administrative Code [19 TAC §76.1001] defines Extracurricular Activities as "activities sponsored by the University Interscholastic League (UIL), the school district board of trustees, or an organization sanctioned by resolution of the board of trustees." These activities are not necessarily directly related to instruction of the TEKS but may have an indirect relation to some areas of the curriculum.

For non-UIL extracurricular areas, the Division of Field Services provides direction and interpretation of Commissioner of Education rules and state law related to extracurricular activities. Examples of non-UIL extracurricular activities include Future Farmers of America (FFA) activities, cheerleading, student council, drill and dance teams and 4-H activities in districts where school trustees have sanctioned the 4-H as an extracurricular organization.

FINDING

RLISD administrators promote high school students' participation and successes in co-curricular and extracurricular competitions to enhance students' high school careers. District administrators said that the district provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate their strengths and talents. They also noted that college and university admission criteria and scholarship awards consider participation in co-curricular and extracurricular activities. RLISD students compete in many academic areas of UIL competition and in athletic programs.

RLISD students compete in academic areas that include accounting, calculator and computer applications, computer science, current issues and events, literary criticisms, mathematics, number sense, ready writing, science, social studies pilot, spelling and vocabulary. Other academic competition areas for students are information and persuasive speaking, poetry interpretation, Lincoln Douglas Debate, news, editorial, feature and headline writing, CX debate, one-act play and keyboarding.

A district administrator said that at least seven students try out for a position on the team in each event. She said that the success of past competitors promotes additional student participation. The district opens competition trials to all students and posts trial information on bulletin boards districtwide. Teachers help prepare students for these competitions.

Exhibit 2-21 shows the district's UIL academic team accomplishments from 1983-84 through 2001-02. RLISD has won the district academic championship since 1994. RLISD has been academic team state runner-up four times.

Exhibit 2-21
RLISD Academic Team Accomplishments
In UIL Competition

Year	Recognition
1983-84	District Champion
1990-93	District Runner-Up
1994-2002	District Champion

Source: RLISD, Superintendent's Office, 2003.

RLISD has excelled in UIL academic accounting competition in individual student and team events. RLISD has won every district, regional and state championship in team accounting since the inception of the award in 1993. District students have won the individual state championship eight of the 10 years the event has been contested.

Accounting students have participated in the state meet for 14 consecutive years, winning 60 medals including 44 gold, five silver and five bronze medals. The RLISD accounting team has won 96 consecutive meets since 1992.

Other accomplishments include: the only perfect accounting paper in 2A state-level competition and 60 perfect papers in competition since 1988; district champions in computer applications for five years; state participants in computer applications and keyboarding (silver and bronze medalists).

RLISD athletic teams have also had success in UIL competition at all levels. The football team won the 2002 state 2A Division II championship. The football team has also captured prior regional and district championships. The boys' basketball team has been district runner-up, bi-district champions and area champions. In 1977-78 the basketball team was a state semifinalist. The girls' tennis, volleyball, cross-country and track teams have won numerous district championships. The tennis team qualified for the state meet in doubles competition in 1999. The volleyball team made the regional semifinal in 1997. The boys' baseball team has won the bi-district championship in 1996 and 2002. The team reached the

regional quarterfinals in 2000. In 1998 the baseball team was the state runner-up.

Local newspapers publish results and articles of student and team competitions. The district conducts an annual awards assembly to recognize student and team achievements. The district also posts competition results on bulletin boards throughout the district. A section in the annual yearbook features participants of co-curricular and extracurricular activities.

COMMENDATION

RLISD promotes students participation in University Interscholastic League academic and athletic competitions to enhance student success after high school.

Chapter 3

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews Rosebud-Lott Independent School District (RLISD) facilities use and management in the following sections:

- A. Facilities Planning
- B. Plant Maintenance and Custodial Operations
- C. Energy Management

Adequate planning of facilities creates an environment that supports educational programs. Maintenance programs coordinate preventive maintenance and repairs to ensure that facilities provide an atmosphere conducive to learning. Custodial operations provide for the general cleanliness and upkeep of facilities on a daily basis. An energy management program provides for the effective and efficient use of utilities by developing energy conservation practices and monitoring energy costs and usage.

BACKGROUND

Rosebud and Lott high schools were in separate independent school districts through 1970. Deteriorating buildings caused voters in Rosebud and Lott to consolidate their school districts. In the fall of 1970 all high school students attended classes in the Rosebud High School building in Rosebud and the junior high school students attended classes in the Lott High School building. Rosebud-Lott High School graduated its first class in 1971.

RLISD serves 19 communities: Wilson, Burlington, Cedar Springs, Barclay, Airville, Durango, Pleasant Grove, Rosebud, Lott, Tomlinson Hill, Baileyville, Wilderville, Powers Chapel, Briary, Clarkson, Sneed Kasner, Terry's Chapel, New Salem and Zipperlandville.

The district obtained property in Travis (an unincorporated area in Falls County located five miles south of Lott and five miles north of Rosebud on State Highway 77) to build a new facility that became RLISD's high school. The Travis property belonged to Travis High School, which closed in the 1960's. Students continued to attend classes in the high school buildings in Rosebud and Lott while the district built the new school.

The new school facility in Travis opened in the spring of 1972. The building housed the administrative offices, classrooms, a library, cafeteria, theater, science labs, vocational homemaking department and athletic

dressing rooms. The facility also has a band hall, gymnasium and vocational agriculture facilities.

The district demolished the old high school building in Rosebud. RLISD then converted the high school building in Lott to host classes for students from kindergarten to grade 6. Rosebud Elementary School became Rosebud Primary School (for students from pre-kindergarten to grade 3) and Rosebud Junior High School became Rosebud Intermediate School (grades 4-6). The homemaking department in Rosebud (a separate building) became the superintendent's residence.

RLISD continued improving its facilities after 1972. The district also constructed an additional classroom building at Lott Elementary. The district added a field house, gymnasium, alternative education program facilities, baseball field, tennis courts, rodeo facilities, bus barn and feedlot at the high school in Travis. RLISD built a cafeteria at the intermediate school in Rosebud. In the early 1970s, the district also completed extensive classroom renovations to facilities in Rosebud and Lott.

RLISD has completed two major renovation projects within the last 15 years. In 1989 the district added a junior high school wing and a girl's softball field to its high school.

The district's Parent Education Program (PEP) Center provides childcare for students who are parents. The daycare is located in what was originally half of the old cafeteria at Rosebud High School. RLISD divided the Rosebud High School cafeteria in 1972. The district moved half of the cafeteria building to Travis Community Center. From June 1994 through November 2002, RLISD leased the PEP building from Travis Community Center for \$125 per month. In December 2002 Travis Community Center sold the PEP building to RLISD in exchange for a \$1 donation.

The school district also owns 14 other properties.

Chapter 3

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

A. FACILITIES PLANNING

RLISD has four educational buildings and two support facilities that serve the district's 968 students and 156 employees. The district has five schools but only four campuses because the junior high and high school reside in the same building. The average age of RLISD's facilities is 35 years. Lott Elementary, which the district built in 1940, is RLISD's oldest facility. The district's more recent additions include the Alternative Education Center built in 1995, and Rosebud Junior High School and Lott Primary School in 1989. The PEP Center sits adjacent to the Rosebud-Lott Junior High/High School. **Exhibit 3-1** provides the size and age of RLISD's facilities.

**Exhibit 3-1
Existing RLISD School Facilities**

Facility	Square Footage	Year Built
Rosebud-Lott High School Main Building*	97,335	1972
High School Field House	3,060	1974
Bus Barn	2,400	1980
High School Gymnasium	17,134	1972
High School Weight Room	2,706	1990
Alternative Center	2,431	1995
Parent Education Program (PEP) Center	2,400	1940s
Lott Elementary (Old H.S. Building)	24,118	1940
Lott Elementary Storage	6,732	1951
Lott Elementary (Classroom Addition)	10,795	1990
Rosebud Intermediate Main	31,394	1950
Rosebud Intermediate Band Hall	2,521	1948
Rosebud Primary Main	28,791	1961
Rosebud Primary Storage	2,924	1938
Total	234,741	N/A

Source: RLISD Business Office, 2002

*The Junior High is housed in the High School complex.

Exhibit 3-2 lists the district's 14 other properties. The district does not currently receive revenues from any of these properties.

**Exhibit 3-2
Other RLISD-Owned Properties
March 2003**

Property Description from Appraisal Firm	Size	Location
Vacant lot	townsite	Lott
Vacant lots (3)	townsites	Lott
Vacant lots (3)	townsites	Lott
Vacant lot	townsite	Lott
Superintendent's house	townsite	Rosebud
Vacant lot	Less than 5 acres, not agricultural use	Rural, outside of Rosebud
Vacant lot	Less than 5 acres, not agricultural use	Rural, outside of Rosebud
Primary School	townsite	Lott
Vacant lot	townsite	Lott
Lot with Structure	townsite	Lott
Vacant lot	townsite	Lott
Vacant lot	townsite	Lott
Lot with Structure	townsite	Lott
Lot with Structure	Less than 5 acres, not agricultural use	Rural, outside of Rosebud

Source: Capital Appraisal Group and Falls County Appraisal District, March 2003.

FINDING

RLISD does not have a formal, long-range facilities planning process or a current facilities master plan. With the district's current informal process,

school principals make most facility assessments and present their respective needs to the superintendent, who in turn presents the facility needs to the board. The board sets the priorities on facilities. The district's principals identified several facility needs in interviews with the review team. The principals said that key structures lack air conditioning, the primary school has excess condensation and a section of the intermediate school's roof leaks.

As explained earlier, the district serves 19 communities and has school facilities located in three of the communities. Review team interviews revealed that the district does not include community members in its facilities planning process through an advisory committee or other informal means. However, community members do have access to board meetings because they are open to the public. TSPR surveys of parents, teachers, district administrators and support staff show that one-third to one-half of those responding disagree that parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board are actively involved or have opportunities to be involved with the facilities planning process.

Since 1985, the district has used the same Waco-based architectural and engineering firm for all but two of its major construction projects. TSPR learned that the firm developed a capital projects renovation/relocation feasibility planning list in 2001. **Exhibit 3-3** shows the feasibility planning list.

**Exhibit 3-3
Feasibility Planning for the RLISD
2001**

Item	Proposed Size of Renovation	Proposed Cost
Relocated Bus and Maintenance Facility	5,400	\$270,000
Relocated Weight Room	2,400	\$42,000
Relocated Alternative School	2,600	\$91,000
Relocated Administration Building	2,600	\$104,000
Renovated Existing Administration Area	2,550	\$100,000
Construction and Administration Subtotal		\$607,000
Engineering Fee		\$42,000
Reimbursable, Printing, ADA, Testing, etc.		\$10,000
Preliminary Total Cost		\$659,000

Source: The Rogers Company Consulting Engineers, developed February 2001.

According to the firm, RLISD requested that the firm only address existing facility relocations and renovations in the feasibility plan. This firm has not updated the list since 2001. Enrollment in the district has decreased for four consecutive years; however, during interviews TSPR learned that district officials believe enrollment will stabilize for the near future.

Facilities' planning is critical to the overall success of school district operations because it coordinates the districts' educational programs, physical space and resources. Some essential components of a facilities master plan include: identifying current and future needs of a district's facilities and educational programs; developing student growth projections and community expansion plans; analyzing cost and capital requirements; and developing facilities program management and design guidelines.

Some districts contract with architectural and engineering firms to assist them in assessing and maintaining their long-range facility needs with a plan. The plans produced by the consultants provide the districts and communities with a strategic focus on facility needs and priorities. The plans developed by these firms also provide essential information to voters for bond issues. These studies usually include research estimating a district's future growth scenarios and enrollment projections.

Another component of facility planning is a facilities assessment. Many districts invite the community to participate in facilities planning through community advisory committees. Depending on the subject matter expertise in the committee, the superintendent may ask the committee to: advise the board on immediate, short-term and long-term facility issues; develop an existing facility assessment; develop a facility needs priority list; and recommend realistic facility additions and/or improvement programs.

Recommendation 15:

Develop a formal facilities planning process, update and expand the 2001 capital projects feasibility planning list.

RLISD should establish a formal facilities planning process and update and expand the 1991 capital projects feasibility planning list into a facilities master plan. The district should also establish a standing community advisory committee that is representative of the district's 19 communities. A comprehensive facilities master plan will ensure the district makes cost-effective decisions about facility consolidations and renovation projects and that the district maintains appropriate documentation.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent, principals, departmental directors and the district's external architectural and engineering firm assess the RLISD facility planning process.	June 2003
2.	The superintendent advertises and convenes public meetings or establishes a community task force to solicit comments about the district's current facilities and future plans.	July 2003
3.	The superintendent, district liaison and principals design a method for obtaining ongoing additional community involvement in the facilities planning process.	August 2003
4.	The superintendent, principals, district liaison, community representatives, departmental directors and the district's external architectural and engineering firm compile remaining components of the facilities master plan and develop a formal facilities master plan document.	September 2003
5.	The superintendent presents the facilities master plan to the board for review.	October 2003
6.	The board approves the final facilities master plan.	October 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

An external architect and engineering firm can conduct the facilities assessments and prepare cost estimates. The firm will meet with district officials to discuss facilities needs; develop enrollment projections; review district facilities to assess current conditions; and develop a budget and recommended schedule for undertaking facilities improvements and new construction, at a cost of \$7,500.

The other in-house related facilities planning activities like planning meetings and presentations to the board can be implemented with existing resources.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Develop a formal facilities planning process, update and expand the 2001 capital projects feasibility planning list.	(\$7,500)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

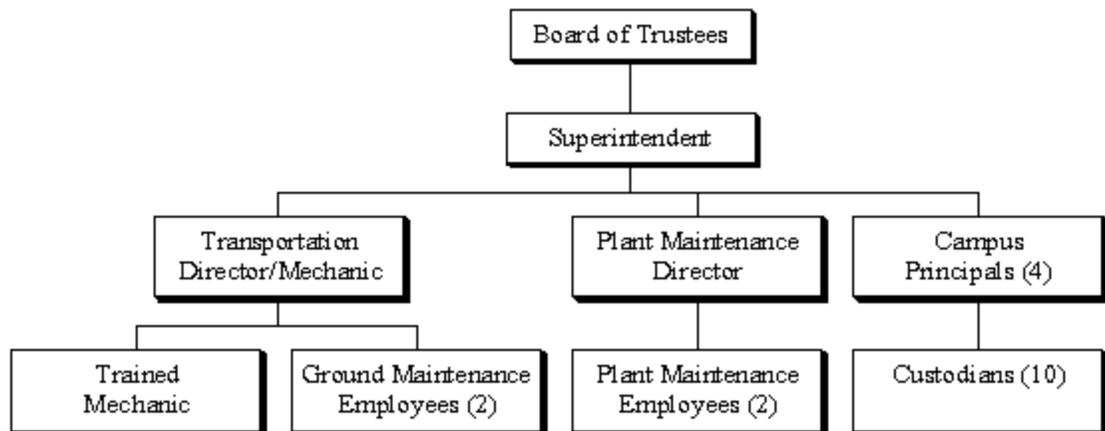
Chapter 3

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

B. PLANT MAINTENANCE AND CUSTODIAL OPERATIONS

RLISD's facilities operations include maintenance of the physical plant, grounds, water and wastewater systems, buildings and vehicles. **Exhibit 3-4** depicts the district's facilities operations maintenance organization.

Exhibit 3-4
RLISD Facilities Operations
Maintenance Organization
2002



Source: Interviews with RLISD, 2002.

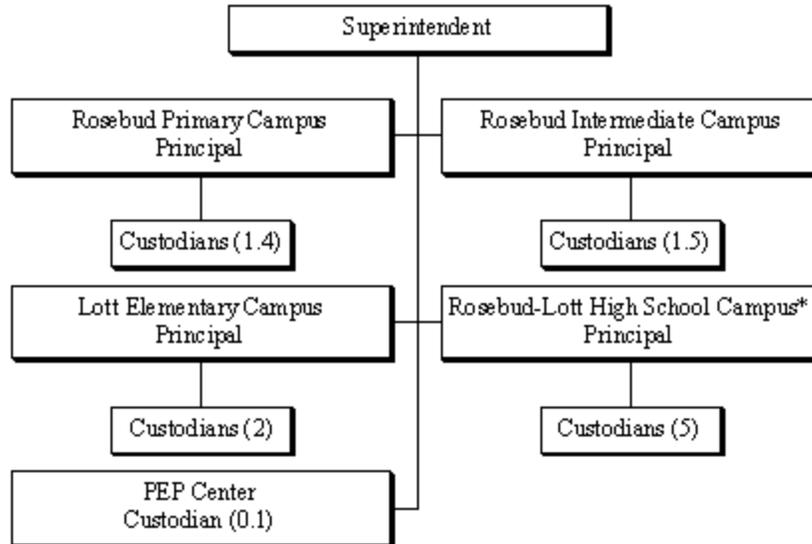
The Plant Maintenance director reports to the superintendent and repairs or replaces all equipment and building materials. He also monitors construction and remodeling projects, performs security-related duties and manages the high school's water and wastewater system with the help of two full-time employees.

The Transportation director reports to the superintendent and coordinates vehicle maintenance and repairs and grounds maintenance. He is also a trained mechanic and supervises another mechanic to repair and maintain the district's vehicles. The grounds maintenance crew clean and maintain the districts grounds. They also help clean and maintain the district's vehicles. The director of Transportation also supervises the grounds maintenance crew.

The Plant Maintenance and Transportation directors routinely communicate with principals about each school's maintenance needs.

Exhibit 3-5 presents the organization of Building Maintenance.

Exhibit 3-5
RLISD Building Maintenance Organization
2002



Source: Interviews with RLISD, 2002.

*Includes Junior High School

The district assigns 10 custodial personnel as follows: five custodians to the junior and high school; two to the elementary school; one to the primary; and one to the intermediate. An additional custodian divides his time among the primary and intermediate schools and the PEP center. The PEP center custodian spends only a few hours a week at the PEP Center and the rest of the time assisting staff at Rosebud's primary and intermediate campuses. The principals at each school supervise the custodial work.

FINDING

The RLISD custodial staff clean more than 208,000 square feet spread among five schools housed in four district-owned facilities. **Exhibit 3-6** presents the district's facilities with square footage for cleaning purposes, industry standard applied to square footage and current custodial allocations. One custodian is responsible for 20,000 square feet under industry standards. Each RLISD custodian maintains nearly 21,000 square feet.

Exhibit 3-6
RLISD Facilities Square Footage Custodial Allocation

Existing Facilities	Square Footage	Number of Custodians to meet 1:20,000 sq. ft. ratio	Current Custodial Allocations
High School	102,697	5.1	5
Lott Elementary	35,500	1.8	2
Rosebud Intermediate	39,757	2	1.5
Rosebud Primary	27,743	1.4	1.4
PEP Center*	2,400	0.1	0.1
Total	208,097	10.4	10

Source: RLISD Business Office, 2002; Rogers Consulting Company interviews, 2002-03.

**The district assigns one custodian to the PEP center and divides the rest of the time between Rosebud's primary and intermediate campuses.*

The review team noted polished floors and trash-free hallways while visiting several campuses.

COMMENDATION

RLISD maintains a clean district by applying industry standards to efficiently assign custodians.

FINDING

RLISD does not have formal training or continuing education programs for its Maintenance employees and managers. Regional Education Service Center XII (Region 12) publishes an annual review of district staff development called the *Staff Development District Detail Report*. Region 12's report for the period August 1, 2000 through November 14, 2002 shows that RLISD maintenance employees did not attend any of the training workshops offered in that time period.

According to Maintenance and custodial management staff, employees receive in-house, on-the-job training. The district does not keep written documentation of in-house training. Through interviews the review team also learned that the district does not offer in-house computer training to maintenance and custodial staff and management.

In addition, the district does not document formal cross training for the maintenance and custodial functions. The lack of a qualified backup for the Plant Maintenance director creates a high-risk situation for the district.

The Plant Maintenance director is the only school employee licensed to operate the water and wastewater systems. If he leaves the district or is unable to work for an extended period of time, there is no backup staff or plan in place.

Maintenance-training programs for all maintenance and custodial employees should include the following topics:

- technical maintenance techniques;
- effective work scheduling;
- interdepartmental communication skills;
- customer communication skills;
- professional skill development for each trade;
- work habits;
- time management;
- quality control; and
- safety initiatives.

Some school districts provide \$250 worth of continuing education classes per maintenance employee per year. The Texas Engineering Extension Service offers a class called "The Principles of Managing Maintenance" and is one of many vendors that offer maintenance classes.

Recommendation 16:

Offer annual training for maintenance and custodial staff.

District management should provide training opportunities for all maintenance and custodial staff and their managers. The program should have annual goals and objectives and include sufficient funding so that each employee can attend at least one course annually.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Plant Maintenance and Transportation directors investigate maintenance training opportunities with outside vendors and speak with Region 12 about the possibility of developing a training program curriculum.	June 2003
2.	The Plant Maintenance and Transportation directors compile a list of training choices with pricing and schedules, choose the top ranking options and present training recommendations to the superintendent for approval.	July 2003
3.	The superintendent submits the training program and budget to the board for approval.	August 2003

4.	The Plant Maintenance and Transportation directors and principals initiate the training program.	September 2003
----	--	----------------

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost to implement this recommendation would amount to \$5,460 annually assuming RLISD chooses the Texas Engineering Extension Service class called "The Principles of Managing Maintenance." This class includes eight one-hour segments on various topics suitable for both staff and management.

The cost estimate assumes one eight-hour training course for four principals and all 17 maintenance personnel at a cost of \$260 per person per year (four principals + 17 maintenance staff = 21 total staff. 21 total staff x \$260 per person per eight-hour training class = \$5,460).

In addition, the review team spoke with Region 12 and learned that they currently do not offer maintenance training, but are available to work with RLISD to define its maintenance training needs and develop courses. The Region 12 specialist also indicated that they would offer reduced rates if the class is large enough.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Offer annual training for maintenance and custodial staff.	(\$5,460)	(\$5,460)	(\$5,460)	(\$5,460)	(\$5,460)

FINDING

RLISD does not have a system to track work orders. Teachers and administrators e-mail their repair requests to the Plant Maintenance director. The district does not have a standard work order request form. The Plant Maintenance director sets the priority for responding to the requests. Urgent requests receive top priority.

The Plant Maintenance director inspects and analyzes the job or equipment that needs repair, including material and equipment requirements. The Plant Maintenance director also handles pricing information and bid quotes. The Plant Maintenance director provides the superintendent with a repair summary and cost estimate to present to the board for major repairs that will cost more than \$1,000. The Plant Maintenance director notifies the superintendent about major repairs that will cost more than \$5,000 prior to obtaining bid quotes.

The Plant Maintenance director inspects all finished contracted work. He notifies the business office when work is completed for payment. The business office retains the file on materials purchased and payments to contractors.

The director, upon request by the superintendent, presents verbal updates to the board. The superintendent provides the Board of Trustees with background information on any on-going projects before scheduled meetings.

TSPR surveys of district administrators, parents, teachers and students show substantial satisfaction with the quality of work performed by the Plant Maintenance Department. However, RLISD does not document its work order history. The Plant Maintenance director is the longest-tenured school staff employee followed by the Transportation director. This lack of documentation creates an unstable environment, especially in this operational area. Without documentation the district will lose important knowledge when the directors retire or otherwise leave the district. In addition, there is no way to measure the success or failure of the department's decisions using work performance standards or cost comparisons.

An efficient and effective maintenance operation for a school district includes well-defined procedures and processes that include:

- adequate information to plan and manage daily maintenance operations;
- a good work order system that enables maintenance staff to respond to repair requests;
- a proactive system (preventive maintenance) that ensures maintenance staff regularly service equipment to minimize down time; and
- a process to monitor maintenance service levels and obtain periodic feedback on maintenance operations that need improvement.

School districts find it more difficult to plan and budget for preventive maintenance or equipment replacement if they cannot track maintenance records. For this reason, maintenance departments in proactive districts typically keep itemized records of all work performed, the workers involved, the number of hours worked, materials used and associated costs. Most keep maintenance records on individual pieces of equipment as well; these records can assist districts in the budget process and in determining equipment replacement needs.

Recommendation 17:

Develop an automated work order system and use labor and cost data to monitor productivity and track costs.

RLISD's director of Technology should develop a spreadsheet as a work order system. This system will enable RLISD's Maintenance Department to automate work order logs to facilitate prioritizing, tracking and preparing cost estimates for maintenance requests. The automated log will enable the Plant Maintenance director to establish performance standards and assess thresholds for contracting specific projects such as large paint, carpentry and plumbing projects to outside contractors.

Once the system is fully implemented, management will be able to establish performance standards for jobs such as replacing air conditioning filters, installing flooring or completing roofing jobs. With predetermined performance standards, the district can monitor the work of Maintenance employees to ensure that the department delivers high quality and cost-effective services.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Plant Maintenance and Transportation directors and principals work with the director of Technology to refine the design of the spreadsheet format for automating work order requests.	June 2003
2.	The director of Technology completes the refinement of the work order system.	July 2003
3.	The Plant Maintenance and Transportation directors and principals use management reports from the automated work order logs to analyze data, such as labor and material cost and work backlog.	July 2003
4.	The Plant Maintenance and Transportation directors and principals develop and monitor Plant Maintenance Department performance standards in order to improve the department's productivity.	August 2003 and Ongoing
5.	The Plant Maintenance and Transportation directors and principals provide the superintendent with periodic reports detailing the maintenance department's operations.	September 2003 and Quarterly

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district does not have a formal maintenance program on equipment and facilities. Maintenance personnel informally maintain RLISD's equipment and facilities. Maintenance directors and staff do not routinely keep preventive maintenance records. Since 1997-98, the vehicle and grounds equipment maintenance records are missing; the district assumes these records have been lost. Most maintenance records are hand-written and not organized. As a result, the review team could not determine whether the district performed emergency or preventive maintenance. District staff indicated that they do not have established procedures for conducting preventive maintenance. The district schedules vehicle and facility preventive maintenance during the winter and summer breaks when school is not in session.

The Plant Maintenance director follows the manufacturer's suggested preventive maintenance schedule for photocopiers. He also replaces all air conditioning filters every six months or sooner if they rate three or above in a scale of condition. The scale ranks the filters from one for good condition to five for bad condition.

Private sector industry tests have shown replacing failing parts is significantly cheaper than repairing equipment after the parts fail. Early detection and maintenance programs that proactively repair and maintain equipment do not increase maintenance costs. In fact, these programs will cause maintenance costs to drop as system reliability improves.

Effective maintenance departments establish annual and multi-year schedules for maintenance. These departments keep databases of projects by year and costs. A tracking system allows departments to develop better long-term maintenance budgets.

Another effective maintenance program is to have organized maintenance crews that visit schools at least once a year and perform preventive maintenance and low priority work orders. These crews include members who have mechanical, electrical, carpentry, painting and plumbing expertise. They make non-emergency repairs to upgrade facilities.

Effective preventive maintenance programs contain the following characteristics: a list of equipment and maintenance requirements; a timeline schedule for completion of projects; and inspection and maintenance procedures.

Exhibit 3-7 presents a sample preventive maintenance program. The "Xs" in the columns indicate the recommended inspection and repair time interval for maintenance in the various repair categories.

Exhibit 3-7
A Sample Preventive Maintenance Program

Area	Component	Inspection and Repair (3-6 Month Intervals)	Inspection and Repair Annually	Inspection and Repair (2-5 Year Intervals)	Inspection and Replacement (7-10 Year Intervals)	Inspection and Replacement (12-15 Years)
Exterior	Roof		X			X
	Roof Drainage		X			
	Windows and Glass		X			
	Masonry		X			
	Foundations		X			
	Joints and Sealants		X		X	
Equipment	Belts and Filters	X				
	Motors and Fans	X				
	Pipes and Fittings	X				
	Ductwork		X			
	Electrical Controls		X			
	Heating Equip.	X				
	Air conditioning Equip.	X				
Interior	Doors and Hardware		X			
	Wall Finishes		X		X	
	Floor Finishes		X		X	
Site	Parking and Walks		X			
	Drainage		X			
	Landscaping	X				
	Play Equipment	X				

Source: Developed by TSPR.

Recommendation 18:

Adopt a preventative maintenance program that provides regularly scheduled reviews on all facilities and equipment.

The Plant Maintenance director should develop the maintenance program along with a detailed preventive maintenance schedule for all facilities and equipment. This program should also establish timeline for completing maintenance projects.

The district should develop reports that provide district administrators with data pertaining to the preventive maintenance program. The superintendent should use these reports to make management decisions on whether to increase the preventive maintenance efforts.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Plant Maintenance and Transportation directors and principals develop and submit a preventive maintenance program that targets all RLISD facilities and equipment to the superintendent for approval.	June 2003
2.	Upon the superintendent's approval, the Plant Maintenance and Transportation directors and principals implement the preventive maintenance program.	July 2003
3.	The Plant Maintenance and Transportation directors and principals provide the superintendent with reports detailing preventive maintenance activities.	Ongoing
4.	The Plant Maintenance and Transportation directors, principals and superintendent use the reports to determine when adjustments to programs are needed.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 3

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

C. ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Energy costs across the state and nation have increased to levels that require close monitoring and management. Energy management ensures the cost-effective operation of the district's utilities. Energy audits and other sources of data are essential to controlling costs. Management uses data gathered from energy audits to determine district priorities and to monitor and evaluate the success of an energy conservation program. While the purpose of an energy management program is to minimize waste, the program should also ensure comfort in occupied spaces and encourage energy awareness across the district.

FINDING

RLISD does not have an energy management plan, and the district does not document its energy conservation activities adequately. The RLISD board oversees the district's energy budgets and expenses. **Exhibit 3-8** shows energy-related costs approved by the board between 1999-2000 and 2002-03.

Exhibit 3-8
Energy Related Expenditures
Annual Operating Budget
1999-2000 through 2001-02

Item	Budgeted 1999-2000	Budgeted 2000-01	Budgeted 2001-02
Water	\$29,000	\$28,700	\$29,600
Electricity	\$95,000	\$84,000	\$80,000
Gas-Utilities	\$18,000	\$15,000	\$22,800
Total	\$142,000	\$127,700	\$132,400

Source: RLISD Business Office, 2002.

The district assigns responsibilities for energy conservation activities informally. Department directors and staff all share responsibilities for energy conservation activities. Individual directors perform activities in their own specialized areas. For example, the plant director replaces the air conditioner filters and provides the board with cost and efficiency data on

air conditioners and other heating ventilation air conditioning (HVAC) equipment the district is considering for purchase.

The positions with informal energy conservation responsibilities do not routinely or formally share information about their activities with the Board of Trustees. Recently the board voted to join a cooperative electric service offered by the Texas Association of School Boards, which may provide some standardized tracking of electricity use by individual schools and related efficiencies.

The State Energy Conservation Office (SECO), a division of the Comptroller's office, publishes general maintenance and operations recommendations that are applicable to most facilities and have resulted in proven energy savings:

- *Publicize Energy Conservation.* Promote energy awareness at regular staff meetings, on bulletin boards and through any school publications. Publicize energy cost reports showing uptrends and downtrends. Establish participation in *Watt Watchers* and other programs, which involve students and staff directly in energy conservation activities.
- *Improve Control Of Interior & Exterior Lighting.* Establish procedures to monitor the use of lighting and reduce unnecessary usage, such as in classrooms at lunchtime and parking lots during daylight hours. One or two friendly reminders for minor infractions usually will result in lower electric bills.
- *Pre-Identify Premium Efficiency Motor (PEM) Replacements.* The advance identification of supply sources and stock numbers for all HVAC fan and pump motors can allow the district to replace these units with PEMs quickly and efficiently as failures occur. As funding allows, the district should pre-stock PEM replacements according to anticipated demand.
- *Control Outside Air Infiltration.* Conduct periodic inspections of door and window weather-stripping and schedule repairs as needed. Additionally, ensure that doors and windows are closed when heating or cooling systems are in operation. Poor insulation from outside air contributes to higher energy consumption, shorter equipment life and occupant discomfort.
- *Establish Heating, Ventilating and Air-Conditioner Unit Service Schedules.* Document schedules and review requirements for replacing filters and cleaning condensers and evaporators. Include particulars such as filter sizes, crew scheduling and contract availability. Generally, appropriate service frequencies are as follows: filters - monthly; condensers - annually; evaporators - every five years.

SECO provides free energy management audits to public sector entities such as school districts. According to the Comptroller's office, school districts that have participated in SECO energy audits and implemented their recommendations have saved about 14 percent on utility bills. SECO's audit also includes an estimate of investment cost, time and payback of annual energy savings.

SECO administers a variety of energy efficiency and renewable energy programs that can significantly reduce energy consumption in school districts. For example, the Energy Management Partnership Program has identified more than \$10 million in energy savings for school districts in Texas. The Lone Star program is recognized as the nation's largest and longest-running energy efficient, government-operated loan program. The program has helped public entities save more than \$94 million through energy efficiency and has recommended additional measures that could save more than \$500 million by 2020.

Spring ISD implemented a successful school energy conservation program designed to promote and reward student and staff participation in energy conservation. The district implemented a rebate program that rewards each school for efficient energy use by sharing savings with any school that reduces its usage below the budgeted amount. The schools that reduce usage below the budgeted amount receive a check for 50 percent of the savings amount.

Recommendation 19:

Request an energy management audit and develop an energy conservation plan.

SECO's general maintenance and operations guidelines should be adopted immediately. Information sharing among schools on energy saving ideas should also begin immediately. In addition, SECO could offer design and materials efficiency suggestions for the district's capital projects with designated fund balance for 2002-03 and beyond. **Exhibit 3-9** presents the list of projects with designated fund balance for 2002-03.

**Exhibit 3-9
RLISD 2002-03 Capital Projects with
Designated Fund Balance**

Item	Amount
Construct New Bus Barn	\$550,000
Construct New Field House	\$400,000

Convert Present Field House to Weight Room	\$20,000
Convert Weight Room to AEP	\$40,000
Convert AEP to Administration Offices	\$200,000
Construct New Storage Building at Travis	\$100,000
Replace Lighting at Football Stadium	\$200,000
Remodel High School	\$250,000
Replace Lighting in High School Auxiliary Gym	\$40,000
Replace Lighting in Lott Gym	\$40,000
Replace Waste Water Treatment Plant at Travis	\$100,000
New Elementary School	\$1,400,000
Total	\$3,340,000

Source: RLISD Business Office, 2002.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Plant Maintenance director contacts SECO and requests an audit.	June 2003
2.	SECO completes the audit and provides RLISD with a report.	July - December 2003
3.	The Plant Maintenance director reviews the report with the superintendent and prepares an energy conservation plan for the superintendent's approval.	January 2004
4.	The superintendent approves the plan and submits it to the board for approval.	February 2004
5.	The board approves the plan and directs the superintendent to move forward with implementation.	February - March 2004 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

Assuming utility bills could be reduced by 10 percent after the energy audit, RLISD would save \$13,240 annually. This is calculated assuming the budgeted 2001-02 utility bills would be reduced by 10 percent ($\$132,400 \times 0.10 = \$13,240$) and savings would begin in 2004-05 to provide the district with sufficient time to complete the audit and implementation.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Request an energy management audit and develop an energy conservation plan.	\$0	\$13,240	\$13,240	\$13,240	\$13,240

Chapter 4

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the financial operations of the Rosebud-Lott Independent School District (RLISD) in the following sections:

- A. Organization and Management
- B. Budgeting and Planning
- C. Tax Collections
- D. Cash and Investments
- E. Insurance and Fixed Assets
- F. Purchasing

A district's financial operations include financial management, asset and risk management and purchasing. Financial management involves budgeting and planning, accounting operations, tax collections, student activity funds and internal and external auditing. Asset and risk management provide adequate insurance coverage for district assets while paying the lowest possible premiums; cash management places district funds in investments that have good interest potential, while safeguarding district money; tax collection ensures taxes are collected efficiently; and fixed assets are accounted for and protected against theft and obsolescence. Purchasing serves as an administrative support function that provides the school district with the supplies and materials required to fulfill its educational responsibilities.

BACKGROUND

The most current financial data available for all districts can be found in the 2001-02 budgetary reports from the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), which are administered through the Texas Education Agency (TEA). AEIS reports provide beginning-of-the-year budget data and include the general fund, the Food Service fund and the debt service fund. All other funds are specifically excluded because they are not legally required to have an officially adopted budget. School districts may have significant budget amendments during the year and may have actual results that differ significantly from the final budget. Budget comparisons from the AEIS reports are presented for comparisons of district expectations, although end results may be different.

For comparison of actual revenues and expenditures, the most current reports available for all districts are for 2000-01, from the TEA Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS). These audited financial reports for each district include all funds. The RLISD Audited Financial Report for 2001-02 is another source of financial information.

School district financial operations must comply with federal, state and local laws and regulations, as compiled in the TEA *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide* (FASRG).

The 77th Legislature (2001) enacted Senate Bill 218, that creates an accountability rating system to measure how well Texas school districts are handling their finances. To comply with this mandate, TEA has established the School Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (School FIRST). In 2002-03, the School FIRST rating system will issue preliminary and final paper reports to each district and its regional education service center. When the rating system is fully implemented in 2003-04, each Board of Trustees will publish an annual report that describes the financial management performance of the district.

School FIRST seeks to improve school districts' financial management. The rating system is designed to assess the quality of financial management in Texas public schools and to measure the extent to which financial resources are directly used for instruction purposes. When the rating system is in place, school district ratings will be publicly available.

Ratings are based on the numerical scores expressed as the number of "No" answers and on 21 other indicators. Answering "no" to as few as one or two of the 21 questions could cause a district receive a low rating. The ratings and scores are shown in **Exhibit 4-1**.

**Exhibit 4-1
School FIRST
Rating Criteria**

Rating	Score (Number of "No" Answers)
Superior Achievement	0-2
Above Standard Achievement	3-4
Standard Achievement	5-6
Substandard Achievement	7 points, OR "No" to one of the five critical criteria indicators
Suspended - Data Quality	Serious data quality issues

Source: TEA, School FIRST.

In addition, failure to meet criteria for one of three critical indicators, or both of two additional criteria, will result in a "Substandard Achievement" rating. **Exhibit 4-2** details the five indicators.

**Exhibit 4-2
School FIRST
Critical Criteria Indicators**

Criteria Number	Criteria Description	Result of a "No" answer
1	Was total fund balance less reserved fund balance greater than zero in the general fund?	Automatic Substandard Rating
2	Were there NO disclosures in the annual financial report and/or other sources of information concerning default on bonded indebtedness obligations?	Automatic Substandard Rating
3	Was the annual financial report filed within one month after the deadline depending on the district's fiscal year end?	Automatic Substandard Rating
4	Was there an unqualified opinion in the annual financial report?	4 AND 5 Automatic Substandard Rating
5	Did the annual financial report NOT disclose any instance(s) of material weakness in internal controls?	4 AND 5 Automatic Substandard Rating

Source: TEA, School FIRST.

Districts that earn a Substandard Achievement rating will be sanctioned, with additional sanctions for data quality issues. Sanctions could result in assignment of a TEA financial monitor or master, or an accreditation investigation.

TEA prepared draft School FIRST reports using 2000-01 financial data. If the School FIRST rating had been applied to that year, the district would have earned a Superior Achievement rating because it had only two "no" answers out of 21 questions, and all critical criteria indicators had "yes" answers.

The "no" answers show areas for improvement in RLISD. Question 6 asks if the percent of total tax collections, including delinquent, is greater than 96 percent. RLISD's percent of total tax collections was 82.74 percent in 2000-01; in 2001-02 the percentage rose to 92.46 percent. In 2001-02, the district scores a "no" for Question 6 because the total tax collection percentage falls below 96 percent.

Question 18 asks if the total general fund balance ranks between lower and upper limits as specified: 50 percent less than and 150 percent more than

the calculated optimum according to the *Fund Balance and Cash Flow Calculation Worksheet* in the Annual Financial Report. RLISD's total general fund balance was almost \$5.5 million, 290 percent higher than the 2000-01 calculated optimum of \$1.4 million, resulting in a "no" response. As presented in **Exhibit 4-3**, RLISD's total 2001-02 general fund balance improved to slightly below the top end of the acceptable range for the calculated optimum.

Exhibit 4-3
School FIRST Rating Worksheet Question 18 Analysis
RLISD Calculated Optimum and Total General Fund Balance
Comparison
2000-01 and 2001-02

Year	Calculated Optimum General Fund balance	Total General Fund Balance Upper Limit - 150% of Optimum	Total General Fund Balance Lower Limit - 50% of Optimum	RLISD Total General Fund Balance	RLISD Total General Fund Balance Percentage of Calculated Optimum	Answer to School FIRST Worksheet Question 18
2000-01	\$1,407,565	\$2,111,348	\$703,783	\$5,487,039	290%	No
2001-02	\$3,201,808	\$4,802,712	\$1,600,904	\$4,641,552	145%	Yes

Source: RLISD Audited Financial Reports, 2000-01 and 2001-02; Draft School FIRST Rating Worksheet, 2000-01.

Texas school districts receive local, state and federal revenue. Considering all funds, as shown in **Exhibit 4-4**, RLISD received 69 cents of every dollar from state sources, 22 cents from local and intermediate sources and 9 cents from federal sources during 2001-02.

Exhibit 4-4
RLISD Actual Revenues by Source - All Governmental Funds
2001-02

Description	Revenues	Percent by Source
Local and intermediate	\$1,372,640	22.0%
State	\$4,330,289	69.0%

Federal	\$595,218	9.0%
Total	\$6,298,147	100.0%

Source: RLISD Audited Annual Financial Report, 2001-02.

Of RLISD's total 2001-02 actual revenues, 22 percent came from local revenues. Property taxes provide the most important source of local revenues. RLISD's real property consists of 29 percent residential and 71 percent commercial, industrial or mineral property. The district is unique because it levies a personal property tax on automobiles, which supplements its real property tax revenue. Few districts have the ability to levy a personal property tax because the authority is granted by vote from local government. Only 11 of the more than 1000 school districts levy such a tax.

Local property tax rates may include a portion dedicated to maintenance and operations (M&O) for general operating needs, and an interest and sinking (I&S) portion for debt service. RLISD currently levies an M&O tax of \$0.902; the district has no debt service, so no I&S tax exists. Other local sources of revenue include interest from time deposits, food service sales and athletic revenues.

RLISD's state funds were 69 percent of total revenues for 2001-02. State funding is based on formulas approved by the Texas Legislature. The major factor in funding formulas is average daily attendance. The formulas also contain funding for programs that benefit educationally disadvantaged students.

RLISD's federal funds accounted for 9 percent of the total 2001-02 revenue. Federal funds are normally granted for a specific program or target group of students. The funds may not be used for normal operating expenditures and are usually reimbursements for money already spent. In addition, most federal grants require the funding to be used to supplement existing programs.

Year to year, revenue estimates change, based on the funding source. Local revenues are affected by property values, the tax rate and district efforts at generating other revenues. State funding formulas and special allocations are set by the Legislature, but the district can apply for special programs funding. Federal funding is almost entirely requested through grant applications.

Reliance on taxes and state funding varies among the four peer districts. RLISD also varies significantly with state and regional averages. With 14.4 percent of the revenue budget from property taxes and a total of 22.2

percent from local sources, RLISD relies the least on property values and tax rates. In comparison with its peers, the district is the second most reliant on state revenue, at 73.9 percent, slightly behind Mart with 77.7 percent.

Exhibit 4-5 shows student enrollment, percentage of economically disadvantaged students, property value per student, budgeted revenue per student and budgeted expenditures per student for RLISD and peer districts.

**Exhibit 4-5
District Statistics
RLISD, Peer Districts, Region 12 and State
2002-03**

District	Student Enrollment	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	Property Value per Student	Budgeted Revenues per Student	Budgeted Expenditures per Student
Corrigan-Camden	1,142	66.6	\$184,432	\$7,754	\$7,740
Franklin	945	38.2	\$315,562	\$8,001	\$8,051
Mart	678	51.6	\$83,543	\$8,128	\$8,157
Rogers	863	39.6	\$105,533	\$6,523	\$6,738
RLISD	953	49.0	\$94,012	\$6,268	\$6,836
Region 12	139,468	49.9	N/A	N/A	N/A
State	4,239,911	51.9	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2002-03.

RLISD's 2002-03 budgeted expenditures per student were less than all of its peer districts except Rogers ISD and about 19 percent less than Mart ISD, with the peer group's highest budgeted expenditures per student of \$8,157. The district also had the lowest 2002-03 budgeted revenues per student of its peer group at \$6,268, almost 30 percent less than Mart ISD's \$8,128, the peer group's highest budgeted revenues per student.

RLISD's total budgeted expenditures were \$6.5 million for 2002-03. With student enrollment of 953, the district would have to spend an additional \$861,512 to match the spending level per student of its next highest peer district, Corrigan-Camden, or almost \$1.3 million to match the peer group's highest budgeted per student expenditures at Mart ISD.

The percentage by function of the operating budget usually maintains a similar percentage of the final actual expenditures by function to the total operating expenditures. As shown in **Exhibit 4-6**, the variance between RLISD's budgeted and actual operating expenditures was less than 1 percent in 2001-02.

Exhibit 4-6
RLISD Budgeted Compared to Actual Expenditures by Function
Percentage of Operating Expenditures
2001-02

Function	PEIMS Reported Budget	Percent of Total	Actual Expenditures	Percent of Total	Under (Over) Budget Variance	Under (Over) Budget Variance Percent
Instruction	\$3,485,535	55.2%	\$3,760,612	59.2%	(\$275,077)	(7.9%)
Instruction-Related Services	\$176,183	2.8%	\$167,927	2.6%	\$8,256	4.7%
Instructional Leadership	\$26,619	0.4%	\$37,202	0.6%	(\$10,583)	(39.8%)
School Leadership	\$399,446	6.3%	\$384,673	6.1%	\$14,773	3.7%
Support Services - Student	\$169,889	2.7%	\$171,997	2.7%	(\$2,108)	(1.2%)
Student Transportation	\$223,365	3.5%	\$180,613	2.8%	\$42,752	19.1%
Food Services	\$396,998	6.3%	\$351,133	5.5%	\$45,865	11.6%
Co-curricular/Extracurricular	\$285,558	4.5%	\$204,641	3.2%	\$80,917	28.3%
Central Administration	\$287,929	4.6%	\$232,462	3.7%	\$55,467	19.3%
Plant Maintenance and Operations	\$672,882	10.7%	\$596,567	9.4%	\$76,285	11.3%
Security and Monitoring	\$13,809	0.2%	\$10,433	0.2%	\$3,376	10.2%
Data Processing Services	\$33,080	0.5%	\$29,391	0.5%	\$3,689	11.2%
Other*	\$142,525	2.3%	\$229,146	3.5%	\$86,621	(60.8%)
Total Operating Expenditures	\$6,313,818	100.0%	\$6,356,797	100.0%	(\$42,979)	(0.7%)

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2001-02.

**Other includes any operating expenses not listed above and all non-operational expenditures such as debt service, capital outlay and community and parental involvement services.*

RLISD spent slightly more than it budgeted 2001-02.

School FIRST Indicator 11 requires that districts spend more than 54 percent of operating expenditures on instruction. In addition to funds reported through AEIS, the School FIRST calculation includes special revenue, debt service and construction, but it excludes shared service arrangements. Also, School FIRST excludes capital outlay expenditures but includes the community service function. If 2000-01 RLISD expenditures were reviewed under School FIRST criteria, it would show that 61.21 percent of expenditures were for instruction, a "yes" to Indicator 11.

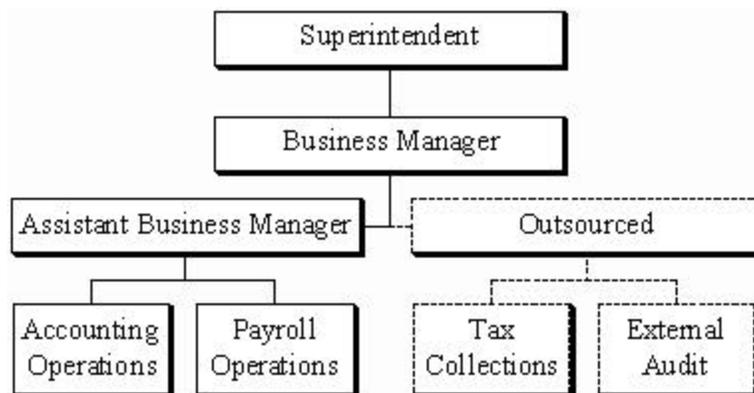
Chapter 4

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

A. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

The business manager reports to the superintendent and is primarily responsible for the district's financial management functions. **Exhibit 4-7** presents RLISD's reporting structure.

Exhibit 4-7
RLISD Financial Management Functions
With Reporting Relationships
2002-03



Source: RLISD Business Office, 2002.

Note: Contracted Services outside the district are shown with a dotted line.

The business manager oversees all financial functions and reports directly to the superintendent. The assistant business manager supervises the internal functions, accounting and payroll operations; the business manager directly oversees outsourced functions, tax collections and external audits. The district contracts with the Falls County Tax Assessor-Collector for tax collections and an audit firm for the external audit.

The business manager handles many key RLISD financial functions. The superintendent and business manager were hired in 2002-03. The assistant business manager left at the beginning of November 2002. Promoted from within the district, the new assistant business manager assumed duties in late November 2002 and has payroll and purchasing experience through a previous job as a nursing home administrator. RLISD has an ongoing consulting contract with the previous business manager to work with the new business manager and the assistant business manager to ensure a smooth transition.

The business manager places a high priority on updating the district's financial software and has purchased the updated version of the Regional Service Center Computer Cooperative (RSCCC) Windows-based software, scheduled for installation between April and July 2003. The business manager attended training for the system upgrade in fall 2002. Until the new software is installed, the business manager has been using her own Excel-based spreadsheets to track key financial data.

Region 12 supports business management personnel by installing financial software and by training district staff. RLISD has access to the financial modules, including accounting and finance, check reconciliation, budgeting, payroll, fixed assets and purchasing. The software is routinely used for monthly accounting, payroll, financial reporting, purchasing and fixed assets record keeping. This software system has menus that allow a district to choose the preferred level of detail to maintain business records. The software also includes management information reports in four general categories: summary reports, fixed asset/inventory reports, vendor/purchase order reports and journals/checks/detailed ledger reports.

RLISD's annual financial audits have not shown any material weaknesses or major issues from 1998-99 through 2001-02.

FINDING

RLISD lacks a single written policies and procedures manual for its business and financial processes. Currently each financial function is performed according to handwritten or verbal instructions. The lack of such a manual weakens RLISD's internal control structure because guidelines and processes may not be applied consistently or as intended. The previous business manager, who retired at the end of 2001-02, had successfully performed her duties based on experience, but written documentation of the policies and procedures was not provided. As a result, the new business manager had no comprehensive written guide and relied on the former business manager's institutional knowledge.

Smaller-sized districts in particular are at risk when the district's expertise is concentrated in a single person. If an accident occurs or that employee leaves the district, the knowledge is lost. Documented policies and procedures manuals help to preserve the district's institutional knowledge.

A well-designed financial manual includes policies and procedures for budgets, payroll, accounts payable, activity funds, cash management and treasury, check approvals and journal vouchers; cash receipts and travel reimbursements, safeguarding district fixed assets, business office processes and the distribution of financial reports.

Many districts document their finance-related activities in a procedures manual. In some cases, the manual is available on the district's Web site. The manual includes financial organization charts, a finance office telephone directory and a guide of who handles what. Manual sections include accounts payable, activity funds, budgeting and planning, financial reporting, purchasing, payroll, benefits and risk management.

Recommendation 20:

Develop a districtwide financial management policies and procedures manual.

Finance-related procedures should be documented in an updated, indexed policies and procedures manual. This will give staff members detailed procedures for performing critical accounting and reporting functions. The manual should clearly outline acceptable and unacceptable practices.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent instructs the business manager to work with the former business manager currently under contract with the district to develop comprehensive financial management procedures for the district.	June 2003
2.	The business manager, former business manager and assistant business manager develop a plan to organize a comprehensive procedures manual.	June 2003
3.	The business manager, former business manager and assistant business manager search for best practices in this area to identify the best model.	June 2003
4.	The business manager, former business manager and assistant business manager draft a procedures manual and submit it to the superintendent for approval.	July - August 2003
5.	The superintendent approves the manual and instructs the business manager to publish, post it on the Web site and otherwise distribute it throughout the district.	September 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

B. BUDGETING AND PLANNING

A budget shows anticipated revenues and expenditures for a given period, usually a year. An effective budget links spending plans to strategic goals, priorities and initiatives established by the governing body. The development of a school district budget is a collaborative effort that requires the cooperation of various individuals across the organization. The budget should reflect the financial stewardship of the administration, the board and the local community.

FINDING

RLISD does not have a comprehensive, inclusive written budget process. According to the business manager, the budget process begins in February with planning and evaluation according to state guidelines. The board has several budget meetings in the summer and then meets for approval in August. The board held two workshops on the 2002-03 budget, which were publicly announced to give local citizens an opportunity for input. The budget was adopted in August 2002. RLISD conducts the required public hearing, and the board adopts the budget.

The district does not have a standing districtwide budget review committee that represents teachers, specialized teaching areas and administrators. District and campus improvement plans are not integrated to work together within the budget process. As a result, the budget may not reflect the priorities in the district and campus improvement plans, and key campus items may not receive budget consideration or funding. The superintendent sets the budget priorities for the year.

The TEA Web site and Region 12 offer blueprints for creating a successful budget process, including best practices from districts with successful budget planning.

Recommendation 21:

Establish a comprehensive budget process that includes community, staff and board involvement.

The budget process should incorporate input from all district stakeholders, including staff members and the community.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager prepares a schedule based on Region 12 guidelines for development and preparation of the proposed 2004-05 budget.	June 2003
2.	The superintendent presents the schedule to the board for approval.	August 2003
3.	Based on the Region 12 blueprint, the superintendent and business manager review staffing, salary schedules and project enrollment, develop revenue estimates and begin to prepare the school budget.	October - December 2003
4.	The superintendent and business manager submit draft campus and program budgets to the board.	January 2004
5.	The board schedules public meetings for community input.	February 2004
6.	The board and district follow the Region 12 blueprint for adopting the 2004-05 budget.	March - August 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

RLISD does not have an effective fund-balance management policy. As a result, the district has accumulated a large fund balance and has not fully planned its usage to meet district facility, administrative or educational needs.

School district fund balances, or reserve balances, function like savings accounts. Fund balances are used for emergencies, to pay bills if cash expenditures occur faster than revenue inflow or to build up savings for large purchases that are not affordable within a single year, such as facility improvements.

Exhibit 4-8 shows the ending general fund balance compared to the optimal fund balance, as calculated annually by TEA and the district's external auditors.

**Exhibit 4-8
General Fund Balance
1998-99 through 2001-02**

	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
--	----------------	------------------	----------------	----------------

General Fund Balance	\$4,332,022	\$4,860,227	\$5,487,039	\$4,641,552
Less: General Fund Optimum Fund Balance Calculation	\$2,045,258	\$1,306,625	\$1,407,565	\$3,201,808
Excess/(Deficit) Undesignated Unreserved General Fund Balance	\$2,286,764	\$3,553,602	\$4,079,474	\$1,439,744

Source: RLISD Audited Financial Reports, 1998-99 through 2001-02.

RLISD board policy calls for an unreserved, undesignated fund balance of at least two months' operating costs. The district has not decided how to use the excess net undesignated unreserved general fund balance. Even after covering net cash outflows, RLISD has historically accumulated significant excess net undesignated unreserved general fund balances, as shown in **Exhibit 4-9**, which does not follow TEA guidelines.

Exhibit 4-9
RLISD Excess Net Undesignated Unreserved
General Fund Balance
1998-99 through 2001-02

Year	Excess Undesignated Unreserved General Fund Balance	Percent Change
1998-99	\$2,286,764	N/A
1999-2000	\$3,353,602	55.4%
2000-01	\$4,079,474	14.8%
2001-02	\$1,439,744	(64.71%)

Source: RLISD Audited Financial Statements, 1998-99 through 2001-02.

For 2002-03, the district tried to reduce its undesignated fund balance by reserving \$3.4 million for individual capital projects. **Exhibit 4-10** shows RLISD's designated fund balance for capital projects in 2002-03 with estimated costs. In interviews and in reviewing budget documents, the review team learned that this list is not directly integrated with any current budget documents. Because the list is not integrated in the budget, these funds are not dedicated, therefore, misstating their actual financial position.

Exhibit 4-10
RLISD Designated Fund Balance for Capital Projects
2002-03

Item	Amount
Construct new bus barn	\$550,000
Construct new field house	\$400,000
Convert current field house to weight room	\$20,000
Convert weight room to alternative education program (AEP)	\$40,000
Convert AEP to administration offices	\$200,000
Construct new storage building at Travis	\$100,000
Expand rodeo arena	\$25,000
Replace lighting at football stadium	\$200,000
Remodel high school	\$250,000
Replace lighting in high school auxiliary gym	\$40,000
Replace lighting in Lott Gym	\$40,000
Construct fence around tennis courts at Rosebud Intermediate	\$10,000
Construct concrete parking lot at Lott Elementary	\$25,000
Replace wastewater treatment plant at Travis	\$100,000
Construct new elementary school	\$1,400,000
Total	\$3,400,000

Source: RLISD Business Office, 2002.

Exhibit 4-11 compares RLISD's fund balance with those of its peer districts. The exhibit shows that RLISD's fund balance is almost twice as high as the second-highest peer district fund balance and about eight times higher than the lowest peer district fund balance for the same period.

Exhibit 4-11
Fund Balance
RLISD and Peer Districts

District	Fund Balance as of 8/31/01	Percent of Budgeted Expenditures for 2001-02
Corrigan-Camden	\$2,551,605	32.7%

Mart	\$1,397,419	30.2%
Rogers	\$1,024,016	19.6%
Franklin	\$624,884	9.7%
RLISD	\$4,594,474	74.3%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

Fund balance is calculated as the difference between the total unreserved fund balance and the designated unreserved fund balance. **Exhibit 4-12** shows that RLISD has accumulated large fund balances compared to the state. This amount is also expressed as a percent of the total budgeted expenditures for the following fiscal year. Since 1998-99, the state's fund balance percent of budgeted expenditures has fallen, remaining constant at about 13 percent, while RLISD's fund balance percent has varied from a low of 44 percent to the budgeted 2001-02 high of 74.3 percent.

Exhibit 4-12
Fund Balance as a Percent of Budgeted Expenditures
1998-99 through 2001-02

Year	RLISD Fund Balances as of August 31*	Percent of Budgeted Expenditures for 2001-02	State Fund Balance as of August 31*	Percent of Budgeted Expenditures for 2001-02
1998-99	\$3,539,263	59.6%	\$4,423,266,863	21.2%
1999-2000	\$2,809,435	44.0%	\$3,093,931,700	13.6%
2000-01	\$4,059,662	65.7%	\$3,299,835,932	13.6%
2001-02	\$4,594,474	74.3%	\$3,574,637,703	13.7%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1998-99 through 2001-02.

*August 31, 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001.

The FASRG provides a computation of the optimum fund balance for the general fund. The Computation Worksheet for an optimal general fund is a required schedule in the annual external audit. TEA recommends that the optimal fund balance be equal to the total reserved balance, total designated fund balance, an amount needed to cover fall cash flow deficits in the general fund and one month of average cash disbursements during the regular (non-summer) school year. Reserved fund balances are legally earmarked for specific future use, such as a reserve for encumbrances.

Designated fund balances are identified by school district management to reflect tentative plans or commitments.

Recommendation 22:

Establish a general fund balance management policy and plan to meet Texas Education Agency guidelines.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent recommends a general fund balance policy to the board that meets key criteria and takes into account Texas Education Agency guidelines and local goals and objectives.	June 2003
2.	The superintendent recommends the use of available, undesignated fund balance to meet key objectives elsewhere identified through an administrative needs assessment, a facilities master plan, educational objectives and implementation of the technology plan.	July 2003
3.	The board approves the use of available, undesignated fund balance and designates the funds according to capital needs.	August 2003
4.	The superintendent integrates the fund balance management policy into future budget documents.	August 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

C. TAX COLLECTIONS

The RLISD Board of Trustees sets the district's tax rate. State law requires that the rate be set after legal adoption of the budget by the board. School districts develop and adopt their tax rates, and central appraisal districts perform district property value appraisals. School district tax rates have a maintenance and operations (M & O) component for meeting operating costs, and a debt service (I & S) component to cover the costs of indebtedness. The rate is applied to the property value to compute the total levy. RLISD contracts with the Falls County Tax Assessor-Collector to collect and remit its taxes.

RLISD's tax assessor-collector calculates the district's effective tax rate for budgeting purposes and as a benchmark for the adopted rate. The tax assessor-collector also oversees the mailing of tax statements in October and processes receipts for approximately 8,327 parcels per year for RLISD. The Falls County Tax Assessor-Collector contracts with a tax attorney to collect its delinquent taxes. State law allows the tax attorney to add a 15-percent collection fee to taxes outstanding as of July 1 of each year. When delinquent taxes are collected, the attorney retains the 15 percent minus the amount per year for tax collection support provided by the Falls County Tax Assessor-Collector. The district keeps the taxes collected, plus penalty and interest.

Property taxes are levied by October 1 on the assessed value listed as of the prior January 1, for all real and business personal property located in RLISD, in conformity with the Texas Property Tax Code. Taxes are due on receipt of the tax bill and are delinquent if not paid before February 1 of the year following the year they were imposed. On January 1 of each year, a tax lien attaches to property to secure payment of all taxes, penalties and interest. Uncollectible personal property taxes are periodically reviewed and written off; the district is not allowed to write off real property taxes without specific statutory authority.

RLISD is one of two districts in Falls County that assess a personal property tax on vehicles. **Exhibit 4-13** shows the Falls County 2001 vehicle tax levy. The vehicle tax is about 14 percent of RLISD and Westphalia ISD's total tax levy, compared with a statewide average of 0.02 percent.

Exhibit 4-13
Falls County Vehicle Tax Levy
Tax Year 2001

Description	RLISD	Total State	Westphalia ISD
Tax year 2001 vehicles appraised value	\$13,825,280	N/A	\$1,567,370
Tax rate per \$100 of value	\$0.90194	N/A	\$1.18618
2001 actual vehicle tax levy	\$124,696	\$3,261,345	\$18,592
2001 total tax levy	\$881,778	\$15,108,765,078	\$127,734
Vehicle tax as a percent total tax levy	14.1%	0.02%	14.6%

Source: Comptroller of Public Accounts Annual Property Tax Report, Tax Year 2001, Issued November 2002.

Exhibit 4-14 presents the taxable property value, property value per student and tax rates for RLISD and its peer districts.

Exhibit 4-14
Property Tax
RLISD, Peer Districts, Region 12 and State
2001-02

District	Assessed Value	Tax Base per Student	Tax Rate*		
			M&O	I&S	Total
Corrigan-Camden	\$180,280,891	\$154,350	\$1.336	\$0.174	\$1.510
Franklin	\$248,851,757	\$252,129	\$1.161	\$0.339	\$1.500
Mart	\$49,429,950	\$72,055	\$1.500	\$0.185	\$1.685
Rogers	\$79,700,988	\$91,821	\$1.387	\$0.106	\$1.493
RLISD	\$88,116,041	\$91,029	\$0.902	\$0.000	\$0.902
Region 12	\$19,982,130,925	\$147,743	\$1.375	\$0.088	\$1.463
State	\$960,394,653,634	\$234,607	\$1.391	\$0.094	\$1.485

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.
*Rounded to the nearest thousandth.

RLISD had the lowest 2001-02 tax rate among its peer districts and was lower than both the Region 12 average and the state average. Also, its property value per student is lower than that of the state, Region 12 and all the peer districts except Mart. Because Mart ISD has a low property value per student it receives a higher state allocation per student, but property tax revenue is still the second-largest source of revenue to the district.

Property values are important determinates of school funding at both the local and state levels. There is an inverse relationship between local property wealth and state aid. The greater the property wealth of the district, the greater the amount of revenue raised locally, but the lower the amount of state aid. **Exhibit 4-15** shows the property value per pupil for RLISD compared to the state average and the benchmark per pupil value that defines a wealthy district.

Exhibit 4-15
Property Value for Each Pupil
2001-02

Wealthy District	RLISD	State Average
\$305,000	\$91,029	\$234,607

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

Since RLISD's property value per pupil is lower than the \$305,000 benchmark for a wealthy district, it is considered a property-poor district. This means that RLISD has more students than local funds available to educate the students at the benchmark level. Because state law guarantees benchmark-level student funding for all Texas school districts, property-poor districts receive state funds, according to the number of annual weighted average daily attendance (WADA) units in each district. WADAs are calculated based on the number of students with adjustments for the programs they qualify for or participate in; one WADA equals about \$5,000. In addition to direct funding from the state, there are provisions for five options for property-wealthy school districts to reduce their wealth to the current benchmark, \$305,000 per pupil, by purchasing WADA credits from property-poor school districts.

Two of the five options, 3 and 4, are used almost exclusively. Option 3 is the purchase of attendance credits from the state, and Option 4 is the education of nonresident students. Option 4 involves a partnership

between a property-wealthy (Chapter 41) district and a property-poor (Chapter 42) district. The labels, Chapters 41 and 42, are commonly used because Chapter 41 of the Texas Education Code contains the partnership rules for property-wealthy districts, and Chapter 42 has the partnership rules for property-poor districts.

Both districts usually benefit because the "property-poor" district gets more dollars per WADA than the state pays in direct funding, and the "property-rich" district pays less dollars per WADA than it would to the state for wealth equalization. RLISD pursued partnerships and sold WADA credits in 2001-02 to Lake Travis ISD. This partnership transaction resulted in a gain (profit) for RLISD and a savings for Lake Travis ISD. Use of the gain is restricted to certain purposes, approved by partnership agreements. **Exhibit 4-16** is an overview of RLISD's partnership for WADA sales for 2001-02, using the sale of one WADA to its Chapter 41 school partner as an example.

Exhibit 4-16
RLISD Partnerships for WADA Sales
2001-02

 Lake Travis ISD Chapter 41 School	Rosebud Lott ISD Chapter 42 School WADA = \$4,000	State WADA = \$4,000
{\$5,000 to RLISD; WADA unit to LTISD}	{From \$5,000: \$1,000 gain to RLISD; \$4,000 to State}	{State receives \$4,000 per WADA unit sold}

Source: TSPR and TEA, Finance and Support Systems Division, 2003.

In 2001-02, RLISD sold 1,320 of its 1,634.46 total WADAs. The sale resulted in the state recapturing \$3.8 million and the district realizing a gain on the sale of WADA of more than \$2 million. Lake Travis ISD saved \$1.3 million by purchasing WADA credits from RLISD in lieu of paying the state directly to reach the equalized wealth level.

For the Chapter 42 district (RLISD) to receive discount or "efficiency credits,"- in this case, a \$1,000 credit on every unit sold for \$5,000-the gain must be used for one of the following:

- an extended year program;
- an AEP;
- a juvenile justice alternative education program (JJAEP);
- a combined program of at least two of the above;
- a combined program plus instructional technology;
- instructional technology;
- an innovative education program; or
- a technology consortium.

FINDING

Errors exist in the district's audited annual financial statements for 2000-01 and 2001-02. The review team learned through interviews that the district's external audit firm did not use TEA's prescribed methodologies in determining two items on the Schedule of Delinquent Taxes Receivable: the net assessed/appraised value for school tax purposes and current year's total levy. **Exhibit 4-17** presents a summary of RLISD's net assessed/appraised property values for school tax purposes and current year total tax levies for 2000-01 and 2001-02 from the district's audited annual financial statements and using TEA's prescribed methodologies.

Exhibit 4-17
RLISD Net Assessed/Appraised Property Values for
School Tax Purposes and Current Year Tax Levies
Schedule of Delinquent Tax Accounts Receivable

Values as reported in RLISD's Audited Financial Statements	2000-01 Actual	2001-02 Actual
Net assessed/appraised property value for school tax purposes	\$108,255,275	\$97,590,143
Current year total tax levy	\$976,398	\$880,205
Values using TEA's prescribed methodologies	Tax Year 2000	Tax Year 2001
Net assessed/appraised property value for school tax purposes	\$96,284,773	\$97,764,576
Current year total tax levy	\$868,106	\$881,778

Source: RLISD Audited Financial Statements, 2000-01 through 2001-02; Comptroller of Public Accounts Annual Property Tax Reports for Tax Years 2000 and 2001.

Note: All values are rounded to the nearest whole number.

In contrast to the values presented in RLISD's audited financial statements, the district's annual assessed property values were fairly constant until they increased from \$98.9 million in tax year 2001 to \$105 million in tax year 2002, or about \$6 million. According to interviews with the Falls County Appraisal District (CAD), this was due to a complete reappraisal of the district's property. For real property classified as class 3 or above, values were increased by at least 15 percent based on current sales information. The reappraisal increase will be recognized in RLISD's 2002-03 audited annual financial statement.

According to a representative of the district's external audit firm familiar with RLISD's audited statements, the current years' levies were taken directly from district-requested printouts of the its property revenues as of fiscal year end, provided by the Falls County Tax Assessor-Collector. The representative said that the net assessed/appraised property values for school tax purposes were not included in the responses; the firm used the letter response information by calculating the missing assessed property value-dividing the total tax levy by RLISD's tax rate.

As a result, the current year levy errors flowed through the A, C, D and H exhibits in both years' audited annual financial statements. Although school funding was not affected, the School FIRST indicator for tax collections is also incorrect because the wrong methodology was applied.

According to TEA's managing director of School Financial Audits, the source of the assessed/appraised value for school tax purposes is the *School District Report of Property Value*. For example, the template on TEA's Web site for the Schedule of Delinquent Tax Accounts Receivable (Exhibit J-1) for 2001-02 has a specific reference for the source of the net assessed/appraised value for school tax purposes, "Source: 2001 School District Report of Property Value (Includes all Supplements and Litigated Accounts.)" In addition, the template also specifies the calculation for the current year's levy, which is to multiply the tax rate times the net assessed/appraised value for school tax purposes.

Recommendation 23:

Immediately correct inaccuracies in RLISD's current and prior audited financial statements, send corrected schedules to the Texas Education Agency and create procedures to ensure future submission schedules are accurate.

RLISD staff and the external auditor should follow TEA's prescribed methodologies and guidelines to ensure the audited financial statements have accurate data. The district should create internal procedures that monitor the accuracy of all information prior to TEA submission.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent and business manager meet with the external audit firm to assess the inaccuracies in the district's current and prior audited financial statements and create procedures to guarantee the accuracy of all information submitted to TEA.	Immediately
2.	The business manager works with the district's external audit firm to get all of the errors corrected.	June 2003

3.	The business manager and external auditor meet with the superintendent to present the corrected audit schedules.	June 2003
4.	The superintendent and external auditor present the corrected audit schedules to the board for approval.	July 2003
5.	The superintendent sends the corrected schedules to TEA.	July 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

RLISD's current and delinquent tax collection rates are low. As a result, RLISD did not meet the passing criteria for School FIRST Indicator No. 6, which is a 96 percent overall (M & O) collection rate as per the School FIRST calculation. For 2000-01 and 2001-02, RLISD's computed collection rates were only about 82 percent and 92 percent, respectively.

RLISD has had an interlocal agreement with the Falls County Tax Assessor-Collector to collect its taxes since 1992. The Falls County Tax Assessor-Collector assesses and/or collects taxes for 13 entities, of which three are school districts. RLISD, Marlin ISD and Westphalia ISD are all located in Falls County.

Exhibit 4-18 presents a summary of RLISD tax collection rates and statistics for 1998-99 through 2001-02.

Exhibit 4-18
RLISD Assessed Value, Tax Rates, Tax Levy and Tax Collections
1998-99 through 2001-02

	1998-99 Actual	1999-2000 Actual	2000-01 Actual	2001-02 Actual
Assessed property value	\$93,452,429	\$93,314,166	\$108,255,275	\$97,590,143
M&O tax rate	\$0.902	\$0.902	\$0.902	\$0.902
I&S tax rate	\$0.000	\$0.000	\$0.000	\$0.000
Tax rate per \$100 value	\$0.902	\$0.902	\$0.902	\$0.902
Current year tax levy	\$842,885	\$841,638	\$976,398	\$880,205

Current year tax collections	\$760,898	\$766,146	\$764,250	\$773,252
Current year percent collected to levy	90.3%	91.0%	78.3%	87.8%

Source: RLISD Audited Financial Statements, 1998-99 through 2001-02.

RLISD's percent collected to levy was slightly above 90 percent from 1998-99 through 1999-2000, dropped to less than 79 percent in 2000-01 and then rose to almost 88 percent for 2001-02. As shown in **Exhibit 4-19**, RLISD's overall collection rate (fiscal year adjusted tax levy divided by delinquent tax accounts receivable) has improved to the 50-percent range since 1998-99.

Exhibit 4-19
RLISD Delinquent Tax Collection Rates
1998-99 through 2001-02

Description	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Delinquent Tax Accounts Receivable as of August 31, 2002	\$354,106	\$371,190	\$517,198	\$444,475
Fiscal Year 2002 Adjusted Tax Levy	\$857,349	\$850,192	\$997,471	\$897,816
Delinquent Tax Accounts Receivable as a Percent of Adjusted 2002 Tax Levy	41.3%	43.7%	51.9%	49.5%

Source: RLISD, Audited Financial Statements, 1998-99 through 2001-02.

Exhibit 4-20 compares current and delinquent tax collection rates among RLISD, peer districts, and other districts that contract with the Falls County Tax Assessor-Collector for tax collections.

Exhibit 4-20
Tax Collection and Delinquent Tax Collection Rates
RLISD, Peer Districts and Other Districts
that Contract with Falls County for Tax Collections
2001-02

Description	Corrigan-Camden	Franklin	Mart	Rogers	RLISD	Marlin	Westphalia
-------------	-----------------	----------	------	--------	-------	--------	------------

Percent of Fiscal 2002 Taxes Collected as of August 31, 2002, based on adjusted levy	95.5%	97.3%	85.6%	95.5%	86.1%	94.3%	96.7%
Delinquent Tax Accounts Receivable as of August 31, 2002	\$448,737	\$270,271	\$185,751	\$150,534	\$444,475	\$801,991	\$16,430
Fiscal Year 2002 Adjusted Tax Levy	\$2,609,101	\$3,752,304	\$885,195	\$1,177,521	\$897,816	\$2,102,268	\$125,780
Delinquent Tax Accounts Receivable as a Percent of Adjusted 2002 Tax Levy	17.2%	7.2%	21.0%	12.8%	49.5%	38.1%	13.1%

Source: RLISD, Corrigan-Camden ISD, Franklin ISD, Mart ISD, Rogers ISD, Marlin ISD, and Westphalia ISD Exhibit J-1 of the Audited Financial Statements, 2001-02.

At 49.5 percent, RLISD has the highest delinquent tax accounts receivable as a percent of adjusted 2001-02 tax levy. The district's overall delinquent accounts receivable collection rate, which shows the level of delinquent tax accounts carried forward, is much higher than Westphalia ISD's 13.1 percent and more than 10 percentage points above Marlin ISD's 38.1 percent.

The review team learned through interviews with the Falls County Tax Assessor-Collector and delinquent tax collection firm representative that the district's delinquent tax accounts receivable as a percent of adjusted 2002 tax levy is artificially high because there are many properties on

RLISD's current tax roll that meet the requirements for deactivation and removal from the tax roll. Though these properties are in the process of being removed, the process of identifying and removing these properties is time consuming because one property at a time is manually deleted with the current software package.

RLISD's actual delinquent tax collections have increased over the past three years, as shown in **Exhibit 4-21**.

Exhibit 4-21
RLISD Delinquent Tax Collections
Tax Years 2000 through 2002

	Tax Year 2000	Tax Year 2001	Tax Year 2002	Percent Change from Tax Year 2000 to Tax Year 2002
Delinquent Tax Collections	\$68,255	\$84,202	\$93,882	37.6%

Source: RLISD Delinquent Tax Collection Firm Interview, 2003.

According to the delinquent tax collection representative, real property is eligible to be removed from the tax roll 20 years after an abstract of judgment has been filed with no tax collections received and personal property is eligible to be removed 10 years after an abstract has been filed with no tax collections received.

Some properties on the district's tax rolls are classified as abandoned, meaning the owner is unknown, the property has no recorded deed and no tax collections have been received for five consecutive years. RLISD's delinquent tax collector has aggressively pursued removing the abandoned properties using a process that results in a tax warrant, bypassing the normal jurisdictional channels that may take months to complete. Once the tax warrant is issued, property ownership is transferred from the district's tax roll to either the city or county of the property's location by vote of local governing councils.

Another significant contributing factor to the high level of delinquent taxes is automobile tax collections, as shown in **Exhibit 4-22**. The Falls County Tax Assessor-Collector has received many complaints from taxpayers who don't like paying this tax. According to the tax assessor-collector, if taxpayers sell their cars during the year, many refuse to pay tax for that year because they didn't own the car at the end of the year.

Exhibit 4-22
RLISD's Automobile Tax Levy and Collections
Tax Year 2002 Statistics as of April 17, 2003

Description	Tax Year 2002
Total personal property automobile tax levy for tax year 2002	\$112,224
Total adjusted tax levy for tax year 2002	\$915,805
Automobile tax levy as a percent of the total tax levy, tax year 2002	12.3%
Uncollected automobile tax levied in tax year 2002	\$39,882
Percent of tax year 2002 delinquent automobile tax collections	35.5%
Uncollected total adjusted tax levy for tax year 2002	\$129,262
Uncollected automobile tax levy as a percent of the uncollected total adjusted tax levy for tax year 2002	30.9%

Source: Falls County Tax Assessor-Collector, Year-to-Date Tax Collection Statistics for Tax Year 2002, April 2003.

For tax year 2002, automobiles accounted for more than 30 percent of the delinquent tax levy. Since the district is not insured or bonded to hold repossessed vehicles and the insurance is costly, repossessing cars is not a viable method for recovering tax dollars, according to the delinquent tax firm representative. She modified the process in 2002-03 by filing against delinquent taxpayers at the local Justice of the Peace (JP) court instead of district court. Not only does this revised method save court costs, it also helps to increase collections because delinquent taxpayers are ordered to appear in JP court with three options: pay the tax due in full, enter a payment arrangement to satisfy the judgment against them for delinquent taxes, or go to jail.

Recommendation 24:

Improve current and delinquent tax collection rates by working with the Falls County Tax Assessor-Collector and delinquent tax collector to remove properties that qualify for deactivation from the tax rolls.

RLISD could improve its current and delinquent collection rates by setting goals with the Falls County Tax Assessor-Collector for removing properties that meet the deactivation requirements from the rolls, aggressively pursuing delinquent automobile tax collections and pursuing current and delinquent tax collections for real properties. RLISD should be

able to improve tax collection and delinquency rates to at or above the level of the other two districts that contract with Falls County.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent contacts the Falls County Tax Assessor-Collector to discuss current low tax collection and high tax delinquency rates and a strategy to improve the collection rates, similar to the success achieved in other districts that contract with Falls County.	June 2003
2.	The superintendent obtains a written contract from the Falls County Tax Assessor-Collector that documents the revised strategy and processes.	June 2003
3.	The superintendent presents the contract to the board for discussion and approval.	July 2003
4.	The superintendent monitors the collection process and negotiates the contract annually.	August 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

The district's 2001-02 tax levy after adjustments was \$897,816, of which 86.1 percent was collected. RLISD's collection rate is estimated to increase by 9.4 percent, comparable to Marlin and Westphalia ISDs average 2001-02 collection rate of 95.5 percent. Assuming half of the 9.4 percent increase will be attributed to actual collections, with the other half attributed to removing inactive properties from the tax rolls, an additional 4.7 percent of the tax levy will be collected annually. This is calculated by assuming RLISD's actual collections will increase by 4.7 percent, resulting in \$42,197 in additional funds annually ($\$897,816 \times .047 = \$42,197$).

By continuing with the proven policies and recent practices used by the Falls County tax collection office and delinquent tax collection firm, RLISD's current and delinquent tax collection rates should improve to meet the School FIRST tax collection requirement.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Improve current and delinquent tax collection rates by working with the Falls County Tax Assessor-Collector and delinquent tax collector to	\$42,197	\$42,197	\$42,197	\$42,197	\$42,197

remove properties that qualify for deactivation from the tax rolls.					
---	--	--	--	--	--

Chapter 4

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

D. CASH AND INVESTMENTS

Developing an effective cash management program can give a district additional revenues to fund essential programs and operations. Maximizing return on invested funds while ensuring the safety and liquidity of investments is a high priority. Effective cash management programs offer high rates of return with various investment instruments, and they are based on a written, board-approved, comprehensive investment policy. Such programs help staff to learn investment procedures and techniques and to keep abreast of current money markets.

This section reviews the district cash management program. Key elements are investment policy, depository bank relationship, controls over cash disbursements, use of cash flow forecasting and use of automated tools for good management.

The district's investment policy complies with the Public Funds Investment Act (Government Code Chapter 2256 Subchapter A). The Act governs the investment practices of all Texas government entities, including school districts. Its major requirements are that:

- investments must be made in accordance with written policies;
- the board will designate one or more officers or employees as investment officers (superintendent and business manager in RLISD);
- the investment will be governed by preservation of principal, liquidity and yield (in order of priority);
- the investment officer will prepare and submit a written report of investment transactions to the board at least quarterly;
- the type of investments must be authorized as defined by the act; and
- the investment policy and strategy must be reviewed at least annually.

The district maintains 11 checking accounts for normal operations and seven bank accounts for investments. Campus and student activity funds are deposited in one checking account. These funds support campus-based activities such as student groups and student government and are maintained at the campus level.

The district has a depository agreement with First National Bank of Cameron for a two-year term, which began in June 2001 and runs through

June 2003. Under the terms of the agreement, the bank holds district funds under a compensating balance arrangement in which the district maintains sufficient balances to compensate the bank for account maintenance, item processing and other banking services. All accounts are interest bearing. Compensating balance arrangements are used as alternatives to monthly fees. Districts that maintain compensating balances automatically sweep excess collected balances into overnight investments to earn additional interest. RLISD has recently begun liquidating CDs as they mature to invest idle funds in its depository bank.

RLISD also invests idle cash in certificates of deposits and public fund investment pools. **Exhibit 4-23** shows a summary of RLISD's investments as of September 30, 2002.

Exhibit 4-23
RLISD Investment Portfolio as of September 30, 2002

Type of Investment	Book Value at September, 2002	Book Value of Individual CDs at September, 2002	Monthly Interest Rate	Percent of Portfolio
Certificates of Deposits (CD), Total Book Value	\$1,800,000	N/A	N/A	31.2%
CD no.151552	N/A	\$300,000	2.12%	N/A
CD no.151735	N/A	\$500,000	1.45%	N/A
CD no.151780	N/A	\$300,000	1.45%	N/A
CD no.152025	N/A	\$200,000	1.53%	N/A
CD no.152108	N/A	\$500,000	1.71%	N/A
TEXPOOL	\$1,607,239	N/A	1.86%	27.8%
LoanStar	\$917,222	N/A	1.86%	4.3%
First National Bank, Cameron	\$5,776,655	N/A	3.00%	36.68%
Total	\$10,101,116	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: RLISD Business Office.

Exhibit 4-24 lists RLISD's U.S. Government securities, pledged as collateral for portfolio account balances over the \$100,000-per-account Federal Depository Insurance Corporation limit.

Exhibit 4-24
RLISD U.S. Government Securities
Pledged for Portfolio

Type of* Instrument	Required Collateral Coverage Ratio	Book Value at August 31, 2002	Percent of Portfolio
Treasury	1:1	\$1,103,470	12.9%
GNMA	1.5:1	\$1,061,679	12.4%
FHLMC	1.5:1	\$3,160,259	37.0%
FNMA	1.5:1	\$492,215	5.8%
FHLB	1.5:1	\$1,472,361	17.2%
FN	1.5:1	\$1,258,958	12.3%
FHG	1.5:1	\$209,723	2.5%
Total		\$8,548,942	100.0%

Source: RLISD Business Office.

**Note: GNMA is Ginnie Mae Mortgage Association; FHLMC is Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation; FHLB is Federal Home Loan Bank; FNMA is Federal National Mortgage Association; FN is a type of FNMA security; and FHG is a type of FHLB security.*

The bank requires a 1-to-1 collateral coverage ratio for Treasury bills and a 1.5-to-1 collateral coverage ratio for all other government securities.

FINDING

RLISD does not formally and consistently forecast cash flow to maximize earnings. In RLISD's current favorable depository agreement, the business manager deposits all daily cash receipts that are not earning interest into the NOW account every evening. All maturing Certificates of Deposit and cash receipts are deposited in the NOW account, which has a favorable 3-percent rate. The review team learned that RLISD does not routinely forecast cash flow to determine what funds are needed to meet district expenditures, and it does not invest available funds in higher-yielding securities. As a result, short- and long-term available funds are not identified or invested to maximize district returns.

The current favorable depository agreement ends in June 2003, and the business manager expects a lower interest rate on the new depository agreement bids. The business manager is reviewing TexPool and LoanStar public investment fund returns for further investment possibilities.

FASRG states that cash and investments often represent one of the largest assets on a school district balance sheet. Districts invest excess school district funds with judgment, care, prudence, discretion and diligent management. A cash flow projection report is an important management tool that directs decisions about maturity of investment instruments, in accordance with projected uses of cash to liquidate financial obligations. The investment of public funds should never be speculative, but should be done with consideration for the safety of the principal and for the probable return on such investments. FASRG contains a sample spreadsheet.

Recommendation 25:

Create and effectively use cash flow forecasts.

Although district cash flows are fairly predictable, RLISD has cash balances where rates of return could be maximized further if cash flows were forecast each month. RLISD should perform cash flow forecasting using Microsoft Excel software, which the district already owns. Once the structure or spreadsheet is built, each year's new data can be added to give a better forecast.

At the beginning of each year, the business manager should prepare a spreadsheet that forecasts cash flow monthly for each major account. The business manager would adjust the monthly cash forecast by adding actual revenues and expenditures for each month as the year progresses.

RLISD should be able to maximize interest earnings and effectively plan investment portfolio activities by using cash flow forecasting.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager identifies existing software for recording expenditures and revenues.	June 2003
2.	The business manager uses the software tool to track expenses on a regular basis and develop estimates for monthly district expenses, based on expenditure history and predictable expenses.	June 2003
3.	The business manager generates similar estimates for monthly incoming revenues.	June 2003
4.	The business manager uses the software to identify projected cash	July 2003

	surpluses during the month and plans for their investment.	
5.	The business manager monitors actual cash surpluses and investment status.	August 2003 and Ongoing
6.	The business manager documents the use of funds and additional revenue the district generates.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

E. INSURANCE AND FIXED ASSETS

Risk management has become an essential part of school district operations. Rising costs for health, property and liability insurance coverage demand that administrators limit costs. Risk management limits the district's exposure to financial loss through insurance coverage for district employees, students and the district's assets. Effective risk management involves:

- identifying risks;
- classifying identified risks;
- evaluating identified risks in terms of frequency and severity;
- managing risks through avoidance, reduction, deductibles or insurance; and
- developing, maintaining and monitoring loss prevention programs and practices.

RLISD manages most risks through insurance programs that consist of group healthcare and employee benefit plans, workers' compensation and property and casualty insurance. The district contracts with Scott & White for group healthcare. **Exhibit 4-25** shows an overview of the district's property and casualty insurance coverage. RLISD is in an unincorporated area, so the only available property and casualty insurance provider is the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB).

Exhibit 4-25
Schedule of RLISD's Property Casualty Policies

Insurance Carrier	Type of Coverage	Term	Deductible	Coverage	Annual Premium
TASB Risk Management Fund	Unemployment Compensation Program	10/01/02-10/01/03	None	Based on gross wages	\$3,489
Deep East Texas Worker's Compensation Fund	Workers' Compensation	09/01/01-08/31/04	None	Based on gross wages	\$45,556
TASB Risk Management	General Liability/	10/03/02-10/03/03	\$1,000	Liability-General	\$3,950

Fund	Personal Injury			liability per occurrence \$1,000 - Employee benefits liability per occurrence \$1,000 - School professional \$1,000 per occurrence	
TASB Risk Management Fund	Property Wind/Hail Named Storm	10/03/02-10/03/03	\$1,000	Blanket replacement cost	\$47,268
TASB Risk Management Fund	Auto Liability	10/03/02-10/03/03	\$250	Liability-Bodily injury per person \$100,000 - Bodily injury per accident \$300,000 - Property damage \$100,000 - Physical damage actual cash value	\$11,956
Total Property Casualty Premiums					\$112,219

Source: RLISD Business Office, 2002.

Statement 34 of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB 34) has dramatically changed how fixed assets are presented in financial statements for governmental entities. Local governments, school districts and other public-sector organizations must change accounting practices and may have to make wholesale changes in how fixed assets are managed and reported. As GASB 34 requirements are implemented, many school districts will have to improve fixed asset and controllable asset accounting procedures and bring asset records to new standards.

FINDING

RLISD revised and updated its fixed asset inventory process before GASB 34 required it. RLISD completed an update with the new process in December 2002.

The district has contracted with records management consultant RCI Technologies to set up a fixed and controllable asset inventory system. As part of the contract, RCI Technologies barcoded all existing fixed and controllable assets and scanned them into special inventory software to establish a district inventory database. The records management consultant trained district staff in the inventory process, including how to barcode, scan and download information into the database for updates. The intent was for the district to maintain control over its fixed and controllable assets by conducting an annual inventory and making daily adjustments for asset arrivals and departures. Handheld scanners are used to record inventory changes, which are later downloaded into the inventory database. For the annual inventory, exception and asset reports are automatically generated from the software, with the information necessary to comply with GASB 34. This inventory package expedites the tracking process and produces a more accurate inventory.

RLISD's revised procedures require assets to be delivered to the warehouse, where they are tagged and then delivered to the appropriate campus or department. The inventory tag number, make and model number and serial number are recorded in the controllable asset system. The business manager maintains fixed asset balances on the district accounting books. TEA defines fixed assets as purchased or donated items that are tangible, have a useful life of more than a year, have a unit value of at least \$5,000 and can be reasonably identified and controlled with a physical inventory system.

To control and accurately report these assets, FASRG requires assets of \$5,000 or more to be recorded in the Fixed-Asset Group of Accounts. Items that cost less than \$5,000 are recorded as an operating expense of the appropriate fund under TEA guidelines. RLISD's inventory system accommodates both types of assets.

For control and accountability, these guidelines allow school districts to establish lower thresholds for equipment that cost less than \$5,000. For example, computer and audiovisual equipment that cost less than \$5,000 does not have to be accounted for in fixed assets. Some districts list these assets for control and accountability. For insurance purposes, RLISD maintains a list of fixed assets that cost more than \$18 million.

COMMENDATION

RLISD revised and upgraded their asset tracking system with barcoding and reporting capability in advance of mandatory GASB 34 compliance.

Chapter 4

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

F. PURCHASING

The purchasing function is an important school district business activity. The primary goal of a good purchasing system is to provide quality materials, supplies and equipment, in the right quantity in a timely, cost-effective manner. A good centralized purchasing system benefits a district by providing:

- systematic procedures for the procurement of goods and services;
- essential controls for budget and accounting purposes; and
- economic benefits through bulk purchasing and price/bid solicitation.

The purchasing system includes purchase order procedures, bidding practices, internal controls, warehousing and systems integration. An effective, efficient purchasing system meets district procurement requirements. One of its most important components is an organization staffed with well-trained people. Roles and related responsibilities are clearly defined and adapted to meet the unique operating environment of the district.

School districts strive to maximize purchasing efficiency. TEC includes state purchasing regulations designed to provide the best value to school districts through a competitive bidding process. Generally, when districts purchase items valued at \$25,000 or more (or multiple like items with a cumulative value of more than \$25,000 in a 12-month period), one of the following competitive bid processes outlined in **Exhibit 4-26** is required.

Exhibit 4-26
Competitive Procurement Methods

Purchasing Methods	Description
Competitive bidding	Requires that bids be evaluated and awarded based solely upon bid specifications, terms and conditions contained in the request for bids, and according to the bid prices offered by suppliers and pertinent factors affecting contract performance. Forbids negotiation of prices of goods and services after proposal opening.
Competitive	Requires the same terms and conditions as competitive bidding

sealed proposals	but allows changes in the nature of a proposal and prices after proposal opening.
Request for proposals	Generates competitive sealed proposals and involves key elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • newspaper advertisement • notice to proposers • standard terms and conditions • special terms and conditions • scope-of-work statement • acknowledgment form/response sheet • felon conviction notice • contract clause
Catalog purchases	Provides an alternative to other procurement methods for acquisition of computer equipment, software and services only.
Interlocal contract	Provides a mechanism for agreements with other local governments, the state or a state agency to perform governmental functions and services.
Design/build contract	Outlines method of project delivery in which the school district contracts with a single entity to design and construct a project.
Job order contracts	Provides for use of a particular type of contract for jobs (manual labor work) for minor repairs and alterations.
Construction management contracts	Outlines use of a contract to construct, rehabilitate, alter or repair facilities, using a professional construction manager.
Reverse auction procedure	Outlines a bidding process that involves submission of bids by multiple suppliers, unknown to each other, in a manner that allows the suppliers to bid against each other.

Source: Texas Education Code (TEC), Section 44.031.

Purchasing cooperative and interlocal agreement purchasing methods are entered into by entities to get better pricing from vendors. Generally, entities will determine an approximate amount of merchandise they intend to purchase during a 12-month period. One of the entities in the purchasing cooperative will then consolidate all amounts and perform the competitive purchasing. All entities are then allowed to process individual purchase orders from these bids.

Vendors offer better pricing to purchasing cooperatives because the amounts to be purchased are generally larger than if purchased by a single entity.

State law requires formal quotations solicited through formal advertisement for purchases between \$10,000 and \$25,000 and recommends them for items that cost less than \$10,000. The law also requires formal competitive sealed bids for purchases of \$25,000 or more. For example, Port Arthur ISD (PAISD) policies require competitive quotes for all purchases of \$2,000 or more. PAISD's policies for competitive purchasing requirements are outlined in **Exhibit 4-27**.

Exhibit 4-27
Competitive Purchasing Policies

Dollar Value of Purchase	Policy
\$25,000 or greater	Formal competitive bids, including a newspaper advertisement.
\$10,000 to \$24,999	Formal written quotations, including a newspaper advertisement.
\$2,000 to \$9,999	Three documented catalog or telephone quotations.

Source: PAISD purchasing policies, 2002.

As shown in **Exhibit 4-28**, RLISD uses three types of purchase orders.

Exhibit 4-28
RLISD Types of Purchase Orders Processed

Type	Description	Approval Route
Regular purchases	Request for purchases made with school or department budgeted funds.	Department Head; Campus Principals; Superintendent; Business Manager
Maintenance purchases	Request for local purchases with a block of purchase orders assigned to the RLISD Maintenance department.	Accounts Payable/Business Manager
Supply enter purchases	Request for purchases to restock the central warehouse supply inventory.	Accounts Payable/Business Manager

Source: RLISD Purchasing Department, 2002.

RLISD participates in purchasing cooperatives with the Region 12 Purchasing Cooperative. The cooperatives are primarily used for "spot purchases," defined as smaller items that the district does not competitively bid and purchase in bulk quantities. RLISD uses three types of purchase orders for supplies, materials and services. **Exhibit 4-29** identifies purchasing agreements for services as of November 2002.

**Exhibit 4-29
Purchase Agreements as of November 2002**

Vendor	Contracted Service
ICCI, Inc.	Drug/Alcohol interdiction service
Waste Management of Texas, Inc.	Waste-hauling service
Region 12 Service Center EDLink 12	Internet access interlocal agreement
Region 12 Educational Service Center	Information services contract for RSCCC, WIN School, EClass
TASB	Insurance
Deep East Texas	Unemployment fund
Lott, Vernon and Company, P.C.	Annual audit
Falls County Tax Assessor-Collector	Tax collection

Source: RLISD Purchasing Department, 2002.

Efficient operation of warehouse services means that purchases and deliveries to schools and administrative areas are complete and timely. Inventory levels must be sufficient to fill supply requests. Property and equipment must be properly accounted for, and surplus or obsolete property must be disposed of properly and removed from district records.

FINDING

The district's financial management system is outdated, and the district is upgrading to the new release of the Regional Service Center Computer Cooperative (RSCCC) software in 2002-03. The district is scheduled for the RSCCC update installation and training in April 2003.

RLISD's business manager manages the district's purchasing function. She attended a workshop in fall 2002 to prepare the new RSCCC software. In the interim, the district is using a self-created semi automated process to request and obtain supplies, materials and services. Purchase requests are initiated by the schools and departments and then forwarded to the accounts payable/purchasing supervisor where the actual purchasing activities are performed, including verification of funds, account codes and authorization. Purchase orders are then forwarded to the business manager or superintendent for approval.

New features of the fully integrated, automated financial system include an automated receiving module; three-way match of purchase orders, receiving data and invoice; unlimited approver paths and more purchase order features. Region 12 will phase out the current system after 2002-03 and thereafter will not provide technical support for that system.

COMMENDATION

RLISD is effectively making the transition to the new, more efficient Regional Service Center Computer Cooperative purchasing software module.

Chapter 5

OPERATIONS

This chapter reviews the computers and technology, transportation and food services functions of the Rosebud-Lott Independent School District (RLISD) in the following sections:

- A. Computers and Technology
- B. Transportation
- C. Food Services

Use of automation enables school districts to enhance instructional and business programs. Over the past three sessions, the Texas Legislature enacted laws accelerating the integration of technology into public education. State and federal efforts to build technology infrastructure have included the Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund (TIF) grants, Technology Literacy Challenge Fund grants and the E-Rate discounts.

Texas Education Code (TEC) Section 34.007 enables a school district to operate an economical public school transportation system in the county or district. The county or school district must employ school bus drivers certified according to Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) standards. TEC Section 42.155 states that each district or county operating a transportation system receives state allotments for its transportation costs. Districts do not receive allotments for extra and co-curricular trips or for transporting students who live within two miles of the school, unless they face hazardous traffic conditions walking to school. Individual school boards define hazardous areas.

An effective school food service program provides students with nutritionally balanced, appealing and reasonably priced meals served in a safe, clean and accessible environment. Successful school food service programs achieve customer satisfaction and contain costs while complying with applicable federal, state and local board regulations and policies. The Texas School Food Service Association (TSFSA) has identified nine standards of excellence to evaluate school food service programs. TSFSA states that effective programs should:

- identify and meet current and future needs through organization, planning, direction and control;
- maintain financial accountability through established procedures;
- meet the nutritional needs of students and promote the development of sound nutritional practices;
- provide appetizing, nutritious meals through effective, efficient systems management;

- maintain a safe and sanitary environment;
- encourage student participation in food service programs;
- provide an environment that enhances employee productivity, growth, development and morale;
- promote a positive image to the public; and
- measure success in fulfilling regulatory requirements.

Chapter 5

OPERATIONS

A. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

Technology serves as a critical element in today's public education. The State Board of Education (SBOE) has established nine objectives, including one addressing technology, to achieve Texas' educational mission. The SBOE objective on technology states that school districts will implement a technology program to increase the effectiveness of student learning, instructional management, staff development and administration.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) developed the original *Long Range Plan for Technology 1988-2000*. The plan called for the administration of a statewide electronic transfer system, expansion of integrated telecommunications systems and a center for research in educational technology. The original plan also established goals for Texas public schools regarding the use of technology in classroom learning. School districts receive \$30 per student for a technology allotment.

The SBOE adopted an updated technology plan in 1996. The updated plan, *Long-Range Plan for Technology 1996-2010*, reflected changes in teaching and learning, educator preparation and development, administration and support services and infrastructure for technology.

RLISD has incorporated the SBOE mission and objectives related to technology in its district and campus improvement plans. The district's improvement plan has strategies to provide students opportunities to learn about technology, access to technically advanced equipment, access to the internet and staff development in internet applications.

RLISD's Technology Department has a technology coordinator, PEIMS coordinator, one full-time and two part-time aides. The coordinators have offices in the high school, and the aides are assigned to the elementary and intermediate schools.

The technology coordinator maintains all district servers and personal computers, as well as provides software and network support. The PEIMS coordinator reports the district's demographic and academic performance, personnel, financial and organizational information to TEA. TEA publishes this latter information in its PEIMS database. The PEIMS coordinator also writes grants to obtain funding for technology projects.

The technology aides provide administrative and instructional support at their assigned schools. The aides work directly with teachers. The intermediate, elementary and primary school principals oversee technology instruction and administration at their respective schools.

FINDING

RLISD's technology plan states that the school district has made a commitment to provide students with current technology tools for education. The RLISD plan states that with increased technology education (such as using the Internet in the classroom), the technology gap which now exists between rural and non-rural schools will eventually be bridged. This bridge will help lead to a more "level playing field" after graduation, offering RLISD students a greater chance for success.

To assist in fulfilling the district's commitment to provide current technology tools for students and staff, in summer 2001 the RLISD board approved a comprehensive technology infrastructure upgrade for the entire district. The upgrade included:

- replacing Existing Novell 4.11 networks with Windows 2000 high-speed networks with fiber backbone for 100MB connectivity in each school including six video/data drops per classroom and additional drops in other offices and work areas;
- replacing existing network hardware with new Windows 2000 servers at each school;
- adding APC Uninterruptible Power Supplies at each school;
- connecting primary, elementary and intermediate schools to the high school using T-1 lines and Cisco catalyst switches and routers to provide direct internet access to all computers;
- adding an MS Exchange Server for email and calendar services;
- upgrading current Windows 98 desktop computers to 2000 and increasing RAM to 132MB;
- installing additional wireless access point for wireless cart at Rosebud - Lott Jr. High/High School campus;
- installing eSafe virus detection software for all district servers and workstations; and
- installing ClassWorks gold software on primary, elementary, and intermediate campuses.

During the upgrade, the district also replaced all outdated computers as needed with Dell Pentium III models (with Windows 2000 and Microsoft Office 2000) to provide classroom computers as well as lab and office computers.

The elementary and intermediate school has a new 24-station lab equipped with Microsoft Office 2000 and ClassWorks Gold. In addition to the labs, all teacher classrooms have been equipped with new Dell computers with Microsoft Office 2000 and ClassWorks Gold. Administrative and counselor offices also have new computers. Existing technologies still available on the elementary schools include: one vcr/tv/DVD player per grade level, overhead projector in every classroom and at least two copiers per school.

The junior high/high school has four main computer labs with new Dell computers with Windows 2000 and Microsoft Office 2000. The "keyboarding" lab consists of 25 upgraded computers. The Special Ed lab consists of 14 upgraded computers. The business lab consists of 24 new computers and three upgraded HP laptops. The library lab consists of 25 new computers. The Home Economics classroom has four upgraded computers and the Ag classroom has six upgraded computers. In addition to the labs, all teacher classrooms and offices have been equipped with one to two new Dell computers with Microsoft Office 2000.

A VTEL Workgroup 500 Video Conferencing System provides video conferencing capabilities at the junior high and high school. **Exhibit 5-1** outlines the district's computer hardware by school.

**Exhibit 5-1
Hardware Deployment Summary by School for RLISD**

School	Description	Quantity
Rosebud Intermediate	Dell Pentium III 1000 Mhz Personal computer	28
	Hewlett Packard LaserJet 4100N Network Printer	4
	Hewlett Packard DeskJet 648C Color Printer	13
	Dell Laptop Cart (24) with Wireless Access Point	1
Rosebud Primary	Dell Pentium III Mhz Personal Computer	39
	Hewlett Packard LaserJet 4100N network Printer	4
	Hewlett Packard DeskJet 648C Color Printer	19
	Dell laptop Cart (24) with Wireless Access Point	0
Lott Elementary	Dell Pentium III 1000 MHz Personal Computer	46

	Hewlett Packard LaserJet 4100N Network Printer	4
	Hewlett Packard DeskJet 648C Color Printer Dell Laptop Cart (24) with Wireless Access Point	20 1
Rosebud-Lott Junior/High School	Dell Pentium III MHz Personal Computer	112
	Hewlett Packard LaserJet 4100N Network Printer	8
	Hewlett Packard DeskJet 648C Color Printer	33
	Dell Laptop Cart (24) with Wireless Access Point	0
	Dell Wireless Access Point	1

Source: RLISD Technology Plan, 2002-06.

RLISD received substantial technical assistance from the Regional Educational Service Center XII (Region 12) in upgrading the district's technology infrastructure. An instructional technology specialist and a network systems analyst from Region 12 conducted a needs analysis of the district.

The needs analysis report included findings based on interviews, surveys and observations. The report presented findings in 10 areas including technology and implementation, collective vision, leadership capacity, equitable learning experiences, libraries as information centers, instructional practices, learning uses, home/school connection, connectivity and staff development programs.

The appendix of the needs analysis report presented a building visit summary for the four RLISD schools. The instructional technology specialist conducted seven interviews with the principal, teachers, students and library/media specialist at each school. The building visit summaries also ranked each interviewee's level of technology use.

The initial section, mapping instructional uses of each building summary, displayed a chart of the current and future technology uses for each school. This section also listed data/observations for literacy uses, integrating uses and evolving uses.

Other sections of the building summaries included nine of the 10 areas listed above excluding technology and implementation. An optimal level (based on national standards) and a target level (according to the Texas STAR Chart) of technology integration prefaced each of the nine areas.

Each area also contained strength and weakness statements, data, observations, personal stories or comments.

The Region 12 instructional technology specialist presented the findings of her report to RLISD's board. Based on the needs analysis that centered on the curriculum, the board approved a comprehensive technology infrastructure upgrade for the district for the summer of 2001.

The network systems analyst from Region 12 assisted in upgrading the district's technology infrastructure. Major components of this upgrade included re-cabling the four schools, purchasing computers, printers, carts for laptop computers and software, installing routers and servers, establishing e-mail and video conferencing capabilities.

Region 12 representatives also worked extensively with the RLISD Technology Committee especially during the preparation of the district's technology plan. Region staffs continue to provide advice and assistance during the implementation of the technology plan.

COMMENDATION

RLISD in collaboration with Region 12 has overhauled the district's computer infrastructure and upgraded its instructional computers.

FINDING

RLISD uses a Technology Planning Committee to manage and coordinate districtwide technology issues. Established in September 2000, the Technology Planning Committee produced RLISD's Technology Plan 2001-06 and published it in August 2001.

Committee members include the superintendent, two principals, five teachers, two students, two community members, a counselor, the technology coordinator and the PEIMS coordinator. The committee meets at least quarterly to discuss implementation of the district's technology plan and sometimes meets ahead of schedule to discuss urgent or other timely matters.

The superintendent credits his attendance in workshops sponsored by the Bill Gates Foundation for his interest in promoting computers and technology within the district. Several of the principals also attended these workshops.

The committee evaluates the status of each strategy presented under the four goals of the Technology Plan which cover teaching and learning,

educator preparation and development, administration and support services and infrastructure as follows:

- RLISD will integrate technologies to support the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills that will provide graduates the skills necessary in a competitive marketplace as well as in higher education (35 strategies);
- RLISD will provide continuous opportunities for "Just in time technology training" and other necessary professional development for all state members (24 strategies);
- RLISD will provide tools for collecting, aggregating, transmitting, and posting educational data for students, staff, parents and community members to access (26 strategies); and
- RLISD will connect all campuses to form an efficient informational and educational network for communication, data, resource sharing, and Internet access and software utilization (33 strategies).

In November 2002, RLISD presented a progress report on each goal. The report listed completed strategies, strategies in the process of completion within the projected timeline, strategies implemented ahead of schedule and strategies moved ahead of schedule. Developed in collaboration with Region 12 the technology plan also identifies RLISD officials who have implementation responsibilities. The plan includes a five-year timeline, budget and evaluation sections.

COMMENDATION

RLISD established a Technology Committee, which addresses district short-term and long-term technology needs through a five-year technology plan.

FINDING

RLISD technology plan shows that the district has implemented all its training strategies. Teachers and staff receive training by attending workshops conducted in-house and at Region 12. Teachers are also allowed to take home the district's laptop computers. The instructional software manufacturer also provided teacher training in the use of its software.

Exhibit 5-2 shows projected training-related costs, which includes annual staff training costs, area, state and national conference fees, cooperative training and incentives for district personnel who provide training. The total training costs amount to 8 percent of the total project costs for

technology for the initial two years. The training cost increased to slightly more than 12 percent over the last two years.

Exhibit 5-2
RLISD Projected Costs for Technology Projects
2002-03 through 2005-06

Costs	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Total Projected	\$685,500	\$631,821	\$345,571	\$335,571
Training	\$52,350	\$41,350	\$42,350	\$42,350
Percent Training to Total Projected	8%	7%	12%	13%

Source: RLISD, Technology Plan 2001-2006.

RLISD began an in-house, after school technology training program for teachers and staff in October 2002. Trainers included the superintendent, a teacher, the technology coordinator and the PEIMS coordinator. **Exhibit 5-3** shows the training schedule for technology for fall 2002.

Exhibit 5-3
Technology In-House Training
Schedule for RLISD
October through December 2002

Date	Session	Number		Trainer
		Reservations	Participants	
October 16	Microsoft Word - Beginners	18	18	Teacher
October 21	Microsoft Word - Beginners (Phase II)	18	10	Teacher
October 23	Email - Advanced	15	11	Technology coordinator
October 30	Microsoft Word - Advanced	13	10	Teacher
November 6	Excel - Formulas & Calculations	9	8	Superintendent
November 13	Internet - Educational Sites / Research	11	8	Teacher

November 20	Excel - Database / Mail Merge	10	9	Superintendent
December 11	E-class - Advanced	9	6	PEIMS coordinator

Source: RLISD, Business Office.

The district offered eight training sessions. The superintendent said that the training sessions were offered in addition to the workshops that teachers may attend at Region 12. Staff sign up for available classes and attend the majority of the sessions.

The review team examined the *Staff Development District Detail Report* from Region 12 covering the period August 1, 2000 to November 14, 2002. The Region 12 report showed that RLISD teachers and staff attended a variety of technology training sessions for which they received continuing education credit hours. According to the report, RLISD teachers and staff attended five workshops in 2000, 37 workshops in 2001 and 26 workshops in 2002.

A National Center for Education Statistics publication on technology explains that an organization's training program should install new or upgraded technology for the technology support staff and for each user to ensure that all users obtain adequate skills for independent use. The publication further notes that beyond the initial training, ongoing training for new users and refresher training for experienced users remains essential for success.

RLISD has made a considerable computer and technology investment. The district also has plans to expand its use of computers and technology by offering advanced placement distant learning to its students.

COMMENDATION

The district makes technology training available to staff and continually strives to improve its training.

FINDING

RLISD does not have a written disaster recovery plan. The technology coordinator said that the district did not have a disaster recovery plan or computer back up procedures. A disaster recovery plan ensures the protection of a district's digital information and services. Computers store and process vast quantities of data. A district must have the capacity to

continue functioning with limited disruption in the event of computer catastrophe.

RLISD performs daily data backups of servers and workstations, but it does not have written procedures that document back up procedures. The backup is performed automatically to a tape. The district also backs up certain files onto zip drives and compact disks. Support staff with secretarial responsibilities use diskettes for their backup. Tapes are stored in locked closets, located next to the servers that are not fire-proofed.

The Rosebud Primary School server has 50 gigabytes of memory. The technology coordinator said the tape back up, which is changed daily, starts at 1 a.m. Tuesday through Saturday. The server goes out to the network and backs up e-class, Win School, Plato and the other learning programs in addition to personal files. The primary school server also is used to back up the Lott Elementary School server. The Rosebud Intermediate School server, which also has 50 gigabytes of memory, backs up the same data as the primary school server on a daily tape rotation. The Rosebud-Lott Junior High and High School serves as the central headquarters for network. The junior high and high school server has a 50 gigabyte tape back up and backs up the same data as the primary and intermediate schools ensuring that RLISD has three copies of data in the event of accident.

The lack of written backup procedures exposes the district to an increased risk in the event of a catastrophe. If the district has a fire, tornado or other catastrophic event that destroyed the hardware, there is no alternate location from which to operate its computer systems until the hardware is replaced.

Glen Rose ISD has developed a comprehensive disaster recovery plan to handle the loss of its information systems. The district's disaster recovery plan includes emergency contacts for the Technology Department staff, the district and software and hardware vendors. The plan includes protocols for both partial and complete recoveries to ensure that the technology staff knows every aspect of recovery and restoration. The plan outlines designated alternate sites dependent upon the type of outage that occurs. The plan also includes system redundancy and fault protection protocols as well as a tape backup plan.

Essential elements of a disaster recovery plan include appointing a disaster recovery team; compiling a list of persons to contact after a disaster; and creating a list of critical functions of the school, essential office equipment and required staffing levels needed immediately after a disaster. A disaster recovery plan includes contingency and backup plans for information technology as outlined in **Exhibit 5-4**.

Exhibit 5-4
Key Elements of a Disaster Recovery Plan

Step	Details
Build the disaster recovery team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a disaster recovery team that includes key policy makers, building management, end-users, key outside contractors and technical staff.
Obtain and/or approximate key information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an exhaustive list of critical activities performed within the district. • Develop an estimate of the minimum space and equipment necessary for restoring essential operations. • Develop a timeframe for starting initial operations after a security incident. • Develop a list of key personnel and their responsibilities.
Perform and/or delegate key duties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an inventory of all MIS technology assets, including data, software, hardware, documentation and supplies. • Set up a reciprocal agreement with comparable organizations to share each other's equipment or lease backup equipment to allow the district to operate critical functions in the event of a disaster. • Make plans to procure hardware, software and other equipment as necessary to ensure that critical operations are resumed as soon as possible. • Establish procedures for obtaining off-site backup records. • Locate support resources that might be needed, such as equipment repair, trucking and cleaning companies. • Arrange with vendors to provide priority delivery for emergency orders. • Identify data recovery specialists and establish emergency agreements.
Specify details within the plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify individual roles and responsibilities by name and job title so everyone knows exactly what needs to be done. • Define actions to be taken in advance of an occurrence or undesirable event. • Define actions to be taken at the onset of an

	<p>undesirable event to limit damage, loss and compromised data integrity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify actions to be taken to restore critical functions. • Define actions to be taken to re-establish normal operations.
Test the plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test the plan frequently and completely. • Analyze the results to improve the plan and identify further needs.
Deal with damage appropriately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a disaster actually occurs, document all costs and videotape the damage. • Be prepared to overcome downtime on your own; insurance settlements can take time to resolve.
Give consideration to other significant issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't make a plan unnecessarily complicated. • Make one individual responsible for maintaining the plan, but have it structured so that others are authorized and prepared to implement if it is needed. • Update the plan regularly and whenever changes are made to your system.

*Source: National Center for Education Statistics, "Safeguarding Your Technology."
(Modified by TSPR.)*

Recommendation 26:

Develop and test a disaster recovery plan.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent establishes a disaster recovery team, comprised of principals, business office manager, departmental directors and the coordinator of Technology.	June 2003
2.	The disaster recovery team develops the disaster recovery plan.	June-July 2003
3.	The technology coordinator develops written procedures for data backup and off-site storage as part of the disaster recovery plan.	June-July 2003

4.	The disaster recovery team presents the disaster recovery plan to the superintendent and board for approval.	August 2003
5.	The board approves the plan.	October 2003
6.	The disaster recovery team monitors the disaster recovery plan and makes changes as necessary.	December 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 5

OPERATIONS

B. TRANSPORTATION (PART 1)

TEC authorizes, but does not require, each Texas school district to provide transportation between home and school, from school to career and technology training locations, for co-curricular activities and for extracurricular activities. The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires a school district to provide transportation for students with disabilities if the district provides transportation for the general student population or if disabled students require transportation to receive special education.

The TEC states that a school district may receive state funding for transporting regular and special program students between home and school, and career and technology students to and from vocational training locations. TEA sets the funding rules. Local funds must pay for transportation costs that the state does not cover.

For the regular program, TEA reimburses a local district for qualifying transportation expenses according to a prescribed formula. This funding formula is based on linear density, which is the ratio of the average number of regular program students transported daily to the number of miles operated daily for those students. TEA uses this ratio to assign each school district to one of seven groups, with each group receiving a different per-mile reimbursement. TEA re-evaluates group assignments once each biennium, for example, in years 2001, 2003, 2005 and so on. To assign groups and funding for the next biennium, TEA calculates linear density using operations data from the first school year of the previous biennium.

All transportation to and from school for special education programs, except certain field trips, is also eligible for state reimbursement. Co-curricular trips take students to activities that are considered part of the student's required curriculum and usually take place during school hours.

Extracurricular transportation takes students to events occurring during and after school and on weekends. Extracurricular transportation consists largely of transportation to and from athletic events. The state does not provide funding for extracurricular transportation.

Each school district pays the capital cost of purchasing school buses. Districts may purchase school buses through the Texas Building and

Procurement Commission (TBPC) under a state contract. Districts may also choose a lease-purchase method to obtain buses.

The Transportation Department director is the district's lead mechanic. The director supervises an assistant mechanic, 11 bus drivers and three grounds maintenance personnel who also help with routine bus maintenance, primarily washing and cleaning of buses and other district vehicles and equipment. The grounds maintenance personnel also drive the school buses on a substitute basis. Some coaches also serve as substitute drivers when needed.

The Transportation director reports directly to the superintendent and makes presentations to the board as requested. Since the director also supervises the grounds maintenance crew, he also works closely with the district's school principals.

The TEA School Transportation Operations Reports for 1998-99 through 2001-02 provide a four-year history of costs and mileage incurred by the Transportation Department. These reports track all costs and mileage related to transportation, including services not funded by the state. TEA reports provide ridership information for state-funded routes only.

The district self-reports this information to TEA. Texas school districts will report operation costs electronically beginning in 2002-03. **Exhibit 5-5** presents an operations cost profile of RLISD.

Exhibit 5-5
RLISD Regular and Special Program Transportation Total Costs,
Annual Miles and Annual Ridership
1998-99 through 2001-02

Item	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	Percent Change 1998-99 to 2001-02
Total Operating and Capital Costs					
Regular Program	\$229,877	\$258,447	\$237,554	\$249,883	8.7%
Special Program	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%
Total	\$229,877	\$258,447	\$237,554	\$249,883	8.7%
Annual Miles					
Regular Program	230,071	235,102	231,564	236,125	2.6%

Special Program	0	0	0	0	0%
Total	230,071	235,102	231,564	236,125	2.6%
Annual Riders					
Regular Program	89,460	91,260	85,860	78,660	(12%)
Special Program	0	0	0	0	0
Total	89,460	91,260	85,860	78,660	(12%)

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Reports, 1998-99 through 2001-02 and School Transportation Route Services Reports, 1998-99 through 2001-02.

RLISD has increased its operating and capital costs by 8.7 percent during the four-year period. Annual miles also increased by 2.6 percent. Annual riders, however, declined by 12 percent. **Exhibit 5-6** shows that cost per mile increased by 6 percent and cost per rider increased by 30 percent from 1998-99 through 2001-02.

**Exhibit 5-6
Costs and Ridership Performance Measures
1998-99 through 2001-02**

Item	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	Percent Change 1998-99 to 2001-02
Cost per Mile					
Regular Program	\$1.00	\$1.10	\$1.03	\$1.06	6%
Special Program	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%
Cost per Rider					
Regular Program	\$2.38	\$2.65	\$2.50	\$3.09	30%
Special Program	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%

Sources: Calculation based on TEA School Transportation Operations Reports, 1998-99 through 2001-02 and School Transportation Route Services Report, 1998-99 through 2001-02. Annual ridership based on total daily ridership multiplied by 180 days. RLISD does not have any special program routes.

Exhibits 5-7, 5-8 and 5-9 compare operations costs for RLISD and selected peer districts. The exhibits show that RLISD does not have any debt service. Rogers ISD is the only peer district that has incurred any debt. Information on Mart ISD was unavailable for some years.

Salaries and benefits for the regular transportation program comprise the largest expenditure for RLISD and its peer districts. For the 1998-99 through 2000-01 period RLISD salaries and benefits averaged 56.5 percent compared to 38.2 percent for Corrigan-Camden ISD, 70.3 percent for Franklin ISD and 44 percent for Rogers ISD of total operations costs.

Capital outlay was the second largest expenditure item for RLISD and its peer districts.

RLISD had the lowest expenditures for supplies and materials of its peer districts. RLISD spent an average of \$39,277 compared to \$64,011 for Corrigan-Camden ISD, \$49,356 for Franklin ISD and \$42,973 for Rogers ISD.

**Exhibit 5-7
Operations Costs
RLISD and Peer Districts
1998-99**

Object	RLISD		Corrigan-Camden		Franklin		Mart		Rogers	
	Regular	Special	Regular	Special	Regular	Special	Regular	Special	Regular	Special
Salaries & Benefits	\$138,031	\$0	\$112,127	\$11,865	\$126,144	\$5,004	N/A	N/A	\$85,923	\$17,246
Purchased & Contracted	\$1,793	\$0	\$14,541	\$172	\$2,127	\$0	N/A	N/A	\$11,028	\$671
Supplies & Materials	\$28,191	\$0	\$63,508	\$4,745	\$39,105	\$0	N/A	N/A	\$31,997	\$4,166
Other Operating Expense	\$9,206	\$0	\$7,814	\$120	\$4,028	\$0	N/A	N/A	\$5,645	\$709
Debt Service	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	N/A	N/A	\$33,883	\$0
Capital Outlay	\$52,656	\$0	\$43,319	\$2,250	\$0	\$0	N/A	N/A	\$0	\$0

Total Operation Costs	229,877	\$0	\$241,309	\$19,152	\$171,404	\$5,004	N/A	N/A	\$168,485	\$22,792
------------------------------	----------------	------------	------------------	-----------------	------------------	----------------	------------	------------	------------------	-----------------

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Report, 1998-99. Note: Data for Mart was unavailable.

**Exhibit 5-8
Operations Costs
RLISD and Peer Districts
1999-2000**

Object	RLISD		Corrigan-Camden		Franklin		Mart		Rogers	
	Regular	Special	Regular	Special	Regular	Special	Regular	Special	Regular	Special
Salaries & Benefits	\$132,960	\$0	\$151,963	\$10,609	\$152,590	\$4,444	N/A	N/A	\$78,178	\$16,938
Purchased & Contracted	\$1,332	\$0	\$14,704	\$457	\$2,319	\$0	N/A	N/A	\$22,773	\$3,504
Supplies & Materials	\$50,875	\$0	\$65,895	\$4,689	\$49,902	\$0	N/A	N/A	\$43,200	\$9,460
Other Operating Expense	\$9,473	\$0	\$8,384	\$400	\$4,500	\$0	N/A	N/A	\$5,855	\$626
Debt Service	0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	N/A	N/A	\$23,883	\$0
Capital Outlay	\$63,807	\$0	\$48,060	\$6,950	\$0	\$0	N/A	N/A	\$0	\$0
Total Operation Costs	\$258,447	\$0	\$289,006	\$23,105	\$209,311	\$4,444	N/A	N/A	\$173,889	\$30,528

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Report, 1999-2000. Note: Data for Mart was unavailable.

**Exhibit 5-9
Operations Costs**

**RLISD and Peer Districts
2000-01**

Object	RLISD		Corrigan-Camden		Franklin		Mart		Rogers	
	Regular	Special	Regular	Special	Regular	Special	Regular	Special	Regular	Special
Salaries & Benefits	\$138,346	\$0	\$166,803	\$24,929	\$159,564	\$4,744	\$50,019	\$26,902	\$66,840	\$20,353
Purchased & Contracted	\$4,501	\$0	\$11,529	\$2,886	\$7,078	\$0	\$18,980	\$0	\$37,937	\$3,938
Supplies & Materials	\$38,756	\$0	\$62,632	\$7,667	\$59,060	\$0	\$22,793	\$4,266	\$53,723	\$14,798
Other Operating Expense	\$8,744	\$0	\$9,634	0	\$9,355	\$0	\$7,513	\$500	\$5,550	\$491
Debt Service	\$0	\$0	0	0	0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$23,883	\$0
Capital Outlay	\$47,207	\$0	\$51,977	\$6,897	\$13,044	\$0	\$43,300	\$5,100	\$0	\$0
Total Operation Costs	\$237,554	\$0	\$302,575	\$42,379	\$248,101	\$4,744	\$142,605	\$36,768	\$187,933	\$39,580

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Report, 2000-01.

Exhibits 5-10, 5-11, and 5-12 present mileage summary data for RLISD and peer districts. RLISD had the most total regular program miles among its peer districts for 1998-99 through 2000-01. RLISD averaged 232,246 annual miles compared to 181,472 for Corrigan-Camden ISD, 203,252 for Franklin ISD and 99,551 for Rogers ISD. RLISD reported the same regular program route miles, 200,556 for the three-year period. Route mileage comprised the largest mileage group for RLISD and the other peer districts.

Extracurricular miles accounted for the second largest mileage for RLISD and the peer districts. RLISD averaged 30,798 extracurricular miles, the lowest among its peer districts, for 1998-99 through 2000-01. Other peer district averages included 42,649 for Corrigan-Camden ISD, 55,000 for Franklin ISD and 34,106 for Rogers ISD. RLISD averaged 1,829 miles for field trips. Peer districts did not report any mileage in this category.

Exhibit 5-10
Mileage Summary
RLISD and Peer Districts
1998-99

Costs	RLISD		Corrigan-Camden		Franklin		Mart		Rogers	
	Regular	Special	Regular	Special	Regular	Special	Regular	Special	Regular	Special
Route Mileage (including Dead Head Miles)	200,556	0	123,932	6,325	137,500	8,082	N/A	N/A	10,102	24,653
Extra/Co-curricular Mileage	26,805	0	33,219	0	52,000	4,900	N/A	N/A	35,399	0
Field Trips/Non-School Organizations	1,710	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0	0
Mileage Other	1,000	0	0	0	4,255	0	N/A	N/A	421	0
Total Annual Mileage (HUB/Odometer)	230,071	0	157,151	6,325	193,755	12,982	N/A	N/A	45,922	24,653

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Report, 1998-99.
Note: Data for Mart was unavailable.

Exhibit 5-11
Mileage Summary
RLISD and Peer Districts
1999-2000

Costs	RLISD		Corrigan-Camden		Franklin		Mart		Rogers	
	Regular	Special	Regular	Special	Regular	Special	Regular	Special	Regular	Special
Route Mileage (incl. Dead Head Miles)	200,556	0	135,360	26,421	138,000	8,000	N/A	N/A	99,221	27,837
Extra/Co-curricular Mileage	31,343	0	50,032	0	52,000	5,000	N/A	N/A	31,847	0
Field Trips/Non-School	1,953	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	0	0

Organizations										
Mileage Other	1,250	0	0	0	5,000	0	N/A	N/A	403	0
Total Annual Mileage (HUB/Odometer)	235,102	0	185,392	26,421	195,000	13,000	N/A	N/A	131,498	27,837

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Report, 1999-2000.
Note: Data for Mart was unavailable.

**Exhibit 5-12
Mileage Summary
RLISD and Peer Districts
2000-01**

Costs	RLISD		Corrigan-Camden		Franklin		Mart		Rogers	
	Regular	Special	Regular	Special	Regular	Special	Regular	Special	Regular	Special
Route Mileage (incl. Dead Head Miles)	200,556	0	157,176	22,391	155,000	8,000	106,454	29,862	105,483	20,928
Extra/Co-curricular Mileage	27,833	0	44,696	0	61,000	5,000	44,764	1,718	35,071	0
(Field Trips) Non-School Organizations	1825	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mileage Other	1,350	0	0	0	5,000	0	275	11	679	123
Total Annual Mileage (HUB/Odometer)	231,564	0	201,872	22,391	221,000	13,000	151,493	31,591	141,233	21,051

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Report, 2000-01.

Chapter 5 OPERATIONS

B. TRANSPORTATION (PART 2)

Exhibit 5-13 summarizes the bus fleet of RLISD. One bus, which has been retired, is scheduled for sale. Two buses are used as spares, one to transport the band and general equipment and the other to cover regular buses that are out-of-service for maintenance.

RLISD has 12 Thomas, three Bluebird, two Wayne and one Carpenter model buses. The district has two 72-passenger, six 71-passenger, two 65-passenger, four 59-passenger, one 53-passenger, one 36-passenger and two 19-passenger school buses. The average age of the 10 RLISD regular route buses is 7.2 years.

**Exhibit 5-13
RLISD Bus Fleet Inventory
2002-03**

Model	Route Type	Passengers	Model Year	Age	Mileage	Average Mileage/Yr
Wayne	Retired	19	1979	23	352,456	15,324
Thomas	Spare	53	1988	14	164,175	11,726
Wayne	Spare	65	1988	14	90,155	6,439
Bluebird	Regular	72	1990	12	205,815	17,151
Bluebird	Regular	72	1990	12	170,041	14,170
Thomas	Regular	71	1992	10	167,930	16,793
Carpenter	Pre-K, PEP	19	1993	9	185,690	20,632
Thomas	Trip	71	1993	9	127,429	14,158
Thomas	Trip	71	1993	9	139,244	15,471
Thomas	Regular	59	1995	7	100,691	14,384
Thomas	Regular	59	1995	7	76,957	10,993
Thomas	Regular	71	1995	7	106,780	15,254
Thomas	Regular	71	1997	5	58,397	11,679
Thomas	Regular	59	1997	5	72,025	14,405

Thomas	Regular	59	1998	4	61,420	15,355
Thomas	Alter. Prog.	36	1999	3	54,492	18,164
Thomas	Regular	65	1999	3	37,273	12,424
Bluebird	Trip	71	2002	-	10,305	10,305

Source: RLISD, Transportation Director.

Exhibit 5-14 below compares the age of regular bus fleet of RLISD to peer districts for 1998-99 through 2000-01. When compared to the peer districts, RLISD has a middle age bus fleet. RLISD also has younger buses when compared to the peer average. RLISD has three buses 10 years or older.

Exhibit 5-14
Regular Bus Age Distribution
RLISD and Peer Districts
1998-99 through 2000-01

Peer District	Fleet 1 to 5 Years			Fleet 5 to 10 Years			Fleet Over 10 Years		
	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01
Corrigan-Camden	6%	8%	6%	6%	7%	6%	4%	4%	5%
Franklin	0%	0%	5%	0%	0%	7%	1%	1%	4%
Mart	N/A	N/A	4%	N/A	N/A	4%	N/A	N/A	6%
Rogers	2%	2%	2%	4%	4%	4%	5%	1%	5%
Peer Average	4%	5%	4.2%	3.3%	5.5%	5.2%	3.3%	2%	5%
RLISD	8%	8%	5%	6%	6%	9%	5%	4%	3%

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Report, 1998-99 through 2000-01.

Over the past four years, RLISD has purchased five buses. RLISD has spent an average of \$32,700 on its bus acquisitions each year.

School buses typically have a useful life cycle between 10 and 15 years. TEA recommends a 10-year procurement cycle; however, districts with good maintenance programs can extend bus life for 10, 12 or even 15 years before they need replacement. The RLISD Transportation director,

for example, uses older buses on roads that are better maintained to extend their life.

FINDING

RLISD uses cameras on all school buses to ensure student safety, monitor student discipline, promote bus route efficiency and prevent bus vandalism and theft. The district initially used cameras on selected buses and dummy boxes that simulated cameras on the rest of the fleet. Satisfaction with the cameras led the district to purchase cameras for all buses used on the district's school routes.

The district's cameras are mobile video products specifically manufactured for school buses. Each bus has a permanent remote camera head with a lock box under the driver's seat that contains the video camera recorder (VCR). Cameras are fitted with a lens that covers the entire length of the bus. Each bus also has a motion detector that activates the VCR.

The Transportation director reviews the bus tapes weekly to evaluate student behavior, bus and bus driver performance and reported vandalism and theft of buses, especially during the night. The Transportation director secures the tapes. The district limits tape viewing to the Transportation director, pertinent bus drivers, students and parents, superintendent and assistant principal responsible for district safety and security. The district's legal counsel provides advice on the use of tapes when serious student discipline issues occur.

COMMENDATION

RLISD uses cameras on all school buses to ensure student safety, monitor student discipline, promote bus route efficiency and prevent bus vandalism and theft.

FINDING

RLISD has established a systematic employment, communications and management process for bus drivers. The transportation department undertakes several steps in hiring, orienting and managing bus drivers. The Transportation director's hiring and orientation process includes:

- conducting an initial interview;
- verifying personal background, especially driving record;
- reviewing employment history;
- introducing driver and making him or her familiar with district rules and regulations;
- enrolling driver in 10-hour credit course on obstacle training;

- tutoring driver on Commercial Driver's License (CDL), if needed, and ensuring passage of CDL test;
- enrolling driver in 20-hour certification training course offered by Region 12; and
- ensuring driver passes physical exam and drug test.

All RLISD bus drivers on regular routes are certified and re-certified, as required. The transportation department uses coaches, principals and ground maintenance employees as substitute drivers.

The Transportation director maintains radio contact with all drivers during their morning and afternoon routes. He said that this accessibility ensures a rapid response to emergencies and other issues that may arise. The Transportation directors also spot checks bus driving, loading and unloading. He discusses issues and problems with all bus drivers.

A TSPR focus group with RLISD bus drivers found that bus drivers rate their department management positively. Bus drivers and other transportation employees said they have a good department, a good transportation director and team as evidenced in the following comments:

- "The director listens and has an open door policy."
- "There is good communication within the department."
- "The director is a good spokesperson for the group. He has the best interest of drivers at heart. He speaks up for the drivers at board meeting when needed."
- "The drivers are provided with good mechanical service, the mechanics are knowledgeable and there is a quick response time on repairs."
- "All drivers have to do is pick up the telephone and call the director whenever they need something."

COMMENDATION

RLISD has established a systematic employment, communications and management process for bus drivers.

FINDING

RLISD lost its bus maintenance records for the past five years. RLISD does not have a preventive maintenance program in place for maintaining the school bus fleet or other district vehicles. The Transportation director said that his department changes the oil and lubricates its buses and other school vehicles during student vacations.

Since all vehicles do not accrue mileage at the same rate, some buses and other school vehicles have not had inspections at appropriate intervals. Some school districts conduct monthly inspections of their vehicles as part of their preventive maintenance program.

Tracking maintenance offers many benefits. First, it ensures preventive maintenance is performed on time. Documented maintenance leads to well-maintained buses and vehicles and avoids breakdowns. Second, maintenance tracking helps to identify recurring problems. Recurring problems usually indicate more serious maintenance problems. Third, tracking identifies the cost of repairing vehicles. This latter information can assist a district to decide whether to replace a high maintenance vehicle.

Austin ISD uses fleet maintenance software to ensure its Transportation Department performs preventive maintenance on its buses as required by mileage standards. Transportation Department data entry personnel record the vehicle's mileage each time they enter a transportation work order and whenever a driver fuels their vehicle. Each day, the service department generates a report detailing all vehicles due for preventive maintenance. The mechanics prioritize the maintenance schedule based on mileage.

Recommendation 27:

Document maintenance performed on each vehicle.

The Transportation director should establish a system for tracking the maintenance and cost of each vehicle to determine cost effectiveness.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	Technology coordinator trains the Transportation director on computer spreadsheet development and maintenance.	June 2003
2.	The Transportation director and the technology coordinator develop a spreadsheet to track maintenance on each vehicle.	June 2003
3.	The Transportation director records, at a minimum, the date, the mileage, a description of the repair, the parts used and cost, and the number of hours expended on the repair.	July 2003 and Ongoing
4.	The Maintenance director uses the maintenance records to identify when buses, other vehicles and equipment need maintenance and establishes a preventive maintenance schedule.	September 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The Transportation director designs the district's bus routes manually. The department's routing data consist of bus logs with stops, turns and distances. This type of planning limits the efficiency of the routes and can result in bus overcrowding or underutilization.

The state limits funding for regular program transportation to transporting students living two or more miles from the school they attend. The state does not reimburse districts for transporting students living within two miles of their school unless they face hazardous walking conditions, such as crossing a four-lane roadway without a traffic signal or crossing guard. The state will reimburse districts for transporting students on hazardous routes within two miles of school; however, the reimbursement for transporting students on hazardous routes may not exceed 10 percent of the total annual reimbursement for transporting only two-or-more-mile students. A school district must use local funds to pay for transportation costs the state reimbursement does not cover.

For the regular program, the state reimburses districts for qualifying transportation expenses based on linear density, which is the ratio of the average number of regular program students transported daily on standard routes to the number of route miles traveled daily for those standard routes. Standard miles and riders do not include miles or riders for alternative, bilingual, desegregation, magnet, parenting, pre-kindergarten regular transportation or hazardous area service. TEA uses this ratio to assign each school to one of seven linear density groups. Each group is eligible to receive a maximum per mile allotment. Allotment rates are based on the previous year's linear density.

RLISD has not increased its state transportation allotment since 1998-99. The district has received an annual state allotment of \$158,439 between 1998-99 and 2001-02. The district has also not scheduled a special education route during the same period. RLISD does not operate a special education route because the district participates in a special education cooperative operated by Marlin ISD that provides all special education transportation services for the co-op members.

TEA has classified RLISD in linear density group 2 since 1998-99. This grouping, the second lowest as **Exhibit 5-15** shows, received a reimbursement of \$.79 a mile for regular program transportation compared to the actual cost of \$1.06 a mile in 2001-02.

**Exhibit 5-15
Linear Density Group**

Linear Density Group	Allotment Per Mile
2.40 and above	\$1.43
1.65 to 2.40	\$1.25
1.15 to 1.65	\$1.11
0.90 to 1.15	\$0.97
0.65 to 0.90	\$0.88
0.40 to 0.65	\$0.79
Up to 0.40	\$0.68

Source: TEA, Handbook on School Transportation, 2001-02.

Exhibit 5-16 shows regular route ridership by bus, route, capacity and actual utilization. RLISD regular bus routes range in capacity from 43 percent to 99 percent. The average capacity of the regular routes equals 69 percent.

**Exhibit 5-16
Profile of Regular RLISD Bus Routes
2001-02**

Route Number	Route Length	Capacity	Riders	Percent Capacity
27	95.6	72	31	43%
21	84.6	72	44	61%
24	95.2	71	58	82%
17	99.6	59	48	81%
20	93.8	59	43	73%
48	114.0	71	70	99%
23	76.4	71	57	80%
25	96.6	59	34	58%
34	100.2	59	33	56%
22	69.4	65	38	58%

		658	456	69%
--	--	------------	------------	------------

Source: RLISD, Transportation Director.

Using software that automates route design, a district can design bus routes and schedules more efficiently and more cost effectively than with manual methods and in a fraction of the time. Route optimization is especially critical in stop location selection, run building and route coupling.

Stop location optimization allows districts to define a hazard, estimate maximum walking distance for students and for maximum students at a stop and determine forbidden or undesirable locations for stops. Automated systems identify and select the minimum number of stops at the best locations to satisfy these stop location requirements. Interactive graphics can allow districts to anticipate problems, evaluate solutions and make appropriate revisions and/or corrections.

Run building optimization enables districts to automatically build multiple bus runs to a specific school or cluster of schools. An automated system can maximize vehicle capacity while minimizing time and distance traveled. Computer plots can help evaluate and modify the results as needed.

Route coupling optimization permits districts to combine a specified group of bus runs into bus schedules with the objective of minimizing fleet requirements, travel distance and wait time.

In 2001-02, the district reported total miles as 192,492 in the School Transportation Route Services Report and had an allotment of \$158,439.

Katy ISD has successfully used automated route planning software for more than 15 years. Katy's director of Transportation says that in a growing district, with new streets constantly being added, it is impossible to keep bus routes running efficiently using a manual system.

Recommendation 28:

Purchase an automated bus routing system.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Transportation director and Region 12 transportation specialist contact routing software vendors to obtain detailed product information.	June 2003
----	--	-----------

2.	The Transportation director and the Region 12 transportation specialist evaluate product information.	June 2003
3.	The Transportation director solicits bids for bus routing software and submits an estimated budget for the upcoming fiscal year.	June-September 2003
4.	The Transportation director presents a recommendation for award to the superintendent and board for approval.	September 2003
5.	The business manager issues a purchase order for the bus routing software.	October 2003
6.	The Transportation director schedules training for the new software.	October 2003
7.	The Transportation director implements the bus routing software.	November 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

Initially, the district needs to purchase routing software which can be obtained for a maximum of \$2,500 given the number of RLISD's routes. Using the route scheduling software to enhance bus capacity and efficiency could increase the district's linear density from its current second to third TEA grouping. RLISD could increase its linear density from the current \$0.472 to \$0.651 and increase the state allotment from \$0.79 per mile to \$0.88 per mile. Based on RLISD's reported mileage of 192,492, RLISD's allotment for regular transportation would increase to \$169,392 from its current allotment of \$158,439 or an increase of \$10,953 each year.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2003-04
Purchase automated bus routing software.	(\$2,500)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Use automated system to develop routes that are more efficient, increase linear density and generate additional state reimbursement.	\$10,953	\$10,953	\$10,953	\$10,953	\$10,953
Net (Cost)/Savings	\$8,453	\$10,953	\$10,953	\$10,953	\$10,953

Chapter 5

OPERATIONS

C. FOOD SERVICES (PART 1)

The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) are intended to safeguard the health and well-being of the nation's children and to encourage the domestic consumption of nutritional agricultural products. The TEA Child Nutrition Programs Division administers the NSLP and SBP. The division processes district claims for reimbursement, providing special marketing projects and procurement assistance to promote more nutritious eating habits, conducting on-site compliance monitoring and coordinating training through the 20 regional education service centers.

Exhibit 5-17 shows suggested performance measures for food service operations.

Exhibit 5-17
Suggested Performance Measures
For Food Service Operations

Category	Performance Measure
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of meals served • Nutrition value of meals served • Revenues by source (i.e., a la carte, regular lunch) • Special programs (nutrition education) • Meal variety and quality
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food preparation practices • Condition of storage and service areas • Sanitary conditions and practices • Food quality
Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absenteeism • Turnover • Employee training
Cost Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost per meal • Utilization of donated commodities • Financial results

Source: *Doing More with Less: Competitive Contracting for School-Support, 1999.*

Food service funding sources include: student and adult meal payments; federal reimbursements for all qualifying students who eat school meals (reimbursement rates vary for those who receive free meals or who purchase reduced-price or full-price meals); a la carte sales of food items; and fees from special functions catered by the food services operations.

Exhibit 5-18 shows the reimbursement rates for 2002-03. Reimbursement rates have increased slightly over the last few years.

Exhibit 5-18
Free and Reduced-Price Lunch Program
Reimbursement Rates
2002-03

Meal Type	Reimbursement Rate
Reimbursable lunch	Full Price: \$0.20 Reduced Price: \$1.74 Free: \$2.14
Reimbursable breakfast	Full Price: \$0.22 Reduced-Price: \$0.87 Free: \$1.17
Reduced price meals maximum available	Lunch: \$0.40 Breakfast \$0.30

Source: TEA, Child Nutrition Division.

The Food Service director's office, which is located in the junior high/high school cafeteria, has five employees including a manager, three full-time employees and one part-time employee.

The Food Services director orders and maintains food inventory for all schools; assigns work positions as needed; accumulates and submits invoices for payment by the business office; and makes daily deposits and balances deposits from each school. In addition, the director prepares monthly reports and compiles all the food production sheets, verification forms and applications for free and reduced-price program(s).

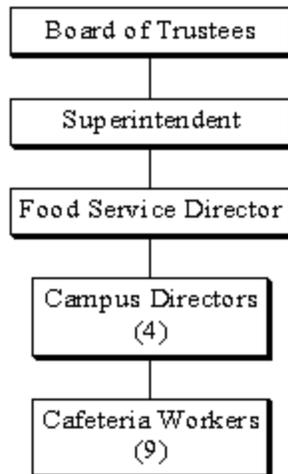
RLISD has three other cafeterias located at Lott Elementary, Rosebud Intermediate and Rosebud Primary schools. Each of these schools has two employees including a manager. The principals of each school have established working relationships with their respective cafeteria workers.

The director sometimes substitutes for absent employees or hires substitute help. All cafeteria managers are certified.

The review team conducted a walk through of all the cafeterias in the district. All cafeterias appeared well-maintained and clean. The primary, elementary and intermediate schools reported no problem in feeding all their students. All the cafeterias have a walk-in pantry, ovens, stand-up freezers and ice machines.

Exhibit 5-19 presents the organizational chart of the food service organization.

Exhibit 5-19
Food Service Organization
2002-03



Source: RLISD Business Office.

Directors manage the individual cafeterias. There are four campus directors and nine cafeteria workers. **Exhibits 5-20, 5-21, and 5-22** compare key Food Service operating statistics for RLISD and peer districts for 1999-2000 through 2001-02. RLISD has five schools and selected peer districts each have three schools. RLISD has just one cafeteria at the junior high and high school, although TEA reports count this as two schools. Rogers ISD has an open-campus policy that allows students to leave school for lunch.

All districts retained their average daily attendance ranking. Corrigan-Camden had the most students followed by RLISD, Franklin, Rogers and Mart. With the exception of the Rogers ISD, the districts declined in average daily attendance (ADA) for the past three-years,

In 2001-02, Corrigan-Camden ISD had the largest percentage of students eligible for free/reduced meals for both breakfast and lunch. Corrigan-Camden ISD averaged 89.1 percent and 82.1 percent for breakfast and lunch, respectively, followed by RLISD, 85.5 percent and 56.3 percent, Mart ISD, 84.7 percent and 63.9 percent, Franklin ISD, 83.4 percent and 47.6 percent and Rogers ISD, 75.7 percent and 56.6 percent.

Exhibit 5-20
Food Service Key Operating Statistics
RLISD and Peer Districts
1999-2000

Description	RLISD	Corrigan-Camden	Franklin	Mart	Rogers
Number of schools served	5	3	3	3	3
Food Service ADA	1,005	1,096	895	700	851
Percentage of students eligible for free/reduced meals					
- Breakfast	86.1%	89.6%	80.5%	86.0%	77.9%
- Lunch	60.3%	81.1%	46.8%	61.8%	54.0%
Meals served					
- Breakfast	44,944	88,891	24,969	33,412	28,679
- Lunch	113,420	150,169	107,314	82,711	79,719
Average meal participation percent					
- Breakfast	25.3%	46.3%	16.1%	26.4%	18.9%
- Lunch	63.8%	78.3%	69.3%	65.3%	52.6%

Source: TEA, Child Nutrition Program Division and Peer Districts Food Service Programs.

Exhibit 5-21
Comparison of RLISD's and Peer Districts' Food Service Key
Operating Statistics
2000-01

Description	RLISD	Corrigan-Camden	Franklin	Mart	Rogers
Number of schools served	5	3	3	3	3
Food Service ADA	1,005	1,061	895	692	854

Percentage of students eligible for Free/reduced meals					
- Breakfast	85.1%	88.6%	86.2%	82.2%	74.6%
- Lunch	57.0%	81.4%	46.4%	60.1%	54.8%
Meals served					
- Breakfast	42,465	85,820	28,073	32,424	25,123
- Lunch	114,354	149,871	101,891	80,320	74,180
Average meal participation percent					
- Breakfast	23.4%	46.2%	18.1%	26.7%	17.3%
- Lunch	62.9%	79.4%	65.8%	66.3%	50.8%

Source: TEA, Child Nutrition Program Division and Peer Districts Food Service Programs.

Exhibit 5-22
Comparison of RLISD's and Peer Districts' Food Service Key
Operating Statistics
2001-02

Description	RLISD	Corrigan-Camden	Franklin	Mart	Rogers
Number of schools served	5	3	3	3	3
Food Service ADA	980	1,094	887	668	868
Percentage of students eligible for free/reduced meals					
- Breakfast	85.5%	89.1%	83.4%	84.7%	75.7%
- Lunch	56.3%	82.1%	47.6%	63.9%	56.6%
Meals Served					
- Breakfast	41,556	88,072	30,822	39,909	30,072
- Lunch	104,415	146,982	107,265	84,207	73,647
Average meal participation percent					
- Breakfast	23.6%	46.0%	20.3%	32.9%	19.7%
- Lunch	59.5%	75.9%	70.7%	69.6%	48.2%

Source: TEA, Child Nutrition Program Division and Peer Districts Food Service Programs.

Exhibit 5-23 compares RLISD's meal prices to those of the peer districts. On average, RLISD's prices are equal to or lower than the peers for elementary and secondary lunch, faculty/teachers and all other adult meals served. RLISD breakfast prices are mid-range.

**Exhibit 5-23
RLISD and Peer District Meal Prices
2002-03**

Meal Type	RLISD	Corrigan-Camden	Franklin	Mart	Rogers
Breakfast	\$1.00	\$0.50	\$1.25	\$1.00	\$0.70
Lunch-Elementary	\$1.25	\$1.50	\$1.75	\$1.40	\$1.25
Lunch-Secondary	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$1.75	\$1.75	\$1.50
Faculty/Teachers	\$2.25	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.25
All Other Adults	\$2.25	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.25

Source: RLISD and Peer Districts, Food Service Directors.

Exhibit 5-24 shows RLISD Food Service revenues and expenditures by major category for 1999-2000 through 2001-02. During this time frame RLISD revenues decreased by less than 2 percent and expenditures increased by 6 percent. The largest revenue came from federal and local sources. State revenue, which was minor, remained the same for the three years. Local revenue increased and federal revenue decreased.

Food and payroll costs were the largest expenditure items. Both increased slightly during the three years. Expenditures for non-food items, equipment purchase/repairs, utility services and contracted service increased every year. USDA commodities showed an expenditure decline.

**Exhibit 5-24
Food Service Revenue and Expenditures by Major Category
1999-2000 through 2001-02**

	1999-2000		2000-01		2001-02	
Revenues						
Category	Actual	Percent	Actual	Percent	Actual	Percent
Local Revenue	\$130,751	37.0%	\$160,832	43.2%	\$146,937	42.2%
Interest	\$1,484	0.4%	\$1,551	0.4%	\$784	0.2%
State Revenue	\$7,709	2.2%	\$7,643	2.1%	\$7,712	2.2%

Federal Revenue	\$213,410	60.4%	\$202,700	54.4%	\$192,999	55.4%
Total	\$353,355	100.0%	\$372,726	100.0%	\$348,522	100.0%
Expenditures						
Payroll Cost	\$132,595	37.7%	\$145,148	37.7%	\$142,733	38.3%
Contracted Services	\$10,051	2.9%	\$14,021	3.6%	\$12,136	3.3%
Food	\$152,889	43.5%	\$171,705	44.6%	\$162,892	43.7%
Non-Food Items	\$10,923	3.1%	\$14,078	3.7%	\$16,268	4.4%
USDA Commodities	\$22,949	6.5%	\$16,066	4.2%	\$16,423	4.4%
Other Supplies	\$3,110	0.9%	\$2,247	0.6%	\$676	0.2%
Travel, Training	\$267	0.1%	\$499	0.1%	\$201	0.1%
Insurance/Bonding	\$50	0.01%	\$100	0.0%	\$50	0.0%
Equipment Purchase/Repairs	\$4,061	1.2%	\$5,407	1.4%	\$5,427	1.5%
Utilities	\$14,695	4.2%	\$15,367	4.0%	\$15,985	4.3%
Total	\$351,589	100.0%	\$384,640	100.0%	\$372,791	100.0%
Difference	\$1,756		(\$11,914)		(\$24,269)	

Source: RLISD, Comparison of Food Service Operations Report, 1999-2000, 2000-01 and 2001-02.

FINDING

RLISD meal participation rates remain low, contributing to the district's Food Service program operating deficit. **Exhibit 5-25** and **Exhibit 5-26** present the Food Service Program breakfast and lunch participation rates for RLISD for 2000-01 and 2001-02.

Exhibit 5-25 RLISD Food Service Participation Rates by School 2000-01

School	Breakfast Participation Percent	Lunch Participation Percent
--------	---------------------------------------	-----------------------------------

RLISD Junior/High School	10%	49%
Rosebud Intermediate School	41%	87%
Rosebud Primary School	41%	75%
Lott Elementary School	36%	70%

Source: RLISD, Food Service director.

Exhibit 5-26
RLISD Food Service
Participation Rates by School
2001-02

School	Breakfast Participation Percent	Lunch Participation Percent
RLISD Junior/High School	10%	52%
Rosebud Intermediate	54%	95%
Rosebud Primary School	40%	68%
Lott Elementary School	40%	76%

Source: RLISD, Food Service director.

TSPR conducted written surveys of RLISD students, teachers and parents on a series of questions regarding the food quality and waiting and eating time for students. Students have 30 minutes to eat lunch. Teachers were not asked if students had enough time to eat.

Conversely, the survey found that 55 percent of the parents strongly agreed/agreed that the cafeteria food looks and tastes good, 62 percent agreed that the food is served warm, 58 percent strongly agreed/agreed that students have enough time to eat (**Exhibit 5-27**).

Exhibit 5-27
Parent Responses to TSPR Survey on Food Service

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	4%	51%	21%	17%	6%
Food is served warm.	9%	53%	17%	21%	0%

Students have enough time to eat.	9%	49%	13%	15%	15%
Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	15%	70%	6%	6%	2%
Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	6%	60%	19%	13%	2%

Source: TSPR survey.

Student responses included 79 percent disagreed/strongly disagreed that the cafeteria's food looks and taste good, 26 percent disagreed/strongly disagreed that the food is served warm, 87 percent disagreed/strongly disagreed that students have enough time to eat, 82 percent disagreed/strongly disagreed that students wait in line no longer than 10 minutes and 46 percent disagreed/strongly disagreed that students eat lunch at the appropriate times of day (**Exhibit 5-28**).

Exhibit 5-28
Student Responses to TSPR Survey on Food Service

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	0%	9%	13%	24%	55%	0%
Food is served warm.	15%	16%	43%	25%	1%	0%
Students have enough time to eat.	0%	7%	7%	22%	65%	0%
Students eat lunch at the appropriate times of the day.	1%	33%	17%	22%	26%	0%
Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	4%	8%	6%	14%	68%	0%

Source: TSPR survey.

Chapter 5 OPERATIONS

C. FOOD SERVICES (PART 2)

Sixty percent of teachers strongly agreed/agreed that students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes; 76 percent strongly agreed/agreed that the cafeteria's food looks and tastes good; 80 percent strongly agreed/agreed that the food is warm; and 88 percent strongly agreed/agreed that students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day (**Exhibit 5-29**).

**Exhibit 5-29
Teacher Responses to TSPR Survey on Food Service**

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	8%	68%	16%	8%	0%
Food is served warm.	12%	68%	16%	4%	0%
Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	16%	72%	8%	4%	0%
Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	16%	44%	8%	24%	8%

Source: TSPR survey.

The NSLP has identified the following best practices for improving meal participation: improving food quality; soliciting student feedback in menu planning; improving service quality; educating students about proper nutrition; and implementing marketing and promotional strategies geared to increasing participation.

Food quality should be evaluated by appearance, texture or consistency, flavor and temperature of the food when served. Food Service administration and staff should use established standards to implement formal evaluation methods and ensure that acceptable food items are served at district cafeterias. The age and ethnic background of students will be a factor in establishing quality standards and these standards may vary from school to school. Food Service staff should adjust recipes and/or preparation techniques to improve the acceptability of foods when needed. Standardized recipes should be adjusted among schools to accommodate a

diverse population of students. Additional training sessions could be conducted to implement standards into each cafeteria.

Surveys, focus groups or student advisory councils are used by some districts to solicit student feedback to better tailor menus to student tastes and preferences. Students should be involved in tasting and evaluating food products that are produced and served during school meal times. Scorecards can be developed for students to rate each menu item based on appearance, texture/consistency, flavor/seasoning and temperature. Students will be more likely to purchase school lunches if they are offered menus and individual choices that appeal to them.

The quality of service provided to students by cafeteria personnel should be evaluated, and training should be provided to enhance customer services. Field specialists should monitor the quality of service provided by cafeteria personnel at their respective schools and take corrective actions to continue to improve the quality of service provided by these personnel.

Districts can also involve students and parents in developing nutrition policies that encourage healthy eating and implement *marketing and promotional strategies geared to increasing participation*. This could include promotional campaigns and point-of-purchase materials similar to those used by quick-service restaurant chains.

Tyler ISD prepared and circulated a questionnaire to solicit feedback from students and faculty on the acceptability of lunch and breakfast meals. Cafeteria staff made changes. Breakfast and lunch participation increased by 13 percent and nine percent respectively in the first two years of implementation. Since then, meal participation grew 1 percent in 1997-98 and 3 percent in 1998-99.

Falls City ISD Food Service (FCISD) program has achieved success with its menus by using surveys. The FCISD English Honors Class conducted a study in February 2001 reviewing FCISD food service menus. Their study recorded students' least and most favorite meal preferences. Cafeterias used the survey results to adjust menus.

Recommendation 29:

Adopt strategies to increase breakfast and lunch participation in RLISD's Food Service Program.

The Food Service director and the Region 12 food nutrition specialist should work together to identify ways to increase breakfast and lunch participation using the suggestions recommended by the NSLP.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Food Service director contacts and confers with the Region 12 food nutrition specialist.	June 2003
2.	The Food Service director and the Region 12 food nutrition specialist identify strategies to increase breakfast and lunch participation rates and informs the superintendent and school principals of the strategies.	June-July 2003
3.	The Food Service director implements the strategies and monitors the strategies for improvement.	August 2003
4.	The Food Service director and the Region 12 food nutrition specialist evaluate strategies and report results to the superintendent and school principals	January 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal estimate of increased incremental revenue of \$1,588 annually is based on the district increasing participation by 5 percent a year for a total of 25 percent. With a 5 percent participation rate increase each year, the district will increase the number of meals served incrementally each year by 8,820.

Estimated Meals:	Incremental Participation Rate (.05%)	
Average Daily Attendance	980	
Incremental Participation Rate Increase	x .05	
	49	
Number of School Days	x 180	
Total number of annual additional incremental breakfasts with increased participation rate:	8,820	
Annual additional incremental breakfasts with increased participation rate:	8,820	
Average 2002-03 breakfast reimbursement rate (\$1.00)	x \$1	
Additional revenue		\$8,820

Less:	\$8,820	
Additional Food and Labor Costs (43.7% for food and 38.3% labor, or 82% total):	x .82	
		(\$7,232)
Total annual incremental increased revenue beginning in 2003-04		\$1,588

The 2003-04 savings will be \$1,588, with the \$1,588 annual incremental increased revenue added each year thereafter.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Adopt strategies to increase breakfast and lunch participation in RLISD's Food Service Program.	\$1,588	\$3,176	\$4,764	\$6,352	\$7,940

FINDING

RLISD conducts its record keeping for the free and reduced-price lunch program manually, making it difficult to perform and keep proper records. A March 2002, TEA audit of RLISD's Food Service Operations showed errors in the meal counts, thereby reducing the number of meals the district can claim for federal reimbursement. Except for the junior high and high school, the secretarial staff for each principal administers the meal payment system. Each school has a coded student roster that is checked by homeroom teachers as full-pay, free and reduced-price meal students. The homeroom teachers in the elementary and intermediate schools collect all monies from students. Junior high and high school students pay for their food at mealtime.

Homeroom teachers submit their paperwork and money to their respective principal's secretarial staff. The secretarial staff uses the compiled roster to identify the payment status of students during mealtimes. Secretarial staff calculates daily meal totals. They call the Food Services director with the totals by mid-afternoon. Two schools submit hard copies of their daily forms to the Food Service Department. One school keeps its own files.

District employees voiced concern about the amount of time required to administer the current payment system. It also is difficult to keep proper

records of the district's participation rates with such a manually-intensive system.

Water Valley ISD (WVISD) implemented a point-of-sale (POS) system in its Food Service Department. This software:

- offers convenient pre-payment options;
- maintains confidentiality for students who receive free and reduced-price meals;
- provides a clear audit trail;
- reduces processing time to sell a meal in less than two seconds;
- reduces labor hours needed with automated reports; and
- reduces the possibility for double counting meal sales.

The software automates sales activity, meal and eligibility counts and state claim form preparation. It processes cafeteria sales quickly, tracks all meals and items sold and generates a variety of reports. As a Windows-based software, it meets the district's needs for a system at a reasonable cost.

WVISD reported significant improvements in maintaining its cash receipts. The system has eliminated missing money and eliminates students not paying the proper amount for their food since it holds student-specific data. WVISD eliminated two labor hours a day using its reporting feature.

POS systems have increased student participation. With the inherent confidentiality of the system, it does not differentiate students who are eligible for the free and reduced-price meal program from students who pay regular price. Each student has the same card. Increased participation brings increased federal reimbursement, which is additional cash flow for the district.

Recommendation 30:

Purchase point-of-sale software for each school.

The system will provide better record keeping and ensure that the district recognizes all eligible students and receives the appropriate levels of federal reimbursement.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Food Services director contacts Region 12 food nutrition specialist to help evaluate the district's point of sale process.	June 2003
----	--	-----------

2.	The Food Services director and Region 12 nutrition specialist contact point-of-sale software vendors to obtain detailed product information.	June 2003
3.	The Food Service director and Region 12 nutrition specialist evaluate product information.	July 2003
4.	The Food Service director and Region 12 nutrition specialist solicit bids for POS software and equipment and submit budget for upcoming fiscal year.	July-September 2003
5.	The Food Service director presents a recommendation for award to the superintendent and board for approval.	October 2003
6.	The Business Manager issues a purchase order for the POS software and equipment.	November 2003
7.	The Food Service director schedules training for the new software.	December 2003
8.	The Food Service director implements the POS software.	January 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

RLISD will incur a one-time cost of \$1,000 for training (\$200 x 5 staff) and \$9,556 (\$2,389 x 4 cafeterias) for equipment at each cafeteria for a total of \$10,556 to implement this recommendation (**Exhibit 5-30**).

Exhibit 5-30 Estimated Cost of Point of Sale System

Purchase Item	Cost
Software Cost	\$900
Pentium III Processor	\$649
Touch Screen Monitor	\$539
HP DeskJet 640C	\$155
Video Camera	\$99
Numeric Keypad	\$47
Total Cost of System	\$2,389

Source: WVISD report.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
-----------------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------

Purchase point-of-sale software for each school.	(\$9,556)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Train employees on POS software.	(\$1,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Net (Costs)/Savings	(\$10,556)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

FINDING

By not identifying all students eligible for free and reduced-price meal benefits through the NSLP and SBP, RLISD loses compensatory education and Title I funds. Participation in the free and reduced-price lunch program is low in the Rosebud-Lott Junior High and High School and Lott Elementary. The percent of junior and high school students approved for the free and reduced-price meal program for 2000-01 and 2001-02 was 33 percent and 30 percent, respectively. The percent of students approved at the Lott Elementary and Rosebud Primary School for the same two-year period was 56 percent and 49 percent, respectively. Both schools experienced a decrease in the percent and number of students approved for the free and reduced-price meal program. Economically disadvantaged students are distributed throughout the district.

Conversely, the district's other two schools have higher approval levels. The Rosebud Intermediate School approved 55 percent of its students in 2000-01 and 65 percent in 2001-02. Rosebud Primary School approved 68 percent of its students in both years.

RLISD has significant differences in the percentage of students approved for the free and reduced-price meal program.

Exhibit 5-31 and **5-32** provides a summary of the number of students approved for free and reduced-price meal program by school for 2000-01 and 2001-02.

Exhibit 5-31
RLISD Students Approved for Free and Reduced-Price Meals by School
2000-01

School	Grades	Percent of Students Approved	Number of Approved Students Free	Number of Approved Students Reduced	Total Free/Reduced	Total Enrollment
--------	--------	------------------------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------------------	--------------------	------------------

RLISD Junior/High Schools	7-12	33%	135	31	166	507
Rosebud Intermediate	4-6	55%	56	9	65	119
Lott Elementary	K-6	56%	114	17	131	208
Rosebud Primary	Pre-K- 3	68%	113	21	134	198

Source: RLISD, Food Service Director.

Exhibit 5-32
RLISD Students Approved for Free and Reduce-Price Meals by
School
2001-02

School	Grades Covered In the School	Percent Of Students Approved	Number of Approved Students Free	Number of Approved Students Reduced	Total Free/ Reduced	Total Enrollment
RLISD Junior/High Schools	7-12	30%	112	33	145	481
Rosebud Intermediate	4-6	65%	56	14	70	107
Lott Elementary	K-6	49%	93	12	105	215
Rosebud Primary	Pre-K-3	68%	110	18	128	188

Source: RLISD, Food Service Director.

RLISD qualifies students for the NSLP by providing students an application that the students take to their parents to complete during the first week of school. Students also return the completed application to their respective school principal's office.

RLISD application contains a short written message from the superintendent urging parents to complete the application and remind them about the application deadline. Parents are also informed in the

application that the previous year's application cannot be used to renew their eligibility.

Parents are requested to list eligible children, monthly and other income. Parents are also sent a standard letter explaining the NSLP eligibility criteria. Parents are directed to contact the Food Service director if they wish to appeal a qualification decision. The superintendent also signs the standard letter. RLISD does not initiate any reminder notices or telephone calls to urge parents to complete their applications. Parents are encouraged in the application to call their child's school principal if they need assistance in completing the application.

Compensatory education and Title I funds are provided to districts based on the number of free and reduced-price meal students identified. RLISD received \$693 per student in compensatory education funds in 2002-03. Compensatory education and Title I funding flows to a school district based on the number of economically disadvantaged students. Economically disadvantaged is defined as students identified as eligible for free or reduced-price meals. These funds are funneled to districts so that they can provide additional services to students at-risk of dropping out of school. While not all economically disadvantaged students are considered at risk, the number of economically disadvantaged students closely tracks the number of at-risk students. The federal government uses this figure as its criteria.

Identifying those students who are eligible for free and reduced-price lunches and breakfasts through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program is a tedious and time-consuming process. Some parents are reluctant to fill out the necessary forms.

Exhibit 5-33 summarizes some successful strategies that school districts have adopted for increasing the number of students certified for the free and reduced-price meal programs.

Exhibit 5-33
Free and Reduced-price Lunch Participation Initiatives

Initiative	Description
Direct certification	Some districts do not require families to complete an application for the federal free and reduced-price meal programs if they are pre-certified as eligible by the Texas Department of Human Services through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.
Family identification	If a parent fills out a form for one child, all of the siblings in the same household are automatically qualified.

Campus-based at-risk budgeting	Principals are encouraged to aggressively qualify eligible students because funds for at-risk programs in their campus budget depend on the number of identified students. In the Texarkana ISD, for example, principals are motivated to identify every eligible child for the program because their campus' Compensatory and Title I budget is linked directly to the number of children identified in the program.
Parental assistance	Providing all parents a user-friendly form and campus-based assistance to complete the forms. This approach can be critical for non-English speaking or illiterate parents. The El Paso ISD provides applications in both English and Spanish. Other districts have staff available during registration and the first days of school to help parents read and complete paperwork.
Advertising campaigns	Billboards, posters, and flyers extol the virtue of the free and reduced-price meal program and encourage participation.
Incentive awards	Giving prizes to students and parents for completing an eligibility application. Houston ISD placed all of the applicants' names in a hat and drew for prizes, with the top prize a television. Some of the prizes were donated by local businesses, and some were purchased from the Food Service budget.

Source: Food for Thought: Ideas for improving School Food Service Operations, May 1999.

Recommendation 31:

Design and implement strategies to increase the number of students identified for free and reduced-price meal benefits.

The Food Service program staff should continue using the family application process and ensure all students are provided an application.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Food Services director and the business manager develop processes to increase identification of eligible students.	June 2003
2.	The Food Service director, business manager and PEIMS coordinator design a survey and schedule for students, teachers and parents to identify reasons for low participation by school.	July- August 2003
3.	The Food Services director distributes the survey.	September 2003

4.	The Food Service director and business manager monitor progress and monthly participation rates to ensure improvement.	October 2003 and Ongoing
----	--	--------------------------

FISCAL IMPACT

RLISD could generate an additional \$115,732 annually in compensatory education funds by increasing the number of students qualified for the free and reduced-price meal program at the Rosebud-Lott Junior High and High School and the Lott Elementary to 60 percent, a percentage lower than that of Rosebud Intermediate School and Rosebud Primary School.

Certifying 60 percent of the students at the Rosebud-Lott Junior High and High School would increase the eligible students by 143 students (481 student total enrollment x .60 = 288 students that could potentially be certified minus 145 students currently enrolled = 143 students). By multiplying RLISD's compensatory rate of \$693 x 143 students = \$99,099 of additional compensatory education funds.

Certifying 60 percent of the students at the Lott Elementary would increase the eligible students by 24 students (215 student total enrollment x .60 = 129 students that could potentially be certified minus 105 students currently enrolled = 24 students). By multiplying RLISD's compensatory rate of \$693 x 24 students = \$16,633 of additional compensatory education funds.

Adding the \$99,099 that could be gained by increasing the participation rate at the Rosebud-Lott Junior High and High School to the \$16,633 that could be gained at the Lott Elementary, the district could gain an additional \$115,732 in compensatory education funds. Additional funds would be received beginning 2003-04.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Design and implement strategies to increase the number of students eligible for free and reduced-price meal benefits.	\$115,732	\$115,732	\$115,732	\$115,732	\$115,732

Appendix A

PUBLIC FORUM AND FOCUS GROUP COMMENTS

The following comments convey the public forum and focus group's perception of Rosebud-Lott Independent School District and do not reflect the findings or opinion of the Comptroller or review team. The narrative comments are the actual comments received.

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

- The superintendent is not as accessible as the previous superintendent.
- There is better communication from the new administration.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

- RLISD has good teachers. They are experienced and are caring.
- Teachers have a special interest in student success, there is a team effort.
- The new administration has improved the discipline processes.
- One good thing about working in the district is that teacher's needs are met in terms of supplies and equipment.
- Texas doesn't recognize post baccalaureate degrees, so teachers don't have an incentive for continuing education.
- District needs better ESL services and bilingual program.
- There is a need for added support, training and materials for those working with special populations.
- District needs a curriculum director.
- District needs vertical alignment.
- Need for curriculum guide development.
- More practical training, i.e. staff development.
- District has good TAAS scores, they are proud of the fact that it is a recognized school.
- Secondary school has a great tutoring program.
- School has good UIL programs.
- High school has good staff support network.
- Library has good selection of books on tape.
- There is a team approach to teaching the fine arts programs.
- Teachers work together to identify special needs (intervention assessment team).
- Elementary school offers tutoring 4 days a week, available to any student. Other schools offer tutoring 2 days a week.
- Small class sizes in elementary school are an asset.
- There is no carryover to jr. high in the fine arts program.

- Kids who are bused can not take advantage of after-school tutoring.
- There is a state-mandated science program (special ed vs. regular program).

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Rosebud News provides good coverage for school, as do surrounding areas such as Marlin, Cameron, Waco, Temple.
- The new owner of the Rosebud News plans to provide more coverage for the area, for sports as well as scholastic.
- TV doesn't always provide coverage, despite calls from schools asking for coverage.
- The public library provides books for summer reading program. They have an on-going relationship and plan to develop more programs with proceeds from TIF grant.
- RLISD is working on their Web site.
- Summary of board meetings should be published, Rosebud News does not cover meetings.
- Previous superintendent was active with the chamber.
- The school district has no representation at city council meetings.
- Location of the school affects "ownership" in that it is neither in Rosebud or Lott, so there isn't as much closeness.
- People don't attend board meetings much because generally things are going well.
- Businesses support schools by donating and contributing. Not many businesses in town, but they do support schools.
- RLISD has strong parental, community support.
- People move into the area because of the school district.
- There is much pride in the school and community.
- RL high school graduates are accepted into good colleges.

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

- RLISD experiences sporadic turnover.
- RLISD has consistently low salaries and increases.
- PEP not a recruitment strategy.
- Incentives are needed to retain staff.
- School needs better and consistent state health insurance.
- Teacher salaries are too low in relation to the cost of living and rising insurance rates. The state is losing teachers due to cap on salaries.
- There is a need for incentives to help with recruiting.

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

- Contract labor - agreement to fix roof leak 2 years ago was never fulfilled.
- Priorities are off, i.e., sports take priority above academics.
- There are leaks in the elementary bathroom, one is coming from the light fixture, very dangerous
- Work order process needs improvement.
- Parent complaints take priority, repairs aren't necessarily made, but things are at looked at if a parent complains.
- Only 3 full-time maintenance staff for the whole district
- Dumpsters are located in an unpaved area so when it rains, they must go through the mud to get to the dumpsters. Receptacles don't roll in the mud and they are heavy. The dumpsters are located too far from school.
- Custodians don't have rain gear for bad weather (you can't hold umbrella and push trashcans). They should be provided with rain gear.
- At the high school, positions have been cut and custodians have to work off the clock to complete job, yet they don't receive overtime pay. Positions cut in Sept and were never filled. Supervisor was told the school needed to make cuts due to million dollar debt.
- Custodial supervisor has to hear complaints from employees about the work load and how unfair things are. "We're suffering for the million dollar debt."
- Currently have 3 full-time and 2 6-hour people. Person who used to have cafeteria duty is now with security, but he was originally hired for custodial. Now supervisor has to take others from their duties to work cafeteria.
- Custodians work hourly and only receive one day at Thanksgiving, one at Christmas and New Years Day off. They would like more time off.
- There is turnover at high school because of low salary and level of work. One man quit after receiving first paycheck because he said it wasn't worth it.
- They are paid minimum wage. The old principal said, "I don't do raises." Smaller surrounding districts pay more.
- The elementary school has urinals in the bathroom and there is no need for them because little kids can't reach them! Need commodes for little kids.
- Custodians are in high demand from teachers and staff, but salaries are low.
- The jr. high needs more classrooms.

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- No comment.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- Our district is also too concerned with saving. The school board cuts the budget further every year.

PURCHASING AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

- One good thing about working in the district is that teacher's needs are met in terms of supplies and equipment.

FOOD SERVICE

- No comment.

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

- District has software problems, especially with Classworks Gold, need support assistance.
- Impractical implementation with technology.
- Not enough tech support (knowledge access to program).
- District was part of a pilot program with region 12 and Dell computer, but it didn't work well and we feel like guinea pigs.
- There is an assortment of training programs available.
- RLISD received grant money for new computers and now there are 2 computers in each classroom.

TRANSPORTATION

- Bus drivers feel they have a good department, a good transportation director and team.
- The director listens and has an open door policy.
- There is good communication within the department.
- The director is a good spokesperson for the group. He has the best interest of drivers at heart. He speaks up for the drivers at board meetings when needed.
- The drivers are provided with good mechanical service, the mechanics are knowledgeable and there is quick response time on repairs.
- Limited bureaucracy; all the drivers have to do is pick up the phone and call director whenever they need something.
- The new administration is more supportive of the department, especially the vice principal, who is accessible and takes care of business.
- Meetings are held, as needed, before route time when everyone is together. No need to call weekly meetings, because everyone sees each other every day.

- Good teamwork within department. People available to help take up slack.
- Good safety training (20 hours for the initial certification, recertification is 8 hours every 3 years), although they could use more CPR/First Aid training. Training is provided through region 12.
- Background checks are processed once, when hiring a driver.
- Drivers would like to see a monitoring program, such as a temporary monitor for one week to assist with disciplinary issues.
- The transportation department needs to work better with county road crews to have limbs trimmed and roads repaired.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

- Gates are often left open and cars are broken into in the parking lot.
- There is a need for more lights in the student parking lot and on the campus in general at the high school. There are some dark areas.
- A bus lane/student loading zone needs to be created and enforced, perhaps on the road in front of the school. There is currently a yellow curb marker by the building, but parents and delivery trucks park in the lane anyway. The bus lane needs to be monitored by security, not a teacher.
- There is a strong DARE program in place at the schools.
- 2 security officers are on duty during football games, which is helpful.
- There is a School Safety and Health Speakers Bureau through the Safe and Drug Free Schools Program.
- The check-in process at all the schools needs to be looked at (it is not enforced).
- The second floor of the high school has limited escape routes.
- Teachers feel safe in classrooms and on campus.
- Good overall discipline problems.
- The gates from the band hall and athletic area are not always closed when they should be.
- Visitor ID procedure needs to be improved.
- Students staying after school for activities are not supervised properly.
- Classrooms in primary school need to be able to be locked from inside.
- Lott elementary has no phone in older building, poor communication.
- The district does not have a program in place for personal safety.
- Office is pretty good about having visitors wear visitor tags at elementary school.

- There is a good fifth grade drug awareness program in place county-wide.
- Local law enforcement works closely with school and responds to incidents.

Appendix B

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

Demographic Data

(n=32)

*Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding

1.	Gender (Optional)	No Response	Male	Female			
			25%	75%			
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	No Response	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
		6%	66%	9%	16%	0%	3%
3.	How long have you been employed by Rosebud-Lott ISD?						
	1-5 years	6-10% years	11-15 years	16-20% years	20%+ years		
	34%	25%	9%	16%	16%		
4.	Are you a(n):	Administrator	Clerical staffer	Support staffer			
		13%	16%	72%			
5.	How long have you been employed in this capacity by Rosebud-Lott ISD?						
	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years		
	42%	26%	10%	13%	10%		

A. District Organization and Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	9%	34%	38%	12%	6%
2	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	6%	37%	31%	16%	9%
3	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	15%	33%	33%	9%	9%

4	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	16%	28%	44%	12%	0%
5	Central administration is efficient.	16%	41%	31%	6%	6%
6	Central administration supports the educational process.	22%	41%	25%	12%	0%
7	The morale of central administration staff is good.	15%	51%	27%	3%	3%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8	Education is the main priority in our school district.	28%	34%	22%	16%	0%
9	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	12%	53%	28%	3%	3%
10	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	16%	47%	28%	6%	3%
11	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	1%	14%	12%	5%	0%
12	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
	a) Reading	12%	66%	12%	6%	3%
	b) Writing	6%	75%	9%	9%	0%
	c) Mathematics	9%	81%	6%	0%	3%
	d) Science	9%	78%	9%	3%	0%
	e) English or Language Arts	12%	47%	25%	19%	3%

	f) Computer Instruction	6%	78%	6%	9%	0%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	6%	81%	9%	3%	0%
	h) Fine Arts	0%	53%	16%	16%	16%
	i) Physical Education	9%	81%	6%	3%	0%
	j) Business Education	16%	50%	22%	12%	0%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	6%	7%	25%	19%	3%
	l) Foreign Language	3%	59%	19%	19%	0%
13	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a) Library Service	0%	72%	22%	6%	0%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	9%	50%	25%	12%	3%
	c) Special Education	12%	62%	19%	3%	3%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	3%	50%	44%	3%	0%
	e) Dyslexia program	9%	37%	28%	25%	0%
	f) Student mentoring program	0%	25%	44%	28%	3%
	g) Advanced placement program	12%	34%	34%	16%	3%
	h) Literacy program	6%	44%	44%	6%	0%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	3%	42%	30%	9%	15%
	j) Summer school programs	0%	45%	33%	18%	3%
	k) Alternative education programs	6%	50%	25%	16%	3%
	l) "English as a second language" program	6%	47%	38%	9%	0%
	m) Career counseling program	6%	38%	28%	25%	3%

	n) College counseling program	6%	33%	33%	24%	3%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	3%	36%	33%	18%	9%
	p) Drop out prevention program	6%	31%	38%	13%	13%
14	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	6%	34%	31%	19%	9%
15	Teacher turnover is low.	9%	38%	31%	19%	3%
16	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	25%	59%	9%	6%	0%
17	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	6%	31%	41%	22%	0%
18	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	3%	33%	36%	18%	9%
19	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	3%	6%	47%	22%	22%
20	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	3%	28%	50%	9%	9%
21	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	19%	56%	16%	6%	3%
22	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	16%	53%	19%	9%	3%
23	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	22%	63%	13%	3%	0%

C. Personnel

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
24	District salaries are competitive with similar	3%	6%	25%	38%	28%

	positions in the job market.					
25	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	0%	28%	38%	28%	6%
26	Temporary workers are rarely used.	6%	28%	28%	31%	6%
27	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	6%	19%	56%	16%	3%
28	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	0%	16%	50%	28%	6%
29	The district operates an effective staff development program.	6%	24%	49%	18%	3%
30	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	6%	63%	25%	6%	0%
31	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	0%	3%	50%	31%	16%
32	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	3%	13%	50%	22%	13%
33	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	13%	28%	44%	9%	6%
34	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	16%	47%	31%	0%	6%

D. Community Involvement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
35	The district regularly	9%	47%	25%	19%	0%

	communicates with parents.					
36	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	0%	22%	44%	22%	13%
37	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	0%	25%	38%	31%	6%
38	District facilities are open for community use.	3%	16%	44%	19%	19%

E. Facilities Use and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
39	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	0%	18%	36%	27%	18%
40	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	0%	19%	67%	6%	9%
41	Schools are clean.	16%	63%	16%	6%	0%
42	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	22%	53%	16%	9%	0%
43	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	16%	47%	22%	16%	0%
44	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	25%	56%	19%	0%	0%

F. Financial Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
45	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend	3%	25%	63%	0%	9%

	the involvement of principals and teachers.					
46	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	3%	19%	75%	0%	3%
47	The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	0%	16%	72%	6%	6%
48	Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	3%	22%	66%	6%	3%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
49	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	9%	63%	19%	6%	3%
50	Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	13%	41%	38%	3%	6%
51	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	6%	47%	34%	13%	0%
52	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	3%	41%	47%	9%	0%
53	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	9%	72%	13%	3%	3%
54	Textbooks are in good shape.	13%	67%	13%	3%	3%
55	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources for students.	19%	66%	9%	3%	3%

H. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
56	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	19%	38%	28%	16%	0%
57	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	6%	16%	22%	50%	6%
58	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	0%	25%	25%	47%	3%
59	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	9%	41%	34%	6%	9%
60	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	9%	38%	44%	3%	6%
61	A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	16%	50%	25%	3%	6%
62	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	19%	47%	19%	6%	9%

I. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
63	Students regularly use computers.	28%	56%	6%	9%	0%
64	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	19%	63%	9%	9%	0%
65	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	19%	56%	16%	9%	0%
66	Computers are new enough to be useful for student	31%	56%	13%	0%	0%

	instruction.					
67	The district meets students needs in computer fundamentals.	25%	56%	13%	6%	0%
68	The district meets students needs in advanced computer skills.	19%	38%	34%	6%	3%
69	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	34%	56%	9%	0%	0%

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: District Administrative and Support Staff

The following comments convey perception and do not reflect the findings or opinions of the Comptroller or review team.

- We need someone to come in and put education first. Extra-curricular activities are great - my two children have participated in a wide variety over the years. However, education will get them where they need to go - not playing sports or band. Our special programs are hurting. Our district does only what it has to do to say it has the program. My G/T student doesn't even want to participate anymore. They do nothing. Our district is also too concerned with saving. The school board cuts the budget further every year. The baseball team can charter a bus for a one and a half hour trip, but the G/T or AP programs can't take a field trip on the school bus. Dedicated and hard-working non-teachers leave frequently. The pay is low, the hours are filled with all of the odd jobs all day, and the only benefit is health insurance. There is no incentive for the deserving employee vs. the one just showing up. And now teacher's aides are expected to have an associate's degree. Not on our salaries! These aides spend as much time with students as teachers - in some cases more.
- In the past few years the teachers in the Elementary grades have spent too much time drilling the students on TAAS. Whereas, if the children were taught the required curriculum, they would be prepared for the TAAS. For the past several years the district GT program has been lacking any type of structure. It has simply been a nonsense class. Being in GT was simply a title and was not beneficial to the student.
- I am very proud of the Rosebud-Lott ISD. We were very proud that Lott Elementary was awarded an exemplary campus this past year.

- RLISD is the best school district in this area to work for. I enjoy my work, and have a good relationship with teachers and support staff as well. All three of our children graduated from RLISD and I am proud of the education they received here.
- If you are in athletics and good at it you have it made until the season's over. Then you are just back in the system. Athletes are not treated or punished for their actions the same as other students. If you are not an athlete you are treated as a loser. Not all students choose to be athletes. They should be treated with respect as athletes are. All students should be trusted as equally and fairly as others.
- Funds need to be used more on pay raises!
- It's a wonderful school district to work for. There are a lot of things that could be addressed.
- We have a great school district. Our administrators and staff want what is best for our children.
- Funds need to be used more on pay raises!!!
Why are our children so driven on sports, why are they used for profit? Why are they not driven on expecting more out of them for grades. Are we at even Educational level as Cameron Temple? We have enough funds. Why can't we spend more on education? Why didn't the 7th and 8th grades have a school building and lunch room built separate from high school children? Kids are going back to class hungry! Lines are long or run out of food!
- We have had a huge change in administration beginning with the '02 - '03 year, a new superintendent, new high school/junior high school principal and assistant principal. I have answered any questions that pertain to these areas of performance in relation to the new administrators.
- There sometimes are big differences between campuses. I have answered the questions with the junior high/high school campus in mind when there is a large difference.
- A year ago my answers would have been different (worse) but, we have a new Superintendent, Principal, Assistant Principal and maintenance director all of which have made a big difference in improving our district.
- FFA - Agricultural Leadership is poorest of poor and has been for some time.
There are no incentive programs for low income personnel whatsoever.
- Construction management is poor and the architect is not held accountable. Project planning is done without the input from those departments which are affected.
- Special Education is very much in need of attention - Not enough high moral adults working in schools. Too much new changes in top administration last year. Too much Football, other extra

activities for children to feel rested - Needs Community and schools to work with parents so the children and families know how to get help in their daily lives and skills. Thank you for caring. We need more women making decision in education - Women are more nurturing, caring and aware of children needs. Also more male role models with high morals are needed to bring back trust, respect, and less behavior problem. Less Dead ends and more hope for families and children.

Appendix C

TEACHER SURVEY RESULTS

Demographic Data

(n=25)

*Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding

1.	Gender (Optional)	Male	Female	No Response			
		8%	88%	4%			
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	No Response
		88%	0%	0%	0%	0%	12%

3.	How long have you been employed by Rosebud-Lott ISD?	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years
		31%	15%	12%	15%	23%

4.	What grades do you teach this year?				
	Pre-Kindergarten	Kindergarten	First	Second	Third
	1%	3%	6%	1%	6%
	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth
	3%	6%	6%	8%	7%
	Ninth	Tenth	Eleventh	Twelfth	
	13%	14%	14%	14%	

A. District Organization and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	16%	52%	28%	4%	0%
2	School board members	12%	48%	32%	8%	0%

	listen to the opinions and desires of others.					
3	School board members work well with the superintendent.	16%	36%	44%	4%	0%
4	The school board has a good image in the community.	24%	28%	36%	4%	8%
5	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	20%	28%	44%	8%	0%
6	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	24%	24%	48%	4%	0%
7	Central administration is efficient.	24%	48%	28%	0%	0%
8	Central administration supports the educational process.	24%	52%	20%	0%	4%
9	The morale of central administration staff is good.	24%	40%	36%	0%	0%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10	Education is the main priority in our school district.	36%	52%	8%	4%	0%
11	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	16%	60%	12%	12%	0%
12	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	12%	52%	28%	4%	4%
13	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	8%	32%	40%	16%	4%

14	The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	16%	36%	20%	28%	0%
15	The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	12%	32%	28%	28%	0%
16	The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	8%	32%	20%	40%	0%
17	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
	a) Reading	36%	52%	4%	8%	0%
	b) Writing	28%	64%	0%	4%	4%
	c) Mathematics	32%	52%	12%	4%	0%
	d) Science	28%	56%	16%	0%	0%
	e) English or Language Arts	28%	68%	4%	0%	0%
	f) Computer Instruction	20%	56%	8%	12%	4%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	20%	68%	12%	0%	0%
	h) Fine Arts	4%	36%	24%	28%	8%
	i) Physical Education	16%	64%	20%	0%	0%
	j) Business Education	16%	40%	36%	8%	0%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	8%	28%	28%	28%	8%
	l) Foreign Language	12%	40%	32%	16%	0%
18	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a) Library Service	8%	44%	20%	16%	12%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	16%	52%	12%	20%	0%
	c) Special Education	16%	64%	8%	12%	0%

	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	12%	20%	68%	0%	0%
	e) Dyslexia program	16%	48%	24%	8%	4%
	f) Student mentoring program	4%	20%	48%	24%	4%
	g) Advanced placement program	15%	42%	35%	8%	0%
	h) Literacy program	8%	24%	60%	4%	4%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	8%	32%	40%	16%	4%
	j) Summer school programs	12%	40%	24%	20%	4%
	k) Alternative education programs	12%	52%	24%	12%	0%
	l) "English as a second language" program	4%	56%	12%	24%	4%
	m) Career counseling program	4%	36%	32%	28%	0%
	n) College counseling program	8%	36%	32%	24%	0%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	4%	12%	48%	32%	4%
	p) Drop out prevention program	4%	20%	56%	20%	0%
19	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	4%	12%	56%	24%	4%
20	Teacher turnover is low.	12%	32%	24%	24%	0%
21	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	8%	44%	24%	20%	4%
22	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	8%	32%	32%	24%	4%
23	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	4%	0%	24%	40%	32%
24	Teachers are counseled	0%	24%	56%	20%	0%

	about less than satisfactory performance.					
25	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	16%	64%	12%	4%	4%
26	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	28%	36%	12%	24%	0%
27	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	19%	62%	4%	12%	4%
28	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	44%	52%	4%	0%	0%

C. Personnel

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
29	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	0%	12%	12%	56%	20%
30	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	4%	28%	28%	28%	12%
31	Temporary workers are rarely used.	12%	32%	40%	12%	4%
32	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	8%	16%	44%	24%	8%
33	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	4%	12%	36%	44%	4%
34	The district operates an effective staff development program.	4%	52%	28%	16%	0%
35	District employees receive annual personnel	28%	68%	4%	0%	0%

	evaluations.					
36	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	4%	0%	12%	48%	36%
37	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	4%	24%	52%	20%	0%
38	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	8%	48%	44%	0%	0%
39	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	28%	52%	4%	12%	4%

D. Community Involvement

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
40	The district regularly communicates with parents.	16%	76%	8%	0%	0%
41	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	4%	20%	28%	40%	8%
42	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	8%	20%	32%	40%	0%
43	District facilities are open for community use.	8%	40%	32%	16%	4%

E. Facilities Use and Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
44	The district plans facilities far enough in the future to	12%	32%	32%	24%	0%

	support enrollment growth.					
45	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	8%	32%	28%	32%	4%
46	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	4%	20%	72%	4%	0%
47	The quality of new construction is excellent.	4%	24%	60%	12%	0%
48	Schools are clean.	12%	68%	8%	8%	4%
49	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	8%	72%	8%	12%	0%
50	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	8%	60%	12%	20%	0%
51	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	12%	72%	12%	4%	0%

F. Financial Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
52	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	8%	48%	36%	4%	4%
53	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	4%	44%	40%	12%	0%
54	Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	4%	40%	44%	12%	0%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
--	------------------	----------------	-------	------------	----------	-------------------

55	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	8%	76%	8%	8%	0%
56	Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	4%	44%	52%	0%	0%
57	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	8%	60%	16%	16%	0%
58	Vendors are selected competitively.	4%	40%	56%	0%	0%
59	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	4%	32%	32%	28%	4%
60	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	28%	60%	12%	0%	0%
61	Textbooks are in good shape.	12%	60%	16%	12%	0%
62	The school library meets the student needs for books and other resources.	16%	48%	12%	24%	0%

H. Food Services

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
63	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	8%	68%	16%	8%	0%
64	Food is served warm.	12%	68%	16%	4%	0%
65	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	16%	72%	8%	4%	0%
66	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	16%	44%	8%	24%	8%
67	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	12%	76%	8%	4%	0%

68	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	44%	52%	4%	0%	0%
69	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	32%	64%	4%	0%	0%

I. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
70	School disturbances are infrequent.	16%	76%	8%	0%	0%
71	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	24%	56%	20%	0%	0%
72	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	8%	20%	28%	44%	0%
73	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	8%	40%	16%	36%	0%
74	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	8%	52%	36%	4%	0%
75	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	8%	48%	44%	0%	0%
76	A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	8%	64%	20%	8%	0%
77	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	15%	69%	0%	15%	0%
78	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	16%	60%	12%	12%	0%

J. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
--	-------------------------	-----------------------	--------------	-------------------	-----------------	--------------------------

79	Students regularly use computers.	24%	68%	4%	4%	0%
80	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	16%	72%	0%	12%	0%
81	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	8%	80%	0%	8%	4%
82	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	20%	76%	0%	4%	0%
83	The district meets student needs in classes in computer fundamentals.	20%	64%	4%	12%	0%
84	The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.	8%	42%	31%	19%	0%
85	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	28%	60%	4%	8%	0%

Additional Comments: Teachers

The following comments convey the perceptions of those teachers responding to the survey and do not necessarily reflect the findings or opinions of the Comptroller or review team.

- The High School campus has many educational concerns. For one, the special education department is very understaffed for the number of students being served. There is not a special education certified instructor in our Alternative program in which several special ed students attend. These problems have been pointed out on numerous occasions to our administration. We currently have a new principal who is not qualified. He is working towards certification but while doing so he is neglecting his duties on the campus. He has delegated administrative duties to teachers and aides. Many of our students graduate and are nowhere near ready for college. They are not up to date on technology. There are many who have gone on to college and had to ask for help just to open e-mail assignments from their college professors. Our district as a whole has no writing program. Most of our students are taught to write simply for the writing TAAS/TEKS and nothing before (K-3) or after (8th, 12th). We do have a wonderful Advanced placement

program that does prepare students for college but those students could probably do it on their own anyway. Our school board and administration need to be closely investigated.

- This district does not even give recognition for years of service. It has even been said to us that seniority does not matter - You can be placed in a position at anytime. - This was done this last year to three teachers that I know of. I don't know if the other campuses are that way or not. (Two of these teachers had seniority and the one w/less experience got what she wanted.
- School board members listen, but many feel they do not seriously consider what they hear. It seems to be a matter of listening to be able to say they have. We are currently working on writing curriculum guides. They are not provided. Site-based committees are a farce. The board and administrators do not listen to or act on suggestions from the committees. Many teachers refuse to serve on these because they feel it is a waste of time.
- Some of the form questions are not appropriate for or relative to a small rural district - to security personnel etc.
- Rosebud-Lott is a great place to work. I'm speaking of my own campus, of course. I guess my biggest complaint is scheduling to meet all the pull-out and extra activities. I often find it difficult to have all my class at one time to just teach! I also think first grade is too young to identify at-risk children.
- Doing a good job (ie scores) with the money that we spend. Teacher retention is not a priority and teachers who have been with the district are not rewarded. Too much special ed paper work. Some questions paint a negative picture - may, because of a particular situation. We just had a change in Administration - Superintendent, Principal, Assistant Principal, Business Manager, so it is hard to evaluate after only a few weeks/months.
- Students have access to computers in a computer or keyboarding class only. The library does not have any quads in the open area of the library for student use and research. A portable lab is available that can be requested and checked out for classroom use. Extremely low IQ Special Education students and extremely high IQ students (College Bound) and both are not given enough individual instruction because of the class size. In a computer class a teacher can successfully teach upper level students of 20, but when you have four to eight Special Education students in that class, time does not permit individual instruction for Special Education or Gifted students. Both levels of students are affected.
- I actually teach at Lott Elementary which is a part of Rosebud Lott ISD. My daughter does go to Rosebud Lott High School so I'm aware of the high school programs. My only complaint with the district which isn't really a complaint with the district but with the state is that I am a single/divorced teacher with two children in

high school and one in college and after five years of teaching I bring home \$1,500 a month after insurance is taken out - that is the reason our educational system in Texas is in such bad condition. I cannot afford to support my family on my income.

- Educational performances at RLISD has been very good. We have a number of students that go to college/universities. Those in higher level class programs are very well prepared for course loads at major universities.
- Believe that vocational/technological courses need to be taught that will better prepare those students going to work or a technical school. Vocationally we offer Agriculture and Career Family (Home Economics) courses. We do offer BCIS and Web Mastering along w/Keyboarding, Accounting and record keeping, but health related courses need to be taught vocationally. Fine arts is low - band, art classes (8th grade and high school) and theater (which has overcrowded classes). Special Education in the junior high/high school are understaffed doing content mastery with special classes - not enough individualized assistance can be given with over crowded classes or class periods with three different courses going on at the same time with content mastery for those students who are mainstreamed. We are fortunate to have a fairly good staff at our campus, but many times the great ones do not always stay (but a year or two). This school district hires too many coaches - some that teach (maybe) one class (social studies) all day, some that have one preparation of core classes (two to four classes) - and an athletic director who on paper teaches physical education classes but doesn't (more concerned with football - and how to keep his players eligible). Sports - mainly football seems to come first.
- Because we have four campuses, it is difficult to evaluate the district as I am most familiar with just my elementary campus. It would probably be a more effective survey to have separate portions for the lower and secondary levels.
- I feel we have a strong educational program. The faculty and staff work very hard at meeting our student's educational needs. This is the reason I stay at Rosebud-Lott, despite the lower pay for Special Education teachers.
- Since we have all new administration things will probably improve with experience.

Appendix D

PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

Demographic Data

(n=47)

*Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding

1.	Gender (Optional)	Male	Female	No Response			
		28%	64%	9%			
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	No Response
		38%	17%	19%	0%	13%	13%

3.	How long have you lived in Rosebud-Lott ISD?	0-5 years	6-10 years	11 years or more
		28%	21%	51%

4.	What grade level(s) does your child(ren) attend (circle all that apply)?				
	Pre-Kindergarten	Kindergarten	First	Second	Third
	7%	12%	13%	20%	11%
	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth
	1%	5%	4%	5%	1%
	Ninth	Tenth	Eleventh	Twelfth	
7%	7%	3%	4%		

A. District Organization and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	The school board allows	4%	30%	51%	13%	2%

	sufficient time for public input at meetings.					
2	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	6%	32%	34%	21%	6%
3	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	6%	34%	51%	2%	6%
4	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	6%	30%	57%	2%	4%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	The district provides a high quality of services.	4%	55%	19%	17%	4%
6	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	9%	45%	36%	9%	2%
7	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	6%	30%	43%	11%	11%
8	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	2%	34%	47%	9%	9%
9	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
	a) Reading	17%	72%	6%	4%	0%
	b) Writing	17%	62%	6%	11%	4%
	c) Mathematics	17%	68%	6%	9%	0%
	d) Science	15%	70%	6%	9%	0%
	e) English or Language Arts	17%	68%	6%	9%	0%

	f) Computer Instruction	13%	63%	8%	10%	6%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	15%	72%	9%	4%	0%
	h) Fine Arts	11%	36%	15%	15%	23
	i) Physical Education	19%	66%	9%	4%	2%
	j) Business Education	9%	47%	28%	15%	2%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	9%	36%	21%	23%	11%
	l) Foreign Language	9%	34%	23%	28%	6%
10	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a) Library Service	21%	60%	13%	6%	0%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	21%	44%	15%	13%	8%
	c) Special Education	17%	60%	17%	2%	4%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	17%	57%	23%	0%	2%
	e) Dyslexia program	13%	32%	34%	11%	11%
	f) Student mentoring program	13%	26%	38%	13%	11%
	g) Advanced placement program	17%	32%	40%	4%	6%
	h) Literacy program	15%	47%	34%	2%	2%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	21%	9%	45%	19%	6%
	j) Summer school programs	17%	32%	38%	4%	9%
	k) Alternative education programs	15%	33%	44%	4%	4%
	l) "English as a second language" program	17%	28%	49%	4%	2%
	m) Career counseling program	11%	19%	43%	13%	15%

	n) College counseling program	9%	21%	43%	13%	15%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	9%	38%	26%	13%	15%
	p) Drop out prevention program	11%	15%	45%	21%	9%
11	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	26%	15%	21%	23%	15%
12	Teacher turnover is low.	11%	32%	34%	6%	17%
13	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	17%	26%	19%	23%	15%
14	A substitute teacher rarely teaches my child.	6%	55%	23%	6%	9%
15	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	13%	55%	21%	9%	2%
16	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	19%	38%	13%	26%	4%
17	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	28%	47%	9%	13%	4%
18	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	17%	49%	17%	15%	2%
19	The district provides a high quality education.	17%	43%	15%	19%	6%
20	The district has a high quality of teachers.	17%	40%	25%	15%	4%

C. Community Involvement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
21	The district regularly communicates with	19%	32%	11%	30%	9%

	parents.					
22	District facilities are open for community use.	4%	23%	34%	17%	21%
23	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help students and school programs.	4%	34%	30%	17%	15%

D. Facilities Use and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
24	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	9%	36%	23%	13%	19%
25	Schools are clean.	26%	57%	4%	13%	0%
26	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	17%	55%	13%	11%	4%
27	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	15%	51%	17%	13%	4%
28	The district uses very few portable buildings.	36%	47%	17%	0%	0%
29	Emergency maintenance is handled expeditiously.	17%	49%	32%	2%	0%

E. Asset and Risk Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
30	My property tax bill is reasonable for the educational services delivered.	13%	38%	30%	15%	4%
31	Board members and administrators do a good job explaining the use of tax dollars.	4%	21%	34%	21%	19%

F. Financial Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
32	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	13%	17%	53%	11%	6%
33	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	13%	17%	62%	4%	4%
34	The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	4%	17%	57%	15%	6%
35	Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	4%	21%	53%	13%	9%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
36	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	11%	62%	21%	6%	0%
37	Textbooks are in good shape.	19%	57%	17%	4%	2%
38	The school library meets the student needs for books and other resources.	21%	49%	19%	6%	4%

H. Food Services

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
39	My child regularly purchases his/her meal from the cafeteria.	30%	53%	13%	2%	2%
40	The school breakfast program is available to all	26%	55%	6%	11%	2%

	children.					
41	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	4%	51%	21%	17%	6%
42	Food is served warm.	9%	53%	17%	21%	0%
43	Students have enough time to eat.	9%	49%	13%	15%	15%
44	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	15%	70%	6%	6%	2%
45	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	6%	60%	19%	13%	2%
46	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	17%	66%	11%	4%	2%
47	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	23%	51%	17%	9%	0%
48	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	26%	49%	21%	4%	0%

I. Transportation

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
49	My child regularly rides the bus.	13%	13%	32%	30%	13%
50	The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	15%	17%	60%	4%	4%
51	The length of the student's bus ride is reasonable.	13%	30%	51%	2%	4%
52	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	23%	34%	40%	0%	2%
53	The bus stop near my house is safe.	15%	23%	57%	0%	4%
54	The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	17%	28%	53%	0%	2%
55	Buses arrive and depart on time.	13%	38%	47%	0%	2%

56	Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	13%	36%	45%	2%	4%
57	Buses seldom break down.	11%	28%	57%	2%	2%
58	Buses are clean.	13%	30%	53%	2%	2%
59	Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	17%	32%	47%	2%	2%
60	The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	11%	21%	66%	2%	0%

J. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
61	Students feel safe and secure at school.	30%	53%	9%	4%	4%
62	School disturbances are infrequent.	21%	47%	26%	2%	4%
63	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	23%	53%	17%	2%	4%
64	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	15%	28%	6%	43%	9%
65	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	15%	36%	26%	15%	9%
66	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	6%	34%	51%	4%	4%
67	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	6%	31%	54%	4%	4%
68	A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	13%	38%	38%	6%	4%

69	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	17%	49%	17%	9%	9%
70	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	15%	51%	19%	11%	4%

K. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
71	Teachers know how to teach computer science and other technology-related courses.	6%	45%	26%	17%	6%
72	Computers are new enough to be useful to teach students.	23%	68%	9%	0%	0%
73	The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	15%	47%	21%	11%	6%
74	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	15%	34%	26%	13%	13%
75	Students have easy access to the Internet.	17%	47%	23%	13%	0%

Additional Comments: Parents

The following comments convey perception and do not reflect the findings or opinions of the Comptroller or review team.

- I've been here a long time and I see and hear a lot. I do see the school board does not listen to the public. We have a new superintendent and he does not want to listen to any one.
- Dear Mrs. Strayhorn, for the past two years, of which I based my survey on, this school district has been in utter chaos. There were fights everyday sometimes two a day. Disrespect from students to teachers is at an alarming high, due to the fact that there was a lapse of discipline coming from the front office. This caused a turn around in faculty coming and going. One teacher had a stroke three weeks into the school year and was replaced with a substitute teacher for the remainder of the school year. This sub did not teach

the class but rather showed videos for the entire time. (It was a homemaking class).

- The substitute teachers are not taken through training programs, rather just given a room number and maybe left instructions from the teacher. Memos on policies regarding students being able to leave the classroom are not submitted to the subs. In other words, you are to figure it out as you go. The subs are not qualified to teach, so if a child has a question about the assignment, they are left on their own to figure it out.
- Computer classes are a joke. The students have to show the teacher more than is being instructed. The athletic department is based purely on pushes. As a parent, you and your child have to brown nose the coaches in order to receive playing time. No longer is your child to put forth the effort in order to learn self esteem but playing time is based on last name status. If someone in your family was good at sports then naturally the rest of the siblings should be, also. On the whole, I feel we have a handful of teachers who still believe in their job and the students. The AP program is the only program that meets the needs of the college bound student. The need of the average and below average students are not being met.
- Some of this can be blamed on the home environment because I feel not all needs are being met there either.
- For a 2A school, we have an alarming rate of teenage pregnancy-- at least four girls at any given time. One of these was an eighth grade student. The junior and senior high are under one building and I feel due to the age differences that these two schools should be separated, as in two separate locations.
- There are discipline problems on the buses and this is why I drive my child to school. The bus drivers need an extra individual to be on the bus with them so they can drive safely and allow someone else to control the students. Many times, bus drivers are having to pull the buses over to stop fights and horseplay.
- We do not have a dyslexic teacher for the junior and senior levels. An alarming amount of students in this school district fall under this category.
- To sum it up, we have a very disorganized, undisciplined school district and any help would be appreciated.
- I have sent my daughter to school in the same outfits as last year. Once I sent her wearing a cute little flowered 1-piece short outfit that has a skirt around the shorts. She had to wear her sweater over it. It was not revealing and she has worn it on several occasions to school. Last week, I sent her to school in a floral dress that went down to her knees and covered her body. It had small straps around the shoulders and she was told to change her clothes. These clothes are not indecent. They are nice outfits and I believe your

dress code is getting a bit ridiculous. I see children wearing open-toed flip-flop type sandals almost all year and nothing is ever said or done about that. The same thing with the overweight kids that wear shirts that show their unnatural bosom and fat rolls sticking out and yet the parents aren't told not to send their children in skin tight shirts.

- I do not feel our school is adequate teaching our children. I feel that special education children do not receive adequate education. There has been strong inconsistency in discipline.
- As far as education, too many people are falling through the cracks. Our Board of Trustees seems only concerned with filling positions and not hiring quality teachers. We have too many agricultural classes and hardly any fine arts. Our board wants to hold on to every penny rather than using funds to provide the best education possible.
- The district needs to allow students during their senior year to work half a day if they have enough credits completed, or use the half day to take classes at a junior college. Instead they make them stay all day and take classes they do not even need.
- My biggest complaint is that the aides are continually being used as substitute teachers. We also are required to purchase so many supplies each year.
- Items marked "no opinion" I did not know about. I've lived in Rosebud only for a few months. Some of those items did not apply to me or my children because of their ages. I do like this school and school district a lot more than Belton's. This school is great for learning and growing.
- My child will be attending Rosebud Intermediate next year. I am concerned for my child because several parents have taken their children out of that school and sent them to Cameron ISD. These parents have told me they did this because their children were getting sent home with two to three hours of work a day. I was told it was work from that day the students did not get to because they were too busy studying for the TAKS or TAAS test (all year long.). If this is true, my child will be severely discouraged about going to school. Thank you.
- I feel the principal over does his job as far as dress code. A little 6 year old girl wearing a tie up shirt has nothing to do with education. My son was kicked up under his rib and I was not called at work or anything; no note was sent home either. They are watching the wrong thing, (dress code). What about accidents? I went to the school to see about it. He said he was going to return my call and never did. So, they need to enforce other kids behavior than watching their clothing they wear to school. Thank you.
- Summer work program is needed for kids to maybe help keep some out of trouble.

- Until forced to act, the Rosebud-Lott School Board provides nothing but the bare-bones education to the students of this district. There are no vocational programs that would prepare students for careers. (We offer Homemaking and Ag.) The district has no fine arts programs. There is no choral music, no art, no dance. My high school freshman can take theater or concert band to satisfy the fine art requirement for graduation. Neither of my children painted a picture, sang a song, or participated in a school program after 3rd grade because the teachers above that grade level do not teach any fine arts at all, and there is no district wide planning or direction to do so. Our counselors at all levels are a joke. They can't, or won't, counsel troubled students or parents.
- Our school board has one goal - to keep the tax rate where it is today, one of the lowest in the state. They lack insight as to educational goals and planning for the changing needs of students and teachers. If something will cost additional tax dollars, RLISD will never have it, unless the state provides it. Our district was allowed to receive WADA funds that could be spent on technology, but would not use the funds to improve the technology until forced by the state to do so. (The board wanted to save the money.) Our district has a tidy sum in its general fund but none of it will ever be directed toward improving education, or providing fine arts, vocational programs, additional funds for gifted and talented, summer programs for students that did not fail the TAAS test or any other innovative program. I have been to board meetings where parents and teachers have requested such things, to no avail. The site-based committee is a joke also. To serve on such is a waste of time. Before our last DEC visit, I saw results of a parent survey that overwhelmingly expressed the concerns that I have listed. Nothing has been addressed since that time, so that survey was a waste of a parents time. I hope that you have not wasted my time!
- Small schools do not get enough funding from the state. When our children graduate, they are in the top of their college graduating class, teaching starts at home.
- Rosebud-Lott needs to have an automobile mechanics class. That way, some kids will know about vehicles and how they work, and they need women on the school board.
- R-LISD has a new superintendent, high school principal, vice-principal and bookkeeper and they seem to be making changes that are positive. To date, the school board has been dominated by a "good-ole-boys" group more interested in sports and holding down tax rates (3rd lowest in state) than in education. This may be changing. RLISD has very weak arts program (no art in junior high or senior high schools - no vocal music, etc.). The district has plenty of funds to improve, but to date, no vision to do so. The

citizens of the district seem to be getting what they want (good sports entertainment, mediocre education and low tax rates!) as they continue to re-elect the key members of the board.

- I feel that too much budgeted money is spent on boys athletics (varsity football and basketball). Far too little attention is given to Fine Arts and Computer Technology, theater funding for arts programs seems to be extremely low on the district priority list. Up until this year, the G/T program has been lacking for several years. It has not been beneficial to a student to become a member of the GT program.
- The aides are used as substitute teachers on a regular basis. We are asked to purchase excessive amounts of school supplies each year.
- Estoy de acuerdo con la educacion que se les da a los ninos y el cuidado que tiene en ellos.
- Estoy de acuerdo con la educacion que se inparte en la escuela donde estudian mis hijos y el cuidado que tienen con ellos.
- Para mi la educacion en Rosebud lott ISD es muy Buena en todos los aspectos.
- The board and superintendent of Rosebud-Lott ISD are not good leaders for the district. Informal nepotism and politics run rampant, 99 percent of dialogue involves sports, equipment, and vocational programs. Thank God we have great principals to run the elementary campuses! We cannot recruit and retain quality teachers because of the narrow-mindedness of upper administration. They need to listen to the principals at the campuses in Rosebud. They know what they are doing, and are doing it right!
- Rosebud Intermediate has a great principal and staff. High school principal too soon to tell. Rosebud Primary principal highly ineffective; primary teachers "run" the school and the principal; they speak of confidential matters outside of the school and brag about how they "train" their principals. Rosebud Primary principal will not discipline teachers, lets them do what they please. Mood at school is oppressive and many parents are extremely unhappy. Worst school in the district. Parents are considering home school options. Needs an almost complete staff change - it is run by local gossips who don't concern themselves with the rules or TEA guidelines. Help!!

Appendix E

STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS

Demographic Data

(n=89)

*Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding

1.	Gender (Optional)	No Response	Male	Female			
		3%	54%	43%			
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	No Response	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
		53%	18%	15%	7%	0%	6%
3.	What is your classification?	No Response	Junior	Senior			
		3%	38%	59%			

A. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	6%	33%	22%	26%	10%	3%
2	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	3%	33%	21%	20%	16%	7%
3	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	4%	63%	15%	8%	7%	3%
	b) Writing	6%	61%	15%	11%	4%	3%
	c) Mathematics	17%	58%	10%	7%	4%	3%
	d) Science	9%	65%	11%	6%	6%	3%
	e) English or	9%	57%	16%	4%	8%	6%

	Language Arts						
	f) Computer Instruction	3%	54%	18%	11%	9%	4%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	9%	56%	16%	11%	3%	3%
	h) Fine Arts	9%	38%	26%	13%	11%	3%
	i) Physical Education	13%	44%	19%	9%	10%	4%
	j) Business Education	4%	30%	29%	20%	11%	4%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	5%	28%	33%	19%	11%	5%
	l) Foreign Language	3%	33%	18%	20%	19%	7%
4	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a) Library Service	10%	42%	33%	5%	7%	5%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	6%	39%	35%	10%	7%	3%
	c) Special Education1	9%	31%	40%	8%	9%	3%
	d) Student mentoring program	3%	19%	51%	17%	7%	3%
	e) Advanced placement program	9%	39%	33%	8%	8%	3%
	f) Career counseling program	1%	24%	37%	18%	16%	5%
	i) College	1%	23%	35%	23%	16%	3%

	counseling program						
5	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	11%	53%	8%	17%	11%	0%
6	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	11%	49%	18%	15%	7%	0%
7	The district provides a high quality education.	2%	39%	32%	18%	9%	0%
8	The district has high quality teachers.	1%	24%	29%	23%	24%	0%

B. Facilities Use and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
9	Schools are clean.	5%	17%	21%	29%	28%	0%
10	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	2%	27%	37%	20%	14%	0%
11	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	23%	30%	28%	18%	1%	0%
12	Emergency maintenance is handled timely.	0%	30%	35%	19%	16%	0%

C. Purchasing and Warehousing

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
13	There are enough	8%	60%	21%	7%	5%	0%

	textbooks in all my classes.						
14	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	8%	63%	18%	7%	5%	0%
15	Textbooks are in good shape.	6%	25%	32%	26%	12%	0%
16	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	9%	47%	26%	8%	9%	1%

D. Food Services

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
17	The school breakfast program is available to all children.	9%	48%	24%	7%	11%	1%
18	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	0%	9%	13%	24%	55%	0%
19	Food is served warm.	15%	16%	43%	25%	1%	0%
20	Students have enough time to eat.	0%	7%	7%	22%	65%	0%
21	Students eat lunch at the appropriate times of the day.	1%	33%	17%	22%	26%	0%
22	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10	4%	8%	6%	14%	68%	0%

	minutes.						
23	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	14%	38%	19%	16%	14%	0%
24	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	28%	46%	13%	5%	9%	0%
25	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	7%	25%	30%	22%	17%	0%

E. Transportation

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
26	I regularly ride the bus.	5%	7%	18%	24%	47%	1%
27	The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	3%	15%	58%	11%	13%	0%
28	The length of my bus ride is reasonable.	1%	21%	59%	6%	15%	0%
29	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	5%	26%	60%	2%	7%	0%
30	The bus stop near my house is safe.	6%	23%	59%	2%	10%	0%
31	The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	9%	18%	58%	3%	11%	1%
32	Buses arrive and leave on time.	2%	16%	63%	9%	10%	1%

33	Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	3%	14%	60%	13%	10%	0%
34	Buses seldom break down.	5%	19%	55%	8%	13%	1%
35	Buses are clean.	1%	14%	48%	17%	21%	0%
36	Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	7%	19%	59%	7%	8%	1%

F. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
37	I feel safe and secure at school.	6%	42%	26%	16%	10%	1%
38	School disturbances are infrequent.	3%	35%	28%	18%	15%	1%
39	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	24%	38%	26%	3%	8%	1%
40	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	11%	17%	24%	24%	25%	0%
41	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	5%	14%	24%	29%	29%	0%
42	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	2%	36%	39%	11%	11%	0%

43	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	6%	26%	35%	15%	18%	1%
44	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	2%	30%	46%	14%	8%	0%
45	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	6%	19%	29%	19%	27%	0%
46	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	1%	18%	47%	18%	16%	0%

G. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
47	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	3%	28%	18%	25%	25%	0%
48	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	1%	24%	30%	23%	23%	0%
49	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	10%	56%	23%	5%	7%	0%

50	The district offers enough classes in computer fundamentals.	2%	36%	24%	23%	14%	0%
51	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	1%	32%	27%	19%	21%	0%
52	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	7%	43%	17%	17%	17%	0%

Additional Comments: Students

The following comments convey perception and do not reflect the findings or opinions of the Comptroller or review team.

- We need more technology courses, the food needs to be better and we need more time to eat.
- Longer lunch periods, open campus lunch and get rid of boring teachers.
- Get rid of all the teachers that can't get along w/students, nor make the classroom interesting enough to make it where its not boring. Need a longer lunch time OPEN CAMPUS LUNCH!!
- Certain teachers especially are very hard to get along with, they automatically think the student is dumb and they won't listen to reason. We don't get enough time to eat. Our school pays more attention to the small things than the big issues, such as throwing paper to getting three days of OCS.
- I believe that the principals are doing a tremendous job, but some teachers really go over the edge on every little thing.
- About the lunch thing we have 35 minutes to eat and over half that time is spent in the snack bar line or lunch line. Then we don't get to eat right - they rush us and we always get tardies or in trouble.
- The counselor doesn't seem to help enough, it takes too long to get food and we need a longer lunch period.
- This district is terrible. I do not want my kids to go here. This place is like a prison. Really, nobody can stand it. The reason half the people there don't go to college is because they don't know their options. Take a look at the parking lot. You wouldn't want to drive your car through that. They don't handle vandalism properly. They

handle small things with more punishment than big things. The OCS is very unnecessarily cruel.

- The food stinks, don't get enough to eat, cost too much for doubles, don't get enough time to eat.
- I feel Rosebud-Lott has a wonderful education performance. The district has wonderful teachers. I think teachers do a great job on trying to educate the students.
- Teachers need to monitor the cheating tactics more closely.
- I think computer access should be more readily available to students. Our school should also offer more computer classes to help our students to be better prepared for college. I think we need to have someone knowledgeable to help guide us in making college decisions and help us find out information and requirements about colleges. We also do not get enough food at lunch most of the time.
- I feel that we as students don't get to use computers when needed for other classes. Another thing is we need to get some teachers who are interested in the students and are willing to help them have fun and learn them at the same time with their school work. Also the lunch room food needs to be better organized. We need to have more than what is being given. Teachers need to be nicer and less rude, they need to take time and teach. Great principal.
- Could be a cleaner, well taken school, and could light up student parking lot more, so students will feel safe when going to their cars late at night.
- At our school the lunch lines are too long we have only 30 minutes to eat lunch. When the lunch bell rings for lunch to end we are still eating. The food quality is not good either. Our buses are not clean enough to ride, there is dust and spider webs on the buses. Sometimes they even have food on the floor.
- We do not get enough food or enough time to eat. I don't care how fat most kids are.
- Lunch lines are too long and they move too slow. When we finally get our food we don't have enough time to eat. If lines are too long we are told we cannot eat in that line.
- Honestly, I feel like I haven't learned a lot. I study and pay attention, but I feel the teachers could teach us more. I feel our counselor could help me out more w/college issues. Thanks for listening to me.
- Better food to eat, more time to eat, should be able to wear ear rings.
- We do not have enough time between classes to use the restroom. We also do not have anywhere close to enough time to eat lunch. And not enough electives. Not enough food and taste bad!
- I like how the school is, don't change it.

- The cafeteria is a major area of concern for me. The lunch ladies are made not to prepare an adequate amount of food for the number of students. Because of this food shortage, some students are made to wait an indecent amount of time for food or do not get to eat at all. Our school faculty has its share of friendly helpful teachers, although a few cheat to allow dyslexic students to pass over high "A" students, this is also a concern.
- Cafeteria food is not very good. Sometimes we find hair in it.
- The cafeteria needs more and better food and a longer time to eat!
- The cafeteria needs better food with a longer lunch.
- This school needs to perform their duties in the discipline area. Students, especially student athletes, are getting away with far too much.
- Better food.
- I feel this school needs improvement.
- Food in cafeteria needs to be increased in quality. Longer lunch, there is not enough time to eat.
- We also need a little longer lunch period.
- We are planning for college and need more help.
- I believe that our school has good qualities but there is not enough done for work/college bound students. I believe that special-ed students are the ones who need to be on-campus at all times - why do they get to leave and smart people can't go on the work-program - That's stupid!
- Lunch ladies are cool. Spanish needs to be improved.
- Get easier teachers.
- We do not have time between classes to use the restroom. Four minutes isn't enough time to do nothing, and they take all day in the lunch lines. Some of us wait at least 10 or 15 minutes until we eat.
- School is poor. Some new teachers are needed. Teachers disrespect students.
- School should be cleaner and better quality of food.
- Our education is not very sufficient. It could be a lot better if the teachers and staff took more time with the students. A big part of this problem is teachers having double jobs such as being teacher/coach and therefore they don't have time for students. The lunch is so bad that it's not even worth discussing.
- They do not allow you to leave the class at anytime unless you take a tardy.
- We need better food, real hamburgers. Better looking and tasting food - more lunch time.
- This school has major problems, it needs improvement.
- I hate the school and don't care about this school.
- I think that this doesn't involve me because my years are over.

- We really have to wait too long for are lunch and we don't have enough time to eat. The parking lot - (student) is horrible and needs help!!!!
- Too many tardies for everything.
- Thank you for your time.
- Get better teachers.
- Our parking lots need to be better and we need a better counselor. Our school is so dirty: my kids will more than likely not go here unless changes are made.
- Tell the office to lay off the little offenses that get you written up. Get better teachers.
- We need better food more time to eat.
- Cafeteria food is too gross and tastes nasty. It needs to be cheaper and we need to get more food. Need more time for lunch to be able to enjoy it and not scarf it down.
- More could be spent on the food it is not that good. Some of the dress codes are too strict. You need to choose the teachers a little better. I would not mind paying a \$1.50 lunch if I had enough time to eat and food was good. There has been times where I have had 5-10 minutes to eat lunch.
- Same food is served every other day. Cafeteria food is nasty. Wait too long in line. Not fair for students getting in trouble because of certain nationality. Not enough time in between classes. Lockers are too small. Need more classes (advanced) that are of more importance or interests. Need a black history class.
- We don't have enough electives to choose from, they do not have some of our interests in the future. We don't have enough time between classes to use the restroom. The food is not good and it is not enough to get a person full. We don't have enough time to eat. We run out of food and some people don't get to eat.