

Elgin Independent School District

With 2,694 students, Elgin ISD is one of the smaller school districts studied by my Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) team, and slightly more than half of its students are considered economically disadvantaged, presenting unique problems to this district which has to do a lot with its small budget. We found a district with some notable successes, but as with all good districts there are significant challenges, including skyrocketing operational costs and fluctuating student performance.

Teacher hiring has kept pace with student enrollment at an estimated 5 percent increase since the 1996-97 school year. Meanwhile, the number of professional support staff, campus administrators and central administrators and auxiliary staff has grown by more than 28 percent, and the district's budget has grown 39 percent. That is why I am recommending today that the district cut non-teaching staff by 5 percent for a savings of more than \$1 million over the next five years.

One of my 10 Principles for Texas in the 21st Century is to drive more of every education dollar directly into the classroom. And my TSPR team has done just that for Elgin ISD with 41 recommendations that, if fully implemented, could result in net savings of \$1.1 million over the next five years.

Several additional recommendations outlined inside are designed to help the district address its fluctuating test scores on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) and to reduce the performance gap between Anglo, minority and economically disadvantaged students. The key to the district's success will be my recommendation to establish written curriculum standards to create a consistent academic standard over time.

My major recommendations would redirect administrative costs and dedicate dollars to improving the education of our children—our most precious resource. I am confident that school board members, school administrators,

teachers and parents are all committed to making Elgin
ISD the best it can be for their students.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carole Keeton Rylander". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carole Keeton Rylander
Comptroller of Public Accounts

Key Findings and Recommendations

During its five-month review, the Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) examined Elgin ISD operations and interviewed employees, school board members, teachers, students, parents, and community and business leaders. Following are the major proposals TSPR developed to help the district address various issues.

Major Proposals

Personnel

- *Eliminate at least 5 percent of non-teaching positions*—Since 1996-97, Elgin ISD's student enrollment and the number of teachers employed by the district has risen by about 5 percent. Meanwhile, the number of professional support staff, campus administrators, central administrators and auxiliary staff has grown by more than 28 percent. In addition, the district's budget has grown 39 percent— from \$13.4 million in 1996-97 to \$18.6 million in 1999-2000. At a minimum, Elgin ISD should set a goal of reducing the number of auxiliary, administrative and non-instructional support staff by 5 percent; a savings of more than \$1 million over the next five years. When instituting these reductions in force, the district should examine each position to determine the value being added to classroom instruction by the retention of that position.

Student performance

- *Implement a long-range program to narrow the performance gap between Anglo, minority and economically disadvantaged students on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS)*—For example, the performance gap in EISD is narrowing between Anglo students and minority students on the TAAS writing test. However, for economically disadvantaged students the gap is greater now than

it was in 1995-96. In 1999-2000, the performance gap between Anglo and Hispanic students widened by 5.3 percentage points.

- *Increase the emphasis on testing all students and reducing TAAS exemptions for minority students*—TAAS exemptions are extremely high in Elgin ISD. In 1998-99, 29.9 percent of African American students and 23.1 percent of Hispanic students were not tested. These percentages increased substantially from 9.8 percent for African American students and 12.8 percent for Hispanic students in 1997-98. The primary reason cited by principals for the increase in special education exemptions was the inclusion of the results of these students in TAAS scores for the first time in 1999. When in doubt of a student's capabilities, principals were reluctant to qualify them to take the TAAS. Assessing each student's strengths and weaknesses is the first critical step necessary for creating programs to help these children succeed.
- *Establish written curriculum standards to create a consistent academic standard over time*—A key challenge for Elgin ISD is improving student performance. On the 1999-2000 TAAS, Elgin ISD student achievement for all student groups declined in two of three categories at a time when the state results were reaching new highs. Lack of a standard curriculum, no curriculum director and ineffective management all contributed to these poor results. While the district has hired an executive director of Academic Services, it also should develop consistent approaches to delivering adopted curriculum, establish performance benchmarks for each grade level and school, and monitor and evaluate performance. These practices must be institutionalized to avoid future disruptions in student achievement.

Personnel

- *Improve the communication and overall relationship among the board, superintendent and staff, particularly teachers*—Teacher turnover in Elgin ISD is high. From 1995-96 through 1998-99, turnover averaged 17.3 percent per year and reached its

highest level, 23 percent, in 1998-99. During this same period, the average teacher turnover in districts both in the region and the state were 13.5 percent. Teachers identified three key areas contributing to recent turnover—politics by the board and superintendent; the management style of the former superintendent; and overall communication in the district, especially lack of input from teachers and other campus staff. To slow the increasing turnover rate, the district should look to how other districts foster communication and involvement at all organization levels. Elgin ISD should then develop an approach that involves the board, superintendent and district staff, especially teachers.

District Management

- *Establish a site-based decision-making model to guide decision making at all levels*—Since the adoption of the site-based decision-making (SBDM) policy in 1996, four superintendents have served on either a permanent or interim basis. Lacking continuity in leadership, the District Advisory Committee (DAC) met infrequently. Principals chair the committees on each campus to guide and facilitate discussions. Only at the high school was the site-based committee viewed as effective by the principal and committee members. To address these concerns, Elgin ISD should create a district-level, site-based decision-making model and assign specific responsibilities for decision making to the DAC, school staff, campus committees, administrators and the board.

Exemplary Programs and Practices in the Elgin Independent School District

TSPR identified numerous best practices in the Elgin ISD. Through commendations in each chapter, the report highlights model programs, operations and services provided by Elgin ISD administrators, teachers and staff. Below are some of the highlights from the report. Other school districts throughout Texas are encouraged to examine these exemplary programs and services to see if they could be adapted to meet local needs.

- **Job Training**—Students who will not be attending college have several job training course options in areas where local job opportunities abound. Elgin ISD has a number of programs in its Career and Technology courses that are designed to address critical needs areas in the local workforce. For example:
 1. Agricultural Biotechnology is a course designed to introduce the basics of molecular biology.
 2. Intergenerational Professions trains students to be caregivers for individuals and to provide group care for young children and the elderly. This course provides opportunities for supervised workplace experience in addition to the regular classroom instruction.
 3. The Cisco Lab is a two-year telecommunications and networking lab program that prepares students to pass a computer network certification test. Students learn the basics of computer networking, cabling, configuring information routers and troubleshooting problems. With this certification, a student qualifies for employment in an area where there is a critical shortage of qualified workers.
- **Technology in the classroom**—The Teacher Technologist Program, which began in the 2000-01 school year, is designed to maximize the benefits of

educational technology and to provide a direct link between each school and the Technology Department. The teachers selected to participate will receive extensive training not only on how to use technology, but also on how to use technology to teach. The teacher technologist will be expected to work with the teachers at their campus in integrating technology into the classroom.

- **Maintenance outsourcing**–The district's Maintenance Department uses a combination of external vendors and internal staff to cost-effectively meet the needs of the district. While Maintenance Department staff handle most of the routine repairs for the district, the director of maintenance contracts with various vendors for heating, pest control, and ventilating and air conditioning work for units with more than five tons in capacity. The director of Maintenance continually reviews the cost of outside vendors both within the Elgin area and in Austin. Based upon the material needs or the type of labor, the director identifies the lowest cost alternatives.
- **Pre-referral Intervention**–In 1999-2000, the district began a pre-referral intervention process called the Student Needs Team, which is designed to ensure instructional strategies are appropriate for student success prior to referral for special education assessment. Teachers try different strategies to work with an individual student in the classroom, based on input from a team of peers and district experts, before referring the student to special education. The process promotes collaboration among parents, students, schools and district level instructional, support and administrative staff members.

What Is TSPR?

The Texas School Performance Review (TSPR), a program of the Texas Comptroller's office, is the nation's first state-level vehicle designed to improve the management and finances of public school districts.

Since its creation in 1991, TSPR has conducted in-depth, on-site management reviews of 37 Texas school districts serving 1 million students, or 26 percent of the state's 3.9 million public school students. More than \$469 million in five-year net savings have been identified in the previous 37 reviews conducted to date.

These reviews diagnose districts' administrative, organizational, and financial problems and recommend ways to cut costs, increase revenues, reduce overhead, streamline operations, and improve the delivery of educational services. TSPR's overall goal is to ensure that every possible education dollar is directed to the classroom.

A TSPR review is more than a traditional financial audit. Instead, TSPR examines the entire scope of district operations, including organization and management, educational service delivery, personnel management, community involvement, facilities use and management, financial management, asset and risk management, purchasing and warehousing functions, computers and technology, food services, transportation, and safety and security.

Reviews can be requested or districts can be selected for a review. A cross-section of Texas school districts—large and small, wealthy and poor, urban and rural—are selected so that a wide variety of other districts can apply TSPR's recommendations to their own circumstances. Priority is given to districts with a poor academic performance and/or a poor financial performance, and where the greatest number of students will benefit from an audit.

Nearly 90 percent of all recommendations are being voluntarily implemented to date in the 30 districts that

have had more than one year to implement TSPR recommendations.

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

September 13, 2000

The Honorable George W. Bush
The Honorable Rick Perry
The Honorable James E. "Pete" Laney
Members of the 76th Legislature
Commissioner James E. Nelson

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am pleased to present our performance review of the Elgin Independent School District (EISD).

This review is intended to help EISD 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 teacher and children, where it belongs. To aid in this task, I contracted with WCL Enterprises of Katy, Texas.

We have made a number of recommendations to improve EISD's efficiency. We also have highlighted a number of "best practices" in the district's operations--model programs and services provided by EISD's administrators, teachers and staff. This report outlines 41 detailed recommendations that could save EISD more than \$1.5 million over the next five years, while reinvesting \$394,568 to improve educational services and other operations. Net savings are estimated to reach more than \$1.1 million--savings that EISD can redirect into the classroom.

We are grateful for the cooperation of EISD's board, staff, teachers, parents and community members. We commend them for their dedication to improving the educational opportunities for our most precious resource in EISD--our children.

I also am pleased to announce that the report is available on our Web site at <http://www.window.state.tx.us/tspr/elgin/>.

Sincerely,



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2000, the Comptroller's office began a performance review of the Elgin Independent School District (EISD) as part of a countywide project to review the four districts in Bastrop County-Elgin, Bastrop, McDade and Smithville. This review signaled the first time since the initial pilot study in 1991 that the Comptroller has conducted a simultaneous countywide review of all of the districts in a single county.

After nearly five months of work, this report identifies EISD's exemplary programs and suggests concrete ways to improve district operations. If fully implemented, the Comptroller's 41 recommendations could result in net savings of more than \$1.1 million over the next five years.

Improving the Texas School Performance Review

Soon after taking office in January 1999, Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Rylander consulted school district officials, parents and teachers from across Texas and carefully examined past reviews and progress reports to make the Texas School Performance Review (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 52 cents of every education dollar is spent on instruction, Comptroller Rylander's approach is designed to give local school officials in Elgin and in other Texas communities the ability to move more of every education dollar directly into the classroom. Comptroller Rylander 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 Rylander has directed TSPR to serve as a clearinghouse of the best ideas in Texas public education.

Under Comptroller Rylander'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 Rylander 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 toll-free 1-800-531-5441, extension 5-3676, or see the Comptroller's Website at <http://www.window.state.tx.us>.

TSPR in Elgin ISD

Not long after March 27, 2000, when TSPR began its performance review of the Elgin ISD, three key opportunities for improvement quickly surface—a decline in student achievement, an ineffective centralized decision-making process and the challenge to successfully integrate new managers into the organization.

The Comptroller's office selected WCL Enterprises, a consulting firm based in Katy, Texas, to assist the agency with this review. The TSPR team interviewed district employees, school board members, parents, business leaders and community members and held a community meeting in EISD's Intermediate School. To obtain additional comments, the review team conducted focus group sessions with parents, teachers, principals, business leaders and representatives from community organizations. The Comptroller also received letters from a wide array of parents, teachers and community members, and staff received calls to the Comptroller's toll-free hotline.

Thirty-five campus and 8 central administrators and support staff; 15 principals, assistant principals and professional support staff; 79 teachers completed written surveys as part of the review. Details from the surveys and public forums appear in Appendices A through F.

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

EISD selected peer districts for comparisons based on similarities in student enrollment, student performance and community and student demographics. The selected peer districts were Bastrop, Del Valle, Leander, Manor and Taylor. TSPR also compared EISD to district averages in TEA's Region 13 Education Service Center, to which EISD belongs and the state as a whole (**Exhibit 1**).

Exhibit 1
Demographic Characteristics of EISD
and Peer School Districts
1999-2000

District	Student Enrollment	5-Year Change in Enrollment	Racial/Ethnic Percentage				
			Percent Hispanic	Percent African - American	Percent Anglo	Percent Other	Percent Economically Disadvantaged
Elgin	2,694	5.5%	40.2%	13.8%	45.0%	0.7%	51.8%
Bastrop	6,137	14.9%	27.4%	10.5%	61.0%	1.1%	40.8%
Del Valle	6,095	28.4%	60.8%	14.5%	22.9%	1.8%	63.4%
Leander	13,089	46.3%	13.8%	3.1%	80.5%	2.5%	17.5%
Manor	2,484	30.5%	42.4%	20.6%	36.4%	0.6%	52.9%
Taylor	2,950	6.9%	43.4%	18.1%	37.8%	0.6%	50.6%
Region 13	264,791	14.1%	33.0%	9.8%	54.6%	2.6%	35.7%
State	4,002,227	6.8%	39.5%	14.4%	43.7%	2.9%	48.9%

Source: Texas Education Agency, 1994-95 through 1998-99 Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS).

During its five-month review of the district, TSPR developed 41 recommendations to improve operations and save taxpayers \$1.5 million by 2004-05. Cumulative net savings from all recommendations (savings less recommended investments) would reach more than \$1.1 million by 2004-05.

A detailed list of costs and savings by recommendation appears in **Exhibit 3**. Many TSPR recommendations would not have a direct financial impact but would improve the district's overall operations.

Acknowledgments

The Comptroller's office and WCL Enterprises wish to express appreciation to the EISD Board of Trustees, former Superintendent Kelt Cooper, district employees, students, parents and community residents who helped during the review. Special thanks are due to Marchelle Sutton, secretary to the superintendent, who acted as EISD's liaisons by arranging for office space, equipment and meeting rooms and otherwise accommodating the review team's needs.

Elgin ISD

EISD served 2,694 students during 1999-2000, a nearly static growth from the 1998-99 enrollment of 2,638. EISD has one high school, one middle school, one elementary school and a pre-K campus and an alternative education campus for secondary and elementary students for a total of 5 campuses.

From 1995-96 to 1999-2000, EISD's property value of \$129,236 per student is 34.8 percent lower than the state average of \$198,149 per student.

Forty percent of EISD's students are Hispanic, 13.8 percent are African-American, 45.2 percent are Anglo and less than one percent are classified as Other. 51.8 percent of EISD's students were classified economically disadvantaged in 1999-2000.

In 1995-96, EISD had zero "low-performing" schools and one recognized school, using TEA's measurement criteria. In 1999-2000, the district received an "Academically Acceptable" rating from TEA with no low-performing schools.

In 1998-99, 77.7 percent of all EISD students passed the TAAS compared to 53.4 percent in 1994-95.

In 1998-99, 57.9 percent of African American students passed the TAAS compared to 21.8 percent in 1994-95; 69.9 percent of Hispanic students passed the TAAS in 1994-95, compared to 36.9 percent in 1994-95; and 66.8 percent of economically disadvantaged students passed the TAAS in 1998-99, compared to 35.9 percent in 1994-95.

During 1999-2000, the district employed a staff of 381 employees, with teachers accounting for 200 or 52.4 percent of EISD staffing. The district had expenditures of \$18.5 million in 1999-2000. Twenty-seven percent of EISD's revenues were generated locally, 63.5 percent came from the state

and 3.8 percent came from the federal government. Some 6.1 percent came from other sources.

In 1998-99, EISD spent 52.3 percent of every education dollar in classroom instruction. In 1999-2000, that number increased to 53.2 percent.

Exemplary Programs and Practices

TSPR identified numerous "best practices" in EISD. Through commendations in each chapter, the report highlights model programs, operations and services provided by EISD 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 local needs. TSPR's commendations are listed below.

- Elgin has a number of initiatives to address the needs of its non-college bound students, while also addressing critical needs areas in the workforce. Agricultural Biotechnology is a unique Career and Technology course designed to introduce the basics of molecular biology. Intergenerational Professions trains students to be care givers for individuals and group care of young children and the elderly. This course provides opportunities for supervised workplace experience in addition to the regular classroom instruction. The Cisco Lab is a two-year telecommunications and networking lab program that prepares students to pass a computer network certification test. Students learn the basics of computer networking, cabling, configuring information routers and troubleshooting problems. With this certification, a student qualifies for employment in an area where there is a critical shortage of qualified workers.
- In 1999-2000, the district began a pre-referral intervention process called Student Needs Team, which is designed to ensure instructional strategies are appropriate for student success prior to referral for special education assessment. Teachers try different strategies in the classroom based on input from a team of peers and district experts before referring the student for special education. The process promotes collaboration among parents, students, schools and district level instructional, support and administrative staff members.
- EISD's Maintenance Department uses a combination of external vendors and internal staff to cost-effectively meet the needs of the district. While Maintenance Department staff handle most of the routine repairs for the district, the director of Maintenance contracts with various vendors for heating, ventilating and air conditioning work for units with more than five tons in capacity

and also for pest control. The director of Maintenance continually reviews the cost of outside vendors both within the Elgin area and in Austin. Based upon the material need, or the type of labor, the director identifies the lowest cost alternatives.

- The Teacher Technologist Program, which began in the 2000-01 school year, is designed to maximize the benefits of educational technology and to provide a direct link between each school and the Technology Department. The teachers selected to participate will receive extensive training not only on how to use technology, but also on how to use technology to teach. The teacher technologist will be expected to work with the teachers at their campus in integrating technology into the classroom.

Key Findings and Recommendations

TSPR's recommendations emphasize improved student achievement; successful integration of new managers into the organization and decentralized decision-making.

District Staffing: The primary mission of any school district is the education of students. Since 1996-97, EISD's student enrollment and the number of teachers employed by the district has risen by only about 5 percent. Meanwhile, the number of professional support staff, campus administrators, central administrators and auxiliary staff has grown by more than 28 percent and EISD's budget has grown 39 percent, from \$13.4 million to \$18.6 million in 1999-2000. At a minimum, EISD should set a goal of reducing the number of auxiliary, administrative and non-instructional support staff by 5 percent; a savings of more than \$1 million over the next five years. When instituting these reductions in force, the district should examine each position to determine the value being added to classroom instruction by the retention of that position.

Site-based Decision-making: Since the adoption of the site-based decision-making (SBDM) policy in 1996, four superintendents have served on either a permanent or interim basis. Lacking a continuity in leadership, the district advisory committees (DAC) have met infrequently. Principals chair the committees on each campus and guide and facilitate discussions. Only at the high school was the site-based committee viewed as effective by the principal and committee members. To address these concerns, EISD should create a district-level, site-based decision-making model assigning specific responsibilities for decision making to the district advisory committee, the school staff, campus committees, administrators and the board.

Student Performance: A key challenge for EISD is improving student performance. On the 1999-2000 TAAS, EISD student achievement for all

student groups in two of three categories declined at a time when the state results were reaching new highs. Lack of a standard curriculum, no curriculum director and ineffective management all contributed to these past results. While the district has hired an executive director of Academic Services, it should develop consistent approaches to delivering adopted curriculum, establish performance benchmarks for each grade level and school, and monitor and evaluate performance. These practices must be institutionalized to avoid future disruptions in student achievement.

Closing Performance Gap: EISD also is having difficulty with closing the performance gap between Anglo students and minority and economically disadvantaged students. For example, while the performance gap has narrowed between Anglo students and minority students on the TAAS writing test, for economically disadvantaged students the gap is greater now than it was in 1995-96. In 1999-2000, the performance gap between Anglo and Hispanic students widened by 5.3 percentage points. The district must implement programs designed to narrow the performance gap between Anglo, minority and economically disadvantaged students.

TAAS Exemptions: Finally, TAAS exemptions are extremely high in EISD. In 1998-99, 29.9 percent of African American students and 23.1 percent of Hispanic students were not tested. These percentages increased substantially from 9.8 percent for African American students and 12.8 percent for Hispanic students in 1997-98. The primary reason cited by principals for the increase in special education exemptions was the inclusion of the results of these students in TAAS scores for the first time in 1999. When in doubt of a student's capabilities, principals were more reluctant to qualify them to take the TAAS. The district must increase the emphasis on testing all students and reducing TAAS exemptions for minority students. Assessing each student's strengths and weaknesses are the first critical step necessary to creating programs that can help those children succeed.

Personnel Management: Teacher turnover in EISD is high. From 1995-96 through 1998-99, turnover averaged 17.3 percent per year and reached its highest level, 23 percent, in 1998-99. During this same period, the average teacher turnover in districts in Region 13 and statewide was 13.5 percent. Teachers identified three key areas contributing to recent turnover-politics by the board and superintendent; the management style of the superintendent; and overall communication in the district, especially lack of input from teachers and other campus staff. To slow the increasing turnover rate, the district must evaluate the efforts of other districts to foster communication and involvement at all organization levels, and develop an approach that involves the board, superintendent and district staff, especially teachers.

Savings and Investment Requirements

Many TSPR's recommendations would result in savings and increased revenue that could be used 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.

Full implementation of the recommendations in this report could produce net savings of more than \$157,813 in the first year (**Exhibit 2**). If all TSPR recommendations are implemented, EISD could achieve total net savings of more than \$1.1 million by 2004-05.

Exhibit 2 Summary of Net Savings TSPR Review of Elgin Independent School District

Year	Total
2000-01 Initial Annual Net Savings	\$157,813
2001-02 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$261,845
2002-03 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$211,845
2003-04 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$261,845
2004-05 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$261,845
One Time Net Savings/(Costs)	(\$9,360)
TOTAL SAVINGS PROJECTED FOR 2000-2005	\$1,145,833

A detailed list of costs and savings by recommendation appears in **Exhibit 3**. The page number for each recommendation is listed in the summary chart for reference purposes. Detailed implementation strategies, timelines and the estimates of fiscal impact follow each recommendation in this report. The implementation section associated with each recommendation highlights the actions necessary to achieve the proposed results. Some items should be implemented immediately, some over the next year or two and some over several years.

TSPR recommends the EISD board ask district administrators to review the recommendations, develop an implementation plan and monitor its progress. As always, TSPR staff is available to help implement proposals.

Exhibit 3 Summary of Costs and Savings by Recommendation

Recommendation	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	Total 5-	One
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							Year (Costs) or Savings	Time (Costs) or Savings
Chapter 1 District Organization and Management								
1	Reduce the number of non-teaching staff in EISD. p. 23	\$112,000	\$224,000	\$224,000	\$224,000	\$224,000	\$1,008,000	\$0
2	Tie the allocation of resources to the District and Campus Improvement Plans. p. 25	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3	Create a district level, site-based decision-making model assigning specific responsibilities for decision-making to the district advisory committee, the school staff, campus committees, administrators and the board. p. 29	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4	Publish a district newsletter each six weeks and hold semi-annual community exchanges. p. 31	(\$5,304)	(\$5,304)	(\$5,304)	(\$5,304)	(\$5,304)	(\$26,520)	\$0
5	Post board agendas, board briefs and upcoming events on the EISD Web site. p. 33	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
6	Revise the responsibilities of the Community Education coordinator and develop a Volunteer/Community Involvement plan to	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	strengthen the parental involvement program. p. 35							
	Totals-Chapter 1	\$106,696	\$218,696	\$218,696	\$218,696	\$218,696	\$981,480	\$0
Chapter 2 Educational Service Delivery								
7	Develop consistent approaches to delivering adopted curriculum, establish performance benchmarks for each grade level and school and monitor and evaluate performance. p. 55	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8	Implement programs designed to narrow the performance gap between Anglo, minority and economically disadvantaged students. p. 58	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$5,000)
9	Implement plans to reduce TAAS exemptions for minority students and monitor results. p. 62	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
10	Develop a formal program evaluation process, clearly define roles and responsibilities and provide trained staff to lead the program. p. 68	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
11	Evaluate programs funded with compensatory education funds and direct funds to successful programs	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	and areas of greatest need. p. 72							
12	Evaluate the ESL program and make changes to better meet the needs of ESL students. p. 77	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
13	Amend G/T assessment criteria to ensure that all student populations have access to G/T assessment and services. p. 84	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$860)
14	Develop a standardized approach to applying discipline in each EISD school. p. 97	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Totals-Chapter 2	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$5,860)
Chapter 3 Personnel Management								
15	Evaluate the efforts of other districts to foster communication and involvement at all organizational levels and develop an approach that involves the board, superintendent and district staff, especially teachers. p. 109	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
16	Develop written information that clearly defines the basis of the index system and how the index multipliers are determined. p. 114	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
17	Adjust all EISD	\$0	(\$26,772)	(\$26,772)	(\$26,772)	(\$26,772)	(\$107,088)	\$0

	salaries to the level required for the position based upon the salary schedule adopted by the district. p. 116							
18	Integrate the benefits information with the payroll system. p. 117	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Totals-Chapter 3	\$0	(\$26,772)	(\$26,772)	(\$26,772)	(\$26,772)	(\$107,088)	\$0
Chapter 4 Facilities Use and Management								
19	Develop a long-range facilities master plan. p. 126	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
20	Evaluate the quality of current maintenance work, identify opportunities to improve service and develop a plan to implement changes. p. 131	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
21	Eliminate one custodial floater position and hire two part-time custodians. p. 135	\$8,974	\$8,974	\$8,974	\$8,974	\$8,974	\$44,870	\$0
22	Have SECO conduct an energy management audit of all EISD facilities that do not have installed controls. p. 136	\$23,152	\$46,305	\$46,305	\$46,305	\$46,305	\$208,372	\$0
	Totals-Chapter 4	\$32,126	\$55,279	\$55,279	\$55,279	\$55,279	\$253,242	\$0
Chapter 5 Financial Management								
23	Settle the successor-in-interest for the Bastrop County Education District among participating	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	districts to reduce administrative time and effort in accounting for this activity. p.153							
24	Continue developing the implementation strategy for GASB Statement No. 34 to meet annual external financial reporting guidelines and TEA's regulatory reporting requirements. p. 157	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
25	Contract for payroll processing. p. 158	\$5,000	\$9,999	\$9,999	\$9,999	\$9,999	\$44,996	\$0
26	Modify the depository agreement and cash and investment policies to provide for a sweep of idle cash balances into higher yielding investments on an overnight basis. p. 161	\$0	\$9,676	\$9,676	\$9,676	\$9,676	\$38,704	\$0
27	Make arrangements with the depository bank to convert existing accounts payable and payroll clearing accounts to controlled disbursement accounts to take advantage of increased clearing times for checks and the ability to fund only checks cleared each day. p. 163	\$366	\$628	\$628	\$628	\$628	\$2,878	\$0
28	Revise daily investment activities to allow	\$13,625	\$27,251	\$27,251	\$27,251	\$27,251	\$122,629	\$0

	diversification of the portfolio to take advantage of higher yielding securities. p. 164							
29	Establish procedures to ensure compliance with all state and local purchasing laws and policies. p. 172	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
30	Automate the purchase requisition and order process. p. 174	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
31	Create and distribute a districtwide purchasing procedures manual. p. 175	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
32	Establish an interlocal agreement with other school districts in Bastrop County in order to make purchases using each other's bids. p. 176	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Totals-Chapter 5	\$18,991	\$47,554	\$47,554	\$47,554	\$47,554	\$209,207	\$0
Chapter 6 Operations								
33	Develop performance expectation for Child Nutrition employees. p. 181	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
34	Eliminate operational barriers and implement new programs to increase meal participation. p. 184	\$0	\$17,488	\$17,488	\$17,488	\$17,488	\$69,952	\$0
35	Develop an accurate, detailed and timely department budgeting and financial	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	reporting system, and provide regular reports to kitchen managers. p. 190							
36	Comply with the state and federal laws regarding proper sanitation and health standards in EISD kitchens. p.191	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
37	Modify the existing technology plan to specify tasks and dates that will accomplish the district's goals and spending priorities. p. 196	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
38	Develop a comprehensive disaster recovery plan and test it. p. 197	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
39	Develop a technology forum among all Bastrop County districts. p. 201	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
40	Adopt a 15-year bus replacement policy. p. 215	\$0	(\$50,000)	(\$100,000)	(\$50,000)	(\$50,000)	(\$250,000)	\$0
41	Purchase and implement an automated fleet maintenance system. p. 216	\$0	(\$400)	(\$400)	(\$400)	(\$400)	(\$1,600)	(\$3,500)
	Totals-Chapter 6	\$0	(\$32,912)	(\$82,912)	(\$32,912)	(\$32,912)	(\$181,648)	(\$3,500)
	TOTAL SAVINGS	\$163,117	\$344,321	\$344,321	\$344,321	\$344,321	\$1,540,401	\$0
	TOTAL COSTS	(\$5,304)	(\$82,476)	(\$132,476)	(\$82,476)	(\$82,476)	(\$385,208)	(\$9,360)
	NET SAVINGS (COSTS)	\$157,813	\$261,845	\$211,845	\$261,845	\$261,845	\$1,155,193	(\$9,360)

	5 Year Gross Savings	\$1,540,401	
	5 Year Gross Costs	(\$394,568)	
	Grand Total	\$1,145,833	

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter describes the organization and management of the Elgin Independent School District (EISD) in the following areas:

- A. Management, Planning and Site-Based Decision Making
- B. External and Internal Communication
- C. Community and Parental Involvement

The organization and management of a school district involves cooperation between elected members of the Board of Trustees and staff of the district. The board's role is to set goals and objectives to be achieved by the district in both instructional and operational areas, determine the policies by which the district will be governed, approve the plans to implement those policies, provide the funding sources necessary to carry out the plans and evaluate the results.

The staff is responsible for managing the day-to-day implementation of the plans approved by the board and to recommend modifications necessary to ensure the most effective operation of all district programs and functions. To undertake this management role, the superintendent, as the chief executive officer of the district, recommends the level of staffing and amount of resources necessary to run the operations and to accomplish the goals and objectives set forth by the board.

BACKGROUND

Elgin ISD has the responsibility to provide public education for all the students who live within the 169 square miles of the district. The district provides these educational opportunities through its four schools and one alternative school. In 1998-99, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) rated EISD Academically Acceptable. The September 1999 enrollment was 2,638 students. The district is served by Regional Education Service Center 13 (Region 13), which is located in Austin.

Each Texas school district is governed by an elected board of trustees that governs and oversees the management of the schools. School board members are elected by district residents either at-large, districtwide or from single-member districts covering only a portion of the school district.

Each board derives its legal status from the Texas Constitution and the Texas Legislature. The board must function in accordance with applicable state and federal statutes, controlling court decisions and applicable regulations pursuant to state and federal law. Under Section 11.151 of the

Texas Education Code, each board has specific statutory powers and duties, including:

- Governing and overseeing the management of the public schools in the district;
- Adopting such rules, regulations and bylaws as the board may deem proper;
- Approving a district-developed plan for site-based decision making and provide for its implementation;
- Levying and collecting taxes and issuing bonds;
- Selecting tax officials, as appropriate to the district's need;
- Preparing, adopting and filing a budget for the next succeeding fiscal year, and filing a report of disbursements and receipts for the preceding fiscal year;
- Having district fiscal accounts audited at district expense by a Texas certified or public accountant holding a permit from the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy following the close of each fiscal year;
- Publishing an annual report describing the district's educational performance, including campus performance objectives and the progress of each campus toward these objectives;
- Receiving bequests and donations or other money coming legally into its hands in the name of the district;
- Selecting a depository for district funds;
- Ordering elections, canvassing the returns, declaring results and issuing certificates of election as required by law;
- Disposing of property no longer necessary for the operation of the school district;
- Acquiring and holding real and personal property in the name of the district; and
- Holding all powers and duties not specifically delegated by statute to TEA or the State Board of Education.

The EISD board consists of seven members elected by single-member districts for three-year terms (**Exhibit 1-1**).

Elections are held each year on the first Saturday in May.

**Exhibit 1-1
EISD Board Members
August 2000**

Board Member	Board Position	Term Expires	Occupation
Harry Grett	President	Mav	Consultant

		2001	
Roy Reyna	Vice-President	May 2002	Texas Department of Public Safety
Dorothy McCarther	Secretary	May 2002	Private business owner
Rosanna Abreo	Member	May 2001	Texas Department of Public Safety
Gary Null	Parliamentarian	May 2003	Outside sales representative
Robert Mauk, Jr.	Member	May 2003	Retired/wrecker service operator
David Graham	Member	May 2001	Private business owner

Source: EISD superintendent.

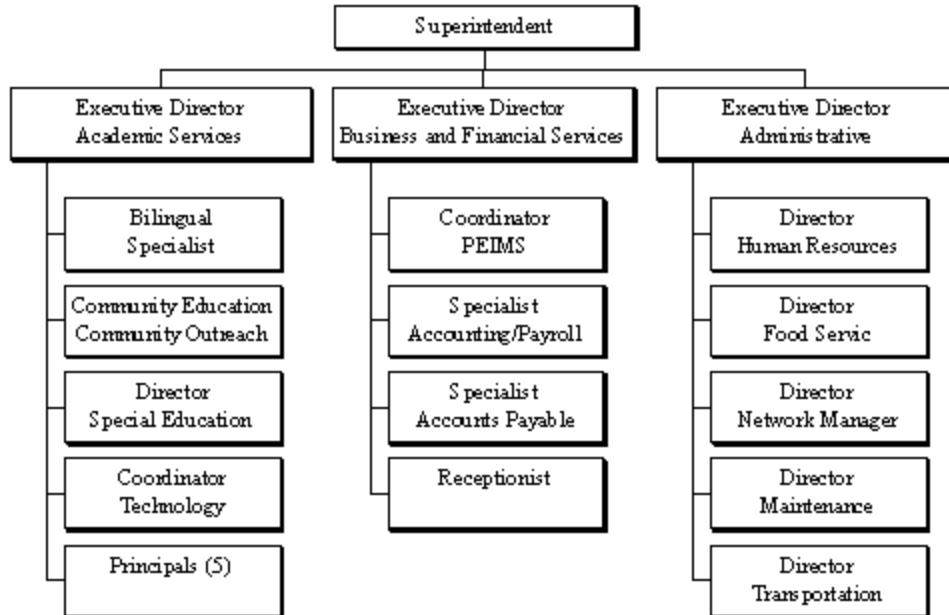
The board meets monthly on the third Monday at 7:00 p.m. in the Elgin High School library. Following the installation of new members each year, officers are elected by the board.

EISD is managed by a superintendent and senior staff members who report to the superintendent. As specified by Section 11.201 of the Texas Education Code, the superintendent is primarily responsible for:

- Administrative responsibility for the planning, operation, supervision and evaluation of the educational programs, services and facilities of the district and for annual performance appraisals of the staff;
- Administrative authority and responsibility for the assignment and evaluation of all district personnel;
- Termination or suspension of staff members or the non-renewal of staff members' term contracts;
- Day-to-day management of district operations;
- Preparation of district budgets;
- Preparation of policy recommendations for the board and administration of the implementation of adopted policies;
- Development of appropriate administrative regulations to implement board policies;
- Leadership in attainment of student performance; and
- Organization of the district's central administration.

Exhibit 1-2 presents EISD's current organization.

**Exhibit 1-2
EISD Organization for 2000-01**



Source: EISD superintendent.

TEA intervened at one point in the mid-1990s and assigned a monitor to the district when it was slow to hire a superintendent. At the time, the board was attempting to manage the district, and one school in EISD was rated low-performing. The district has faced many challenges over time.

EISD selected peer district for comparative purposes based upon certain similarities in student enrollment, student performance and community and student demographics. The districts chosen were Bastrop, Del Valle, Leander, Manor and Taylor.

Chapter 1

A. MANAGEMENT, PLANNING AND SITE-BASED DECISION MAKING

Planning and budgeting are critical to effective management. Planning enables a district to define goals and objectives, establish priorities, select appropriate implementation strategies and determine critical measures of performance in achieving goals and objectives.

The budget process should follow the plan's development and implementation by allocating resources necessary to reaching the performance targets established in the plan. When coordinated properly, the combination of planning and budgeting reduces confusion and conflict regarding how scarce resources are distributed.

School districts with effective planning systems divide the process into a series of key components that provide information used to develop the plan, update it or implement plan priorities. These key components include annual district priorities; campus improvement plans; a regular program evaluation cycle, work plans, ongoing evaluation of the personnel implementing the plan, budget tied to the priorities in the plan and a management information system.

Annual priorities are adopted by the board each year and indicate what the district will do in a given year to achieve the district's goals and objectives. The plan must set priorities and clearly measurable objectives, assign responsibility for implementation at both the district and campus level and define a mechanism by which the accomplishment of the priorities are measured.

The program cycle indicates what will happen in each teaching or support program, and whether new programs or modifications are necessary.

Work plans define the responsibilities for plan implementation and monitoring at all levels. They provide objective-specific tasks and identify which department and position are to be held accountable for completing each task.

The budget is tied to each priority so that adequate resources will be assigned to accomplish each one. Budget information is readily communicated to the public under the established priorities of the district, not the TEA's accounting system.

The personnel evaluation system measures how well district personnel performed in accomplishing objectives. An annual evaluation summary provides information for individual and system improvement.

The management information system reflects how well the total system has performed in satisfying the priorities of the plan.

In Texas, Section 11.252 of the Texas Education Code provides requirements for district-level planning and decision making. Each school district must have a district improvement plan(DIP) that is developed, evaluated and revised annually. The plan must include provisions for the following:

- A comprehensive needs assessment addressing student performance on the Academic Excellence Indicators (AEI);
- Measurable district performance objectives for all appropriate AEI for all student populations;
- Strategies for improvement of student performance;
- Resources needed to implement strategies;
- Staff responsible for ensuring the accomplishment of each strategy;
- Timelines for monitoring implementation; and
- Criteria for determining whether the strategies are improving student performance.

The DIP must be developed by a districtwide committee comprised of board members, district staff, principals, teachers and citizens. Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs) are developed on each campus, are used to identify what each school will do in a given year to achieve district and school objectives.

Section 21 of the Texas Education Code describes certain requirements associated with implementing site-based decision making (SBDM) in Texas school districts. The major theme of SBDM is the empowerment of students, parents, teachers, principals and schools. The code describes requirements for annual district and campus improvement plans, composition of district and campus decision-making councils, election of representatives to each council, terms of office, meetings and general responsibilities.

EISD adopted a policy in November 1996 to create district and school-based collaborative decision-making committees in compliance with state law. These policies provide authorization, scope of responsibility, composition of committees, electoral processes for membership selection and approval processes.

In EISD, the districtwide committee is called the District Advisory Committee. The committee consists of representatives of campus-based professional staff, district-level professional staff, parents, representatives from the business community and non-parent community residents. Two-thirds of the district and campus professional staff are teachers. The remaining one-third is professional non-teaching district and campus-level staff.

In EISD, Campus Improvement Plans are developed by the SBDM on each campus. The campus committee consists of representatives of campus-based professional staff, district-level professional staff, parents, and community and business representatives.

FINDING

The challenge to EISD, as one board member stated, is "to stage change properly." More specifically, the EISD board and its superintendent have the responsibility to provide leadership for the Elgin community as it addresses the following issues: a growing student population; the need for new and/or renovated facilities; the need to strengthen the curriculum and program offerings to meet the needs of all students; the challenge to recruit, retain and reward quality teachers and staff members; and the need to involve the EISD staff, parents and residents in the district's decision-making process in ways that will build trust and confidence in the district's leadership.

These issues must be addressed with limited resources. Comments from focus group participants, EISD staff and community members, and information shared through meetings with community groups highlight these issues:

- The district needs better communication and closer cooperation/involvement with the community;
- The district needs parent participation on school premises;
- The district needs to offer more programs and opportunities for the most advanced students, so they can excel;
- The district needs both a low tax base and more money for its operations;
- The most important need for the district is for an aligned K-12 curriculum;
- The need to maintain and upgrade facilities and grounds;
- The morale of teachers is very low, especially among experienced teachers;
- The community is growing faster than the schools. Facility issues must be addressed;

- The middle school will move into the old high school. Is the old high school too small;
- Elgin ISD is not attracting the best teachers;
- There is a high rate of teacher turnover;
- There is a lack of opportunity for minority students;
- The school board could be less political;
- The business management of the schools needs improvement;
- Over-crowded schools are a challenge;
- More effective means of communication are needed;
- The Chamber of Commerce and the service clubs are pushers improvement; and
- The district needs to spend less money on sports and more on technology and science.

In September 1999, using a facilitator from the TASB, the EISD board and superintendent began a more formal approach to addressing these issues when the board approved eight strategic goals for the district. These goals represented the priorities identified by board members, EISD staff and responses to a questionnaire submitted by 5,000 families in the Elgin community.

From this process, the board and superintendent developed a vision statement, set of core values, a mission statement, eight goals and a series of expected student outcomes (**Exhibit 1-3**).

Exhibit 1-3
EISD Strategic Planning Process Results
September 1999

Plan Element	Description
Vision	
Our students...	<p>Are good neighbors who are actively involved in their community.</p> <p>Have unlimited opportunities to explore career options, a vision for their future and the means to achieve their dreams.</p> <p>Receive scholarships and assistance to achieve their dreams.</p> <p>Have the skills to pursue higher education or become gainfully employed.</p> <p>Are confident, successful and productive learners who take pride in themselves and their accomplishments and are well</p>

	<p>prepared to succeed in life.</p> <p>Are sensitive to the needs of others, take pride in themselves, are kind and show mutual respect.</p>
Our homes, classrooms and campuses...	<p>Work together to ensure that our children come to school ready to continue learning.</p> <p>Provide caring people who meet the needs of each student.</p> <p>Are safe places where people interact and question in an open and supportive environment of mutual respect.</p> <p>Are equipped with state-of-the-art technology available to everyone.</p>
Our supportive environment is such that...	<p>In the community of Elgin the children are our top priority.</p> <p>The community and district work together harmoniously as equal partners to provide top quality education.</p> <p>Outstanding facilities and resources are provided to support maximum student achievement.</p> <p>Our community and district actively recruit and retain the best qualified people.</p>
Values	<p>Elgin is a caring community.</p> <p>Elgin is a hard-working community.</p> <p>Greater freedom requires greater responsibility.</p> <p>Elgin values learning.</p> <p>Elgin promotes a safe community.</p> <p>Developing good citizens contributes to a healthy community.</p>
Mission	<p>The mission of Elgin ISD, as the coordinator and educational leader, is to work in concert with the community to provide a high-quality education for all children.</p>

<p>Goals</p>	<p>Open, accurate and timely communication throughout the district and community.</p> <p>An assessment system that provides timely and useful information on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>A challenging and aligned curriculum.</p> <p>One hundred percent graduation rate.</p> <p>A supportive community fully involved in our schools.</p> <p>A quality education that meets the needs of the individual students.</p> <p>Facilities and resources that meet the needs of our district.</p> <p>Parents who are informed and actively involved in the education of our children.</p>
<p>Expected student outcomes</p>	<p>None of the students will drop out and all of our seniors will graduate.</p> <p>Six months after graduation, our graduates will be gainfully employed (at greater than minimum wage) or enrolled in a college or trade school.</p> <p>By eighth grade, students will demonstrate the ability to apply current technology on grade-level projects.</p> <p>Our graduates are good problem solvers as indicated by applying a problem solving model to develop a personal vision and goals to achieve that vision beginning in the ninth grade, reviewed annually and finalized prior to graduation.</p> <p>Beginning in the primary school, the students will use problem solving skills to generate solutions to interpersonal situations.</p> <p>Upon graduation, students will have completed 50 hours of approved community service hours at least half of which will be as a member of a team.</p>

Source: EISD superintendent.

Based on the eight strategic goals adopted by the board and identified in **Exhibit 1-3**, the district developed specific activities and strategies to respond to each goal and summarized them in the District Improvement Plan that was updated in March 2000. For each board goal, there is a set of specific activities and expected outcomes. A sample of the activities and outcomes is included in **Exhibit 1-4**.

Exhibit 1-4
EISD District Improvement Plan
March 2000

Goal	Sample Activities	Sample Outcomes
<p>Improve student achievement as measured by the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) System</p>	<p>Each campus will improve Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) performance for all students and each sub-group to achieve recognized status.</p> <p>Increase participation of appropriate special needs students in TAAS testing.</p> <p>Each campus will provide after- school individual or small- group tutoring to prepare students for TAAS.</p> <p>Continue collaboration with Head Start to expand pre-K program.</p>	<p>Improved performance on TAAS. TAAS results, Spring 2000.</p> <p>Decreased exemptions for special education students.</p> <p>Improved performance on TAAS. TAAS results, Spring 2000.</p> <p>Students better prepared for kindergarten program. Enrollment data for pre-K.</p>
<p>Improve achievement of all special needs students</p>	<p>Implement strategies for increasing special needs student participation and success in all programs.</p> <p>Implement Student Needs Team program on each campus.</p>	<p>Increase in academic performance of all special needs students.</p> <p>Increased use of regular education options prior to Special Education referral; increased teacher collaboration in exploring options.</p>
<p>Reduce district dropout rate</p>	<p>The Community Outreach Team will assist in dropout prevention by serving as student advocates at the</p>	<p>Dropout prevention. Outreach reports.</p> <p>Increase graduation rate</p>

	<p>campuses.</p> <p>Phoenix Learning Center will continue to retrieve dropouts and allow students the opportunity to earn high school credit.</p> <p>Implement Absent Student Assistance Program.</p>	<p>and achievement of post-high school goals for Special Education students.</p> <p>Increased school attendance, leading to decreased dropout rate.</p>
Implement a challenging and aligned curriculum	<p>Monitor implementation of curriculum and benchmarks with monitoring system.</p> <p>Meeting time will be provided for grade level/department meetings or cross-campus planning.</p> <p>Disseminate Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills and test specifications to teachers of all content areas.</p>	<p>Improved student performance on benchmarks.</p> <p>Curriculum articulation. Schedules of meetings.</p> <p>Enhanced/focused lesson planning. Improved student performance.</p>
Provide appropriate staff development	<p>Each campus SBDM committee will provide appropriate training opportunities for all staff.</p> <p>Special education department will provide training for regular education and special education staff focusing on modifications, least restrictive environment, transition, related services and the pre-referral process.</p>	<p>Enhanced teacher performance.</p> <p>Enhanced teacher performance and compliance with federal and state directives.</p>
Increase parent involvement opportunities	<p>Schedule one waiver day for parent conferences.</p> <p>Involve parents on all SBDM committees.</p> <p>Each campus will use Community Outreach Team for necessary parent contacts.</p>	<p>Parental participation. Roster of parents participating in conferences.</p> <p>Improved communication. Committee lists.</p> <p>Improved</p>

		communications. Outreach reports.
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Source: EISD superintendent.

The document also identifies staff responsible for accomplishing each goal or portion of a goal, resource requirements and timelines.

COMMENDATION

EISD embraced a strategic planning process that provides direction and focus in achieving the district's mission of providing a high-quality education for all children.

FINDING

The primary mission of any school district, including EISD, is the education of students.

Since 1996-97, EISD's budget has grown 39 percent, from \$13.4 million to \$18.6 million in 1999-2000, while student enrollment during this same time period has risen by only 5 percent. The central administrative budget, which includes board travel, training and legal fees, salaries for the superintendent, human resource staff, textbook custodians, public relations, purchasing, financial management, and vehicles and repair costs for equipment used by central administration, has grown from \$565,192 in 1996-97 to \$684,122 in 1999-2000, an increase of 21 percent.

By contrast, the number of teachers has grown by just 5.5 percent, from 189.8 FTEs in 1996-97 to 200.2 in 1999-2000, directly proportional to student growth rates. The number of educational aides over the same period has declined from 33.9 to 22.4, a decrease of 34 percent. Meanwhile, the number of professional support staff, campus administrators, central administrators and auxiliary staff has grown from 123.6 in 1996-97 to 158.5 in 1999-2000, an increase of more than 28 percent (**Exhibit 5-1**).

**Exhibit 1-5
EISD Staff Full-time Equivalent (FTEs)
1996-97 through 1999-2000**

Staff Category	1996-97 Actual	1997-98 Actual	1998-99 Actual	1999-2000 Budgeted	Percent Change
Teachers	189.8	191.4	197.9	200.2	5.5%

Professional Support	20.1	21.2	27.0	29.3	45.8%
Campus Administration	8.2	9.2	9.2	8.5	3.7%
Central Administration	3.8	5.7	4.0	5.9	55.3%
Educational Aides	33.9	39.6	41.7	22.4	-33.9%
Auxiliary staff	91.5	92.3	86.9	114.8	25.5%
Total staff	347.2	359.4	367.2	381.1	9.8%
Total students	2,559	2,606	2,638	2,688 (1)	5.0%

Source: AEIS 1996-97; PEIMS 1999-2000.

(1) End of first semester

Recommendation 1:

Reduce the number of non-teaching staff in EISD.

At a minimum, EISD should set a goal of reducing the number of auxiliary, administrative and non-instructional support staff by 5 percent. When instituting these reductions in force, the district should examine each position to determine the value being added to classroom instruction by the retention of that position.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The superintendent notifies each department and division to prepare a plan for a reduction in force by a minimum of 5 percent.	September 2000
2.	Human Resources staff assists departments and divisions in preparing their plans to comply with all contract provisions and assist in an orderly transition, and institutes a process to assess the need to fill any new vacancies.	October 2000
3.	The superintendent compiles the plans and presents a new staffing plan to the board for final approval.	November 2000
4.	Staffing reductions are implemented in each department and division based upon the approved plan.	December 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

Assuming that 5 percent of the auxiliary, administrative and non-instructional support staff are eliminated, total staffing would be reduced

by 8 positions. Annual base salaries can range from \$15,000 to \$60,000, without benefits. Benefit rates also vary according to employment category from approximately 10 to 15 percent of total salary. Conservatively assuming an average salary for each position eliminated of \$25,000 plus 12 percent benefits, annual savings of \$224,000 (\$25,000 x 9 positions x 12 percent benefits) are estimated. It is assumed that only one-half of those positions can be eliminated through attrition in the first year.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Reduce the number of non-teaching staff in EISD.	\$112,000	\$224,000	\$224,000	\$224,000	\$224,000

FINDING

There is no link between the DIP and the district's budget. The board has not approved the DIP. Resources allocated for each activity are described in broad terms such as staff time, campus budget, shirts, building space and conference time. No specific dollar amounts are included.

Campus improvement plans also do not reflect specific resource requirements necessary to achieve goals. Again, only general terms are used, such as instructional funds, district funds, staff time, materials and campus budget. The lone exception was the campus plan of the primary school where specific costs and sources of funds were identified.

School districts, such as Spring ISD and Houston ISD, link the DIP to the budget in a format that is easier for residents to understand. **Exhibit 1-6** shows the format Spring ISD uses for displaying district priorities and the budget allocated to each one.

Exhibit 1-6 Spring ISD General and Special Revenue Funds Budget by Priorities

	Goal	Budget	Percent
1.	Enhance the quality of teachers and support staff		
	Recruiting	\$482,913	0.47%
	Salary and Benefits	\$59,026,039	57.58%
	Teacher Incentives and Recognition	\$2,352,032	2.29%
	Teacher Development and Improvement	\$1,578,837	1.54%
	Total	\$63,439,821	61.89%
2.	Strengthen student achievement and educational	\$12,502,709	12.20%

	programs		
3.	Increase the quality and quantity of parent involvement	\$1,086,683	1.06%
4.	Provide strong fiscal management, protect the District's investment in facilities and equipment and meet instructional space needs	\$12,221,996	11.92%
5.	Reduce the number of students at risk for dropping out of school	\$1,417,880	1.38%
6.	Provide for safety of students and staff in the schools	\$969,734	0.95%
7.	Increase the effectiveness of student discipline	\$2,104,071	2.05%
8.	Eliminate substance abuse	\$800,104	0.78%
9.	Improve the transition of students from elementary to middle school, from middle school to high school, and from high school to college and work	\$1,149,095	1.12%
10.	Expand computer support applications for teachers and instructional services for students	\$1,517,800	1.48%
11.	Expand school-business partnerships	\$31,000	0.03%
	Total Five-Year Education Plan Priorities	\$97,240,893	94.86%
	Other General Support [Transportation, tax office, school activity]	\$5,269,386	5.14%
	Total General and Special Revenue Funds Budget	\$102,510,279	100.00%

Source: SISD Five-Year Education Plan Budget Priorities.

Recommendation 2:

Tie the allocation of resources to the District and Campus Improvement Plans.

Part of the performance evaluation of principals and teachers should be matching their resources to identified priorities of the district and the success each campus has using those resources to achieve the goals. The SBDM committees should be involved in determining how the resources are used to achieve district and campus priorities, however, a degree of flexibility must be left to the principal to meet unforeseen occurrences, such as the opportunity to get an outside speaker for teacher staff development).

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director for Business and Financial Services and the executive director for Academic Services develop a process by which funds are allocated to the District Improvement Plan.	September-October 2000
2.	The executive directors review the process with the superintendent and develop a process by which each school can apply the same approach to its CIP.	October-December 2000
3.	The executive directors meet with each principal to discuss the approach and receive comments and modifications, and finalize the process and present it to the superintendent for approval.	January-February 2001
4.	The superintendent approves the process and recommends it for approval to the board.	February 2001
5.	The board approves the process and directs the superintendent to implement it.	February 2001
6.	The superintendent directs the executive directors to initiate the process.	February 2001 and ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

EISD lacks a specific SBDM policy and guidelines that delegate decision-making responsibilities among the schools, administrators, teachers and school board. The current policy is broad and vague (**Exhibit 1-7**). No operating guidelines have been written or shared with EISD staff and district and campus committee members to define responsibilities.

**Exhibit 1-7
EISD Site-Based Decision-Making Policy**

Section	Description
District mission, goals, objectives and campus objectives	The board shall approve and periodically review the district's mission and goals to improve student performance. The mission, goals and approved district and campus objectives shall be mutually supportive and shall support the state goals and objectives under Education Code, Chapter 4.

District improvement process	The district's planning process to improve student performance includes the development of the district's educational goals, the legal requirements for the district and campus improvement plans, all pertinent federal planning requirements and administrative procedures. The board shall approve the process under which the educational goals are developed and shall ensure that input is gathered from the district-level committee.
Administrative procedures and reports	The board shall ensure that administrative procedures meet legal requirements in planning, budgeting, curriculum, staffing patterns, staff development and school organization; adequately reflect the district's planning process; and include implementation guidelines, time frames and necessary resources. The superintendent shall report periodically to the board on the status of the planning process including a review of the related administrative procedures, any revisions to improve the process and progress on implementation of identified strategies.
Evaluation	The board shall ensure that data is gathered and criteria are developed to undertake the required biennial evaluation to ensure that policies, procedures and staff activities related to planning and decision making are effectively structured to positively affect student performance.

Source: EISD Board Policy Manual.

Since the adoption of the SBDM policy in 1996, three superintendents have served on either a permanent or interim basis. Lacking a continuity in leadership, no district advisory committee (DAC) meetings were held during the six months prior to the current superintendent assuming his responsibilities.

The superintendent met with the 28-member district advisory committee in Spring 1999. During 1999-2000, the DAC met three times. The superintendent said the DAC is too large, and plans to reduce the size within the framework of TEA Code requirements. Instead, the superintendent has chosen to meet with groups or committees for specific purposes, such as:

- Hiring committees for executive director, principal and assistant principal positions, as necessary;
- Representatives of teacher groups monthly;
- Middle and high school students monthly;

- Paraprofessional salary study committee, as necessary, on recommendations for the budget;
- Professional salary study committee, as necessary, on recommendations for the budget; and
- Insurance committee, as necessary, to discuss changes in vendors and other coverage provisions.

When the DAC was asked to provide input, teachers and parents serving on the district advisory committee said they were frustrated with the board's lack of response or feedback. For example, in Spring 1999, the committee was asked to develop a proposed calendar for the 1999-2000 school year. With input from campus committees, the district committee developed and recommended a proposed calendar to the board. The board developed its own calendar, never acknowledged the work of the committee and never provided an explanation to the committees for its action on the calendar. Committee members understood the board's authority as the final decision maker; however, they are unwilling to accept no response or an absence of explanations when the committees have been acting in good faith and according to board policy.

In 1999-2000, no DAC meetings were held until April 2000, prior to an evaluation visit by the TEA of the Bastrop County Special Education Cooperative, of which EISD is a member. One principal called the function of the DAC during 1999-2000 as "bare bones." The DAC served only at the superintendent's request and met only to fulfill minimum requirements, such as approving a student code of conduct and revising the district improvement plan.

Principals chair the committees on each campus and guide and facilitate discussions. Only at the high school was the site-based committee viewed as effective by the principal and committee members. The key issue was scheduling. The DAC adopted a block schedule over the objection of the superintendent, implemented it for 1999-2000, and at the end of the year recommended a return to an accelerated block schedule.

At the other campuses, principals viewed the committees as either moderately effective or not effective at all. At the primary school, the committee recommended that when the new high school is occupied and the other schools shift facilities, the primary school remain for pre-Kindergarten through third grade. However, since the school is overcrowded with that many grades, the recommendation was not taken, and third grade will be shifted to the elementary school. This leaves the primary campus with no TAAS grade level for accountability.

At the elementary school, the committee was viewed as unsuccessful for several reasons. First, the committee met at 4:00 p.m., which meant there

was a consistent lack of parent participation. Second, there was no leadership from the principal, and committee members indicated that nothing was accomplished. Third, teachers became disillusioned because they realized that the committee's role was only advisory.

At the middle school, the committee was viewed by the principal and other staff members as comprised of people who had an interest in one particular program and not in overall student achievement in the school. Little was accomplished, and some members of the committee indicated that dissension was so bad that members of the committee were actually verbally abused by other committee members and faculty for not supporting specific initiatives.

Some principals suggested that the committees should not be chaired by the principal. They felt that this interfered with open dialogue and, possibly intimidated some faculty members from fully expressing their viewpoints.

Teachers and parents suggested that minutes be taken and distributed following the meetings (either by putting copies in individual staff member boxes at the school or by mail to non-school committee members). They recommended that the minutes be distributed not only to committee members but to all staff members, and that decisions made by the committee be tracked with respect to implementation. They also suggested that a more formal communication process be developed and used by district- and campus-level committees.

Members of both the DAC and the campus committees said the decision-making process and committee roles and responsibilities need to be clarified for the committees to be useful. They also said that central staff worked with the committees in an authoritarian manner, reflecting a top-down management style that provided limited opportunity for input and legitimate involvement in matters that directly affect them.

Specific comments from committee members included:

- The present, harsh dictates from the top school administration have caused the loss of many great teachers;
- The superintendent has made many improvements since he has been on board; however, he is somewhat heavy-handed at times;
- Lack of communication within the district;
- The school board does not take seriously the recommendations of the site-based committees;
- Teachers feel frustrated by a lack of input into policies; and
- People want more staff and community input.

Shared responsibility and mutual respect are critical components to a healthy, productive and efficient organization. The district and campus committees provide such an option. These committees can have a powerful impact on school district climate and teacher and staff morale.

Some districts have addressed the problem of clarification of roles and responsibilities by creating a model that assigns responsibility at each level for providing input, offering recommendations, making decisions and giving approval. **Exhibit 1-8** provides an example of the Spring Branch ISD SBDM model.

Exhibit 1-8
Partial Site-Based Decision-Making Model
Spring Branch Independent School District

Function	School Principal	Central Office	Superintendent	School Board	Campus Advisory Teams
<i>Goal setting:</i> Develop campus improvement plan.	D	R	R	A	I
<i>Personnel:</i> Make final recommendation for the selection of new personnel and assignment of new and current campus staff	D	R			
<i>Budget:</i> Determine use of campus allocations for special populations programs.	D	I	A		I

Source: Spring Branch Independent School District Model for Increasing School Effectiveness Through More Campus-based Decision-making.
I=Input: share/provide information/advise
D=Decide: make a choice/judgment

R=Recommend: to present as worthy of acceptance
A=Approve: give formal/official sanction

EISD needs to update its district-level and SBDM policy and guidelines that delegate decision-making responsibilities between and among the schools, administrators, teachers and the school board.

Recommendation 3:

Create a district-level, site-based decision-making model assigning specific responsibilities for decision making to the district advisory committee, the school staff, campus committees, administrators and the board.

Campus committees should evaluate rotating the chair of the committee among teacher and parent representatives and using the principal as a de facto member of the committee and a resource for information.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent meets with the senior staff to review EISD's philosophy, procedures and directives regarding SBDM; to review the current status of the SBDM process in the district; to identify occasions when breakdowns have occurred in the process; and to develop a proposed SBDM model for board consideration.	September 2000
2.	The board considers and approves a plan that clearly assigns specific responsibilities for decision making among schools, administrators and the board.	October 2000
3.	The superintendent distributes the model to the schools and the community and initiates the process.	November 2000
4.	The SBDM committee evaluates the model and confirms or modifies it annually thereafter.	May 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 1

B. EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Providing accurate, timely information to the public is an important function of public institutions. The efficient delivery of this service fosters trust and enables citizens to draw conclusions and take action based on information, opposed to rumor and gossip. The manner in which school districts perform this function has an impact on how the district is viewed by the public.

A wide variation among school districts exists in the manner in which the community involvement is performed. Larger school districts dedicate departments of three to six employees to this function, while smaller districts have one person in the department or the superintendent and campus administrators coordinate and perform these duties.

Districts also vary widely in how they keep the community informed of district activities. Newsletters, town hall meetings, cable television programs, Web sites, school calendars, brochures and inserts in news media published by other entities are some of the methods that districts use to communicate with parents and other citizens.

District communication with the community and the staff is the responsibility of the superintendent in EISD. The superintendent periodically writes news articles for the local paper, the Elgin Courier. The superintendent also communicates with the public via the Internet. Recently he addressed the parents with an explanation of the districtwide evacuation of campuses.

FINDING

Information about district activities, accomplishments and board goals is not provided to residents without access to the Internet, where some communications are posted. EISD does not publish newsletters from the district or schools.

If the community is not kept abreast of the positive accomplishments in the district, opinions about the district are based on rumor rather than fact. Comments from participants in focus groups and the public forum indicate better communication between the district and community is needed.

Participants of these groups said:

- "More and effective communication between the school and the parents is essential to a good school district;"
- "A concern is communication within the district;"
- "The community forum for this audit was poorly given. The notice was in the newspaper on Wednesday, the day after the meeting;"
- "Public notice on the meeting with the superintendent concerning the reorganizing of grades that will be put into the new school buildings this fall was not put in the newspaper at all. The notice was posted on the primary school's front door;" and
- "Communication between administration, teachers, students and parents is zero to none."

Additionally, the results of a survey for the District-wide Strategic Plan completed in the spring of 1999 rated the most critical issue in the district as communication between the district, parents, government and students. Participants in the survey rated the lack of parental involvement as the second most critical issue. Generally parental involvement lags if the school does not do a good job of communicating with parents.

Bastrop ISD communicates with its constituents by publishing the School Report, a district newsletter, seven times yearly. The cost for 13,000 copies is \$1300. The superintendent writes an article about current issues. Staff and student accomplishments are spotlighted. A calendar of upcoming events and parent education tips are examples of information included in the newsletter.

Public involvement and a continuous flow of information increase a general feeling of goodwill and lessen the perceptions of secrecy and distrust. The overall outcome will be support for the district's instructional programs, which should result in improved student achievement.

Arlington ISD's Public Engagement Plan indicates the superintendent holds "Community Conversations"- Two-way exchange between the superintendent and interested community members on pre-announced topics of interest such as involvement, dress codes and growth within the district.

The Killeen ISD superintendent hosts Citizens Talks, public forums held on all major policy issues.

Recommendation 4:

Publish a district newsletter each six weeks and hold semi-annual community exchanges.

The district must communicate its mission and make strong efforts to help the public understand the district's. The district newsletter should contain a letter from the superintendent, district goal accomplishments, an overview of the financial situation, achievements of staff and students and a quarterly calendar of events. To keep the community informed about campus instructional activities and accomplishments, each school principal should prepare an article for the newsletter and the superintendent should provide districtwide information.

The superintendent can address concerns within the community and obtain information for goals at semiannual community exchanges.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs campus principals to prepare one page of articles by the end of the first week of each grading period for the district newsletter.	September 2000
2.	The community education coordinator gathers information from the superintendent and prepares it for the printing of the first issue of the district newsletter.	September 2000
3.	The superintendent describes the purpose of the community exchange meetings in an article for the district newsletter, the Elgin Courier and the district Web site.	September 2000
4.	Each campus principal prepares one page of articles for the first issue of the district newsletter and forwards the print-ready page to the administrative assistant.	September 2000
5.	The Community Education coordinator publishes and distributes the first issue of the district newsletter.	October 2000 and ongoing
6.	The superintendent holds the community exchange meetings	October 2000 and March 2001
7.	The superintendent prepares a summary of the meetings for the district newsletter and the Web site.	November 2000 and April 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

Reproduction costs for the new newsletter would be 10 cents per copy based on the cost of Bastrop ISD's newsletter. The number of households within a five-mile radius of Elgin is about 3,400 as reported in the July 1999 Districtwide Strategic Plan. The newsletter would be produced six times per year. The total cost of reproduction would be \$2,040 (10 cents/copy x 3400 copies x 6 times yearly = \$2,040.) Postage costs are 16 cents for bulk rate and there are 3,400 households. Since the newsletter

would be mailed six times a year, the total cost of postage would be \$3,264 (16 cents/copy X 3,400 households = \$544 x 6 = \$3,264.)

The total cost of reproduction and postage would be \$5,304 (\$2,040 reproduction + \$3,264 postage = \$5,304) for six issues of the new publication.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Publish a district newsletter each six weeks and hold semi-annual community exchanges	(\$5,304)	(\$5,304)	(\$5,304)	(\$5,304)	(\$5,304)

FINDING

EISD posts board meeting notices on the front door of the administration building. The secretary to the superintendent said copies of the notices are sent to each school. She did not know if the notices were posted at the schools. The Elgin Courier publishes the dates of upcoming school board meetings.

Smithville ISD and Bastrop ISD post board meeting notices with agenda items and any upcoming events and meetings on their Web sites. Smithville ISD summarizes board actions in board briefs following each meeting. Using the Internet provides timely information to community members with Internet access.

Recommendation 5:

Post board agendas, board briefs and upcoming events on the EISD Web site.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent forwards board meeting notices each month to the webmaster for posting.	September 2000 and monthly
2.	The superintendent writes a summary of board meeting and forwards it to the webmaster for posting each month.	September 2000 and monthly
3.	The principal of each campus prepares a monthly calendar and forwards the calendar to the webmaster for posting.	September 2000 and monthly

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 1

C. COMMUNITY AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Community involvement activities enable parents, business leaders and others with a stake in public education to better understand the challenges and opportunities facing the district and to become involved in its activities. Collaborative partnerships with businesses, educational institutions, community agencies and civic organizations are an excellent way to expand the resources of a school district and involve the community in the schools. EISD schools form collaborative partnerships with a number of local entities.

FINDING

The Career and Technology Department at the high school receives many benefits from its partnerships with The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center and Department of Veterinary Sciences, Elgin Veterinary Hospital, Inc., Elgin Breeding Service, Inc., Southwest Stallion Station, CPS-Vegetative Project and Elgin Vegetative Project Farm.

EISD partners with a local nonprofit community services organization, Advocacy Outreach, to provide a Community Based Work Force Training Center. EISD applied for and was awarded a Technology Integrated Education Grant for \$196,000. With this grant, EISD established a computer lab at Washington Middle School. The lab is equipped with three Macintosh computers and 27 PCs with Internet access. In addition, there are 34 laptops available for checkout after an individual has attended two training classes. The lab is utilized by the middle school students from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., by teachers from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. and then is open to the community from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. for structured classes and individual use. The center offers computer literacy classes, General Education Development preparation and family literacy reading classes in addition to the open lab. Advocacy Outreach funds the teacher at the center. Free childcare includes a multi-sensory reading program for the children. This service is provided by the high school's Future Homemakers of America Club.

Elgin Primary School formed a partnership with Advocacy Outreach to promote parental involvement. Advocacy Outreach funds a teacher for Practical Parent Education classes each week at the primary campus. These classes are offered in Spanish. Elgin Primary School provides the facility space, childcare and a light meal for the participants. A bilingual class in Family Literacy where parents work to improve their own reading skills and learn techniques to assist their children is also offered on the

primary campus. The campus provides a snack for participants in this class.

McDonalds partners with Elgin Elementary School. The restaurant funds a trip to the Austin Symphony for all fifth grade students. Other local restaurants provide food and awards for various school activities upon the request of the principals.

EISD's career specialist developed "Passport Elgin," a career exploration program for eighth grade students. Students select a business of their interest, and local businesspeople allow the students to job-shadow them for one day each year. By shadowing an employee at the business, the students learn the requirements for obtaining that type of position and the responsibilities of the position.

Local businesses provide speakers for Career Day at Elgin Elementary School. These speakers provide valuable information about various careers to students.

COMMENDATION

EISD's collaborative partnerships with businesses and community organizations provide benefits to students and parents.

FINDING

EISD employs a volunteer/community outreach coordinator and two parental liaisons. The volunteer coordinator schedules community education classes, but does not recruit and train volunteers. The parent liaisons make home visits and provide transportation for students to get necessary social services.

Although the EISD principals report that the Open Houses in the fall are well attended at all campuses, parental involvement and volunteer efforts are very sporadic. Many parents belong to Band Booster organizations at the middle and high schools. The members of the Band Booster organizations fundraise to support band activities. Parents at the elementary school chaperone field trips. The African-American Social Committee is actively involved on the campus of Elgin Primary School and encourages its members to participate in school activities.

The elementary school secretary said an area bank provides eight volunteers. These volunteers mentor and read to students. One principal said the school attempted but was not successful in organizing a Parent/Teacher organization.

According to the spring 2000 issue of ATPE News, the official publication of the Association of Texas Professional Educators, concerning parental involvement:

"Teachers can't do their jobs effectively without it. Principals are a key component in making it work. Students suffer from a lack of it. Studies from the U.S. Department of Education and many other sources have proven time and again that it increases student achievement, reinforces community and school bonds and leads to parents' heightened overall awareness of their children's well being. It is parental involvement, and it's crucial to the success of every school community and to the entire world, for that matter."

Parent involvement means more than just being visible at the school or at school functions. Many parents spend long hours at work and generally do not have time to participate during school hours. La Mesa Elementary School in Plainview, Texas developed a Parents as Literary Support (PALS) Literacy Bag program to help involve parents with their children at home. The school prepares a number of PAL bags containing a book, a game or something the parents and child can enjoy together. Every night several students take home a literacy bag. Parents and students together use whatever is in the bag and the students return it the next day so another student can take it home. The teacher changes the contents of the bags periodically so parents and students always have new activities to keep their interest.

La Mesa Elementary School also created a Parenting Center at the school where parents can go to get parenting tips, meet other parents and educators, and help with classroom projects. A feeling of usefulness by parents is necessary to the success of any parental involvement program.

Alief ISD holds a volunteer recognition banquet each year. The volunteer coordinator solicits sponsors to underwrite the banquet to reduce the cost to the district.

Bastrop ISD partners with the Bastrop Chamber of Commerce to provide a volunteer program called Hand in Hand. This program provides mentors for at-risk students at all schools. The mentor meets with the student on campus each week and serves as a role model, a guide, a friend and a tutor.

Recommendation 6:

Revise the responsibilities of the community education coordinator and develop a Volunteer/Community Involvement plan to strengthen the parental involvement program.

This employee would be responsible for duties related to parental and community involvement, including the following:

- Identify ways to maximize the use of volunteers, including senior citizens;
- Address methods for facilitating the involvement of disadvantaged parents;
- Recruit volunteer coordinators for each school;
- Develop a policy for screening volunteers to determine the best role for each volunteer;
- Develop a database of best practices to share with each school;
- Identify partnership opportunities; and
- Nurture established partnerships.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent instructs the assistant superintendent of Human Resources to amend the job description for the Community education coordinator.	September 2000
2.	The superintendent informs the Community Education coordinator to convene a committee to develop a Volunteer/Community Involvement Plan.	September 2000
3.	The Community Education coordinator contacts principals and the chamber of commerce president for committee member recommendations and schedules all meetings.	October 2000
4.	The committee researches best practices of other districts and develops the Volunteer/Parental Involvement Plan.	October 2000
5.	The Community Education coordinator presents the Volunteer/Parental Involvement Plan to the superintendent for approval.	December 2000
6.	The Community Education coordinator describes the Volunteer/Parental Involvement Plan in the district newsletter.	December 2000
7.	The Community Education coordinator and principals implement the Volunteer/Parental Involvement Plan.	January 2001
8.	The Community Education coordinator recognizes parents and staff for exemplary parental involvement activities by listing names and activities in the district newsletter.	May 2001
9.	The Community Education coordinator reports on increased parent involvement to the board of trustees.	June 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

EDUCATION SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

This chapter examines the educational services delivery and performance measures of the Elgin Independent School District (EISD) in the following areas:

- A. Student Performance
- B. Curriculum Programs and Staff Development
- C. Compensatory Education
- D. Bilingual/English-As-A-Second Language (ESL) Program
- E. Career and Technology Education (CATE)
- F. Gifted and Talented Education Program
- G. Special Student Populations
- H. Discipline Management and Alternative Education

The key emphasis of any school system is educating children. Instructional programs and services are developed, evaluated and modified based upon the performance of students measured by standardized tests, achievement of learning objectives and the changing composition of the student population. Districts with higher concentrations of students at risk of dropping out must develop programs to ensure these students maintain performance at grade-level norms.

BACKGROUND

Since 1993, Texas has rated and accredited districts and schools based upon specific performance measures including the reading, writing and math portions of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), dropout rates and attendance rates. Districts are evaluated each year, and beginning in 1995-96, districts were rated as presented in **Exhibit 2-1**. EISD was rated Academically Acceptable in 1998-99.

Exhibit 2-1
TEA Accountability Ratings
1998-99

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

Academically Acceptable	District
Acceptable	Campus
Academically Unacceptable	District
Low Performing	Campus
Alternative Education (AE): Acceptable, AE: Needs Peer Review, or AE: Not Rated	Campuses 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 campus rating categories listed above, based on the regular accountability system.
Not rated	These campuses 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 Texas Education Code.
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 to be unsuitable for ratings purposes.
Unacceptable: Data Issues	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: Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System, 1998-99.

In 1999-2000, EISD had four schools and one alternative education campus. **Exhibit 2-2** shows grade levels served and enrollments by school for 1998-99 and for 1999-2000 as of March 10, 2000. The district is served by the Regional Education Service Center XIII (Region 13), which is located in Austin.

Exhibit 2-2
EISD Campuses, Grade Levels and Enrollment
1998-99 through 1999-2000

Campus	Grade Levels	1998-99 Enrollment	1999-2000 Enrollment (1)	Percentage Change
Elgin High School	9-12	746	729	-2.3%
Phoenix Learning Center	9-12	24	25	4.2%
B.T. Washington Middle School	6-8	645	653	1.2%
Elgin Elementary School	4-5	398	406	2.0%
Elgin Primary School	EE-3	825	875	6.1%
Total		2,638	2,688	1.9%

*Source: TEA AEIS 1998-99 and EISD.
(1) March 10, 2000.*

The ethnic breakdown by school and the 1998-99 accountability rating for each school are included in **Exhibit 2-3**. EISD had four schools rated Academically Acceptable (A) and its alternative school rated Alternative Education: Acceptable (AE:A).

Exhibit 2-3
EISD Campuses and Accountability Ratings
1998-99

Campus	Grades Served	Enrollment	African American	Hispanic	Anglo	Other	Rating
Elgin High School	9-12	746	13.9%	34.2%	51.5%	0.4%	A
Phoenix Learning Center	9-12	24	16.7%	33.3%	50.0%	0.0%	AE:A
B.T. Washington Middle School	6-8	645	11.5%	38.3%	49.5%	0.8%	A
Elgin	4-5	398	15.3%	39.4%	44.5%	0.8%	A

Elementary School							
Elgin Primary School	pre-K-3	825	15.4%	42.9%	40.6%	1.1%	A
Total		2,638	14.0%	38.7%	46.5%	0.8%	A

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1998-99.

EISD experienced an increase of 5.4 percent in its student enrollment from 1995-96 through 1999-2000 (**Exhibit 2-4**). Compared to its peer districts, EISD's rate of growth was the slowest.

Exhibit 2-4
EISD and Peer District Growth Rates
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Entity	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	Percentage Change
Leander	8,932	9,798	10,669	11,841	13,151	47.2%
Del Valle	4,745	4,876	5,230	5,625	6,095	28.5%
Bastrop	5,338	5,524	5,765	5,844	6,060	13.5%
Taylor	2,702	2,785	2,785	2,875	2,899	7.3%
Elgin	2,551	2,559	2,611	2,638	2,688	5.4%

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 1995-96 - 1998-99 and 1999-2000, telephone survey and EISD superintendent.,

Compared to its peer districts, EISD has the third-highest percentage of Anglo students, the fourth-highest percentage of African American students, and the third-highest percentage of Hispanic students (**Exhibit 2-5**).

Exhibit 2-5
Ethnicity of EISD, Peer Districts, Region 13 and State Student
Populations
1999-2000

Entity	Anglo	Hispanic	African American	Other
Leander	85%	11%	3%	2%
Bastrop	61%	27%	11%	1%
Elgin	45%	40%	14%	1%
Taylor	38%	44%	18%	1%
Manor	36%	42%	21%	1%
Del Valle	23%	60%	14%	2%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000.

Note: Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Forty percent of EISD students are classified as limited English proficiency (LEP) students and 35 percent are classified as economically disadvantaged students as a percentage of total enrollment. Compared to its peer districts, EISD is second-lowest in the percent of economically disadvantaged students, and is the highest of the peer districts in the percent of LEP students (**Exhibit 2-6**).

Exhibit 2-6
EISD and Peer District Economically Disadvantaged and LEP Students as a Percentage of Total Student Population 1999-2000

Entity	Economically Disadvantaged Students	LEP Students
Del Valle	63%	16%
Taylor	54%	NA
Manor	53%	14%
Bastrop	41%	5%
Elgin	35%	40%
Leander	19%	2%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000.

EISD student attendance was higher than the state and regional averages from 1994-95 through 1996-97, but trailed both in 1997-98 (**Exhibit 2-7**).

Compared to its peer districts, EISD was in the middle of the attendance rate range.

Exhibit 2-7
Attendance Rate of EISD Students Compared to Peer Districts,
Region 13 and the State
1994-95 - 1997-98

Entity	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
Taylor	95.4%	95.5%	95.7%	96.1%
Leander	95.5%	95.3%	95.7%	95.5%
Manor	95.1%	95.5%	95.2%	95.3%
State	95.1%	95.1%	95.2%	95.3%
Region 13	95.0%	94.9%	95.1%	95.2%
Elgin	95.5%	95.2%	95.6%	95.0%
Bastrop	94.7%	94.3%	94.9%	95.0%
Del Valle	92.9%	93.7%	93.0%	94.0%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1994-95 through 1997-98.

EISD's dropout rate fluctuated between 1994-95 and 1997-98 (**Exhibit 2-8**). Compared to its peer districts, the state and the region, EISD's dropout rate was the highest or second-highest in two years and the third-highest the other two years. For 1997-98, EISD's dropout rate exceeded the region and state averages and all peer districts.

Exhibit 2-8
Dropout Rate for EISD, Region 13 and the State
1994-95 through 1997-98

Entity	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
Del Valle	2.0%	1.3%	0.8%	0.3%
Leander	1.1%	0.9%	1.1%	0.6%
Taylor	1.0%	0.7%	1.3%	0.7%
Manor	2.8%	1.7%	1.8%	1.0%
Region 13	1.9%	1.4%	1.3%	1.4%
State	1.8%	1.8%	1.6%	1.6%

Bastrop	2.7%	2.7%	1.6%	2.1%
Elgin	1.8%	2.8%	1.3%	2.3%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1994-95 through 1997-98.

Exhibit 2-9 compares the EISD dropout rate by ethnicity from 1994-95 through 1997-98. Only the dropout rate of Hispanic students decreased over the period. Anglo students had a dropout rate that was at, or below the regional and state averages in each of the four years.

Exhibit 2-9
Dropout Rate for EISD Students by Ethnicity
1994-95 through 1997-98

Ethnic Group	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
African American	1.0%	4.6%	0.5%	3.8%
Anglo	1.2%	1.6%	1.1%	1.4%
Hispanic	3.1%	3.7%	2.1%	2.8%
Native American	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Asian/Pacific Islander	N/A	12.5%	0	0

Source: TEA, AEIS 1994-95 through 1997-98.

The student-teacher ratio in EISD has been less than the regional and state averages for each year since 1995-96, and EISD's student-to-teacher ratio is the third-lowest among its peer group (**Exhibits 2-10** and **2-11**).

Exhibit 2-10
EISD, Region 13 and State Student-to-Teacher Ratio
1995-96 through 1998-99

Entity	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	Percentage Change
Elgin	14.1	13.5	13.6	13.3	-5.7%
Region 13	15.1	15.0	14.9	14.8	-2.0%
State	15.6	15.5	15.3	15.2	-2.6%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1995-96 through 1998-99.

Exhibit 2-11
EISD, Region 13 State and Peer District
Student-Teacher Ratio
1998-99

Entity	Student -Teacher Ratio
Manor	12.8
Bastrop	13.2
Elgin	13.3
Del Valle	13.6
Taylor	14.2
Region 13	14.8
Leander	15.2
State	15.2

Source: TEA, AEIS 1998-99.

EISD's total expenditures in 1999-2000 were slightly more than \$18.3 million. Of that total, EISD spent \$9.9 million, or 53.9 percent, for direct classroom instruction and other activities that deliver, enhance or direct the delivery of learning situations to students (**Exhibit 2-12**). Compared to its peer districts, EISD spent the highest percentage of its total expenditures on classroom instruction in 1999-2000.

Exhibit 2-12
EISD and Peer District Classroom Instruction Expenditures
as a Percentage of Total Expenditures
1999-2000

Entity	Total Expenditures	Classroom Instruction Expenditures	Classroom Instruction Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures
Elgin	\$18,358,237	\$9,888,113	53.9%
Taylor	\$18,398,871	\$9,677,130	52.6%
Del Valle	\$37,937,550	\$19,328,059	50.9%

Leander	\$79,996,231	\$39,728,190	49.7%
Bastrop	\$38,315,640	\$18,188,261	47.5%
Manor	\$22,982,029	\$10,039,577	43.7%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000.

EISD expenditures by program for 1999-2000 reflect a slight decrease in regular education program spending and a slight increase in special education program funding (**Exhibit 2-13**). Bilingual/ESL spending dropped from 3.5% in 1995-96 to 0.7% in 1999-2000.

Exhibit 2-13
EISD Instructional Program Expenditures
as a Percentage of Total Instructional Operating Expenditures
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Program	1995-96 Actual	1996-97 Actual	1997-98 Actual	1998-99 Actual	1999-2000 Budget
Regular education	75.5%	76.8%	72.0%	70.6%	69.7%
Special education	7.0%	9.6%	12.1%	11.4%	13.1%
Compensatory education	8.4%	3.7%	2.6%	10.9%	10.0%
Career and Technology Education	4.5%	4.7%	5.7%	5.3%	5.3%
Bilingual/ESL education	3.5%	3.8%	6.7%	0.7%	0.7%
Gifted and talented education	1.2%	1.3%	0.8%	1.2%	1.2%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1995-96 - 1999-2000.

Note: Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Chapter 2

A. STUDENT PERFORMANCE (PART 1)

In 1999-2000, the percentage of all EISD students that passed the Texas TAAS, based upon preliminary results released in May 2000, was below the state average in all categories (**Exhibit 2-14**). For the first time in 1999-2000, the scores of special education students taking the TAAS are counted in the district's accountability ratings.

Exhibit 2-14
Percentage of All EISD and State Students Passing TAAS, All Levels
1999-2000

Entity	Reading	Writing	Math
Elgin	84.1%	80.0%	84.8%
State	87.0%	88.0%	87.0%

Source: TEA, preliminary TAAS results, May 2000.

Student performance in EISD showed steady improvement between 1995-96 and 1998-99 in reading and math. In 1999-2000, both reading and math scores declined. Since hitting 83.9 percent students passing the writing test in 1996-97, the percentage of EISD students passing writing has declined each year (**Exhibit 2-15**).

Exhibit 2-15
Percentage of All EISD Students Passing TAAS, All Levels
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Reading	77.3%	83.0%	83.9%	88.3%	84.1%
Math	75.1%	81.2%	83.0%	86.7%	84.8%
Writing	76.0%	83.9%	83.2%	80.4%	80.0%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1994-95 - 1998-99 and preliminary TAAS results, May 2000.

The percentage of EISD Anglo students passing TAAS, based upon the preliminary results, trailed the state average in each test (**Exhibit 2-16**).

Exhibit 2-16
Percentage of Anglo EISD and State Students Passing TAAS, All Levels
1999-2000

Entity	Reading	Writing	Math
Elgin	92.1%	88.8%	91.0%
State	94.0%	94.0%	93.0%

Source: TEA, preliminary TAAS results, May 2000.

Anglo student performance in EISD has improved since 1995-96. Between 1995-96 and 1999-2000, Anglo student performance improved 2.7 percentage points in reading, 1.8 percentage points in writing and 4.8 percentage points in math (**Exhibit 2-17**). In 1999-2000, EISD Anglo students passing the reading test declined 2.5 percentage points from 1998-99 and those passing math declined 2.4 percentage points from 1998-99.

Exhibit 2-17
Percentage of EISD Anglo Students Passing TAAS
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Reading	89.4%	91.7%	93.3%	94.6%	92.1%
Math	86.2%	89.7%	91.7%	93.4%	91.0%
Writing	87.0%	90.9%	91.2%	87.1%	88.8%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1994-95 - 1998-99 and preliminary TAAS results, May 2000.

The percentage of EISD's African American students passing TAAS, based upon the preliminary results, trailed the state averages on each test (**Exhibit 2-18**). On the writing and math tests the differences were 11.4 and 10.0 percentage points, respectively.

Exhibit 2-18
Percentage of African American EISD
and State Students Passing TAAS, All Levels
1999-2000

Entity	Reading	Writing	Math
Elgin	77.9%	70.6%	66.0%
State	80%	82%	76%

Source: TEA, preliminary TAAS results, May 2000.

African American student performance in EISD has increased since 1995-96. Between 1995-96 and 1999-2000, African American student performance improved by 26.0 percentage points in reading, 5.1 percentage points in writing, and 13.6 percentage points in math (**Exhibit 2-19**). The percentage of EISD African American students passing the reading and math tests declined from 1998-99 by 1.1 and 6.2 percentage points, respectively.

Exhibit 2-19
Percentage of EISD African American Students Passing TAAS
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Reading	51.9%	67.0%	67.5%	79.0%	77.9%
Math	52.4%	62.1%	63.6%	72.2%	66.0%
Writing	65.4%	79.4%	69.4%	67.3%	70.6%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1994-95 through 1998-99 and preliminary TAAS results, May 2000.

The percent of Hispanic students passing TAAS, based upon the preliminary results, trailed the state average on each test (**Exhibit 2-20**).

Exhibit 2-20
Percentage of Hispanic EISD, Region 13 and State Students Passing
TAAS, All Levels
1999-2000

Entity	Reading	Writing	Math
Elgin	75.3%	70.7%	81.7%
State	81.0%	82.0%	83.0%

Source: TEA, preliminary TAAS results, May 2000.

Hispanic student performance in EISD has increased since 1995-96. Between 1995-96 and 1999-2000, Hispanic student performance improved by 10.9 percentage points in reading, 21.2 percentage points in writing, and 7.7 percentage points in math (**Exhibit 2-21**). In 1999-2000, the number of EISD Hispanic students passing reading and math declined from 1998-99 by 5.8 and 9.8 percentage points, respectively.

Exhibit 2-21
Percentage of EISD Hispanic Students Passing TAAS
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Reading	64.4%	72.6%	75.2%	81.1%	75.3%
Math	63.0%	72.1%	76.0%	80.5%	70.7%
Writing	60.5%	71.2%	75.8%	74.3%	81.7%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1994-95 - 1998-99 and preliminary TAAS results, May 2000.

The percent of economically disadvantaged students passing TAAS, based upon the preliminary results, trailed the state average on each test (**Exhibit 2-22**).

Exhibit 2-22
Percentage of Economically Disadvantaged EISD
and State Students Passing TAAS, All Levels
1999-2000

Entity	Reading	Writing	Math
Elgin	76.1%	67.7%	78.8%
State	80.0%	81.0%	81.0%

Source: TEA, preliminary TAAS results, May 2000.

Economically disadvantaged student performance in EISD has improved since 1995-96. Between 1995-96 and 1999-2000, economically disadvantaged student performance improved by 8.5 percentage points in reading, 1.3 percentage points in writing and 14.1 percentage points in math (**Exhibit 2-23**). In 1999-2000, the percentage of EISD economically disadvantaged students passing reading and math declined by 4.8 and 0.4 percentage points compared to 1998-99.

Exhibit 2-23
Percentage of EISD Economically Disadvantaged Students Grades 3-8
and 10 Passing TAAS
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Reading	67.6%	73.0%	74.4%	80.9%	76.1%
Math	64.7%	72.0%	73.9%	79.2%	78.8%
Writing	66.4%	73.2%	71.2%	64.5%	67.7%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1994-95 - 1998-99 and preliminary TAAS results, May 2000.

The percent of EISD students in third through fifth grade passing the TAAS, based upon the preliminary results, trailed the state average in every test except fifth grade math (**Exhibit 2-24**).

Exhibit 2-24
Percentage of EISD and State
Primary and Elementary Students Passing TAAS
1999-2000

Grade/Subject	Elgin	State
3rd-Reading	77.9%	87%
3rd-Math	71.9%	80%
4th-Reading	83.1%	90%
4th-Writing	77.8%	90%
4th-Math	80.7%	87%
5th-Reading	83.3%	87%
5th-Math	93.8%	92%

Source: TEA, preliminary TAAS results, May 2000.

At the sixth through tenth grades the percent of EISD students passing the TAAS, based upon the preliminary results, exceeded the state average in sixth and seventh grade math and seventh grade reading (**Exhibit 2-25**). Otherwise, EISD students in those grades trailed the state average on all other tests.

Exhibit 2-25
Percentage of EISD and State
Middle School and High School Students Passing TAAS
1999-2000

Grade/Subject	Elgin	State
6th-Reading	83.3%	86%
6th-Math	88.2%	88%
7th-Reading	89.9%	83%
7th-Math	91.8%	87%
8th-Reading	82.8%	89%
8th-Writing	76.9%	84%
8th-Math	81.3%	90%
8th-Science	84.5%	88%
8th-Social Studies	70.9%	71%
10th-Reading	87.9%	90%
10th-Writing	84.3%	90%
10th-Math	85.7%	86%

Source: TEA, preliminary TAAS results, May 2000.

For graduating classes from 1996 through 1998, EISD students scored below the regional and state average Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) I score (**Exhibit 2-26**). The results of the class of 1998 ranked second among the peer districts. Also, 18.6 percent of EISD students taking the SAT scored at or above the accountability criterion level of 1110 established by the State Board of Education. This performance was below the regional average of 36.4 percent and the state average of 27.2 percent.

Exhibit 2-26
Mean SAT I Score for EISD, Region 13, and the State
Classes of 1995-1998

Entity	Class of 1995	Class of 1996	Class of 1997	Class of 1998
Leander	924	1,025	1,037	1,040
Region 13	935	1,037	1,038	1,037

State	891	993	992	992
Elgin	905	944	949	988
Bastrop	953	985	976	977
Taylor	846	974	926	944
Del Valle	864	934	919	916
Manor	814	886	949	913

Source: TEA, AEIS 1996-97 through 1998-99.

FINDING

Elementary student performance in EISD has declined in third grade reading and math since 1995-96; increased in reading, math and writing in fourth grade since 1995-96; and increased in fifth grade reading and math since 1995-96 (**Exhibit 2-27**).

Exhibit 2-27
Percent of EISD Primary and Elementary Students Passing TAAS
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Grade/Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
3rd-Reading	82.8%	75.8%	71.6%	81.7%	77.9%
3rd-Math	82.9%	81.8%	63.7%	85.1%	71.9%
4th-Reading	76.3%	91.4%	80.8%	83.2%	83.1%
4th-Writing	72.7%	87.9%	78.1%	80.5%	77.8%
4th-Math	79.9%	93.2%	75.9%	85.8%	80.7%
5th-Reading	81.3%	88.4%	81.7%	92.1%	83.3%
5th-Math	85.3%	88.3%	88.5%	96.2%	93.8%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1994-95 - 1998-99 and preliminary TAAS results, May 2000.

At the middle and high school levels, the percent of students passing the TAAS test increased substantially from 1995-96 through 1999-2000 (**Exhibit 2-28**). However, from 1998-99 to 1999-2000, the percent of sixth, seventh and eighth grade students passing the reading test declined; the percent of sixth and seventh grade students passing math declined; the

percent of eighth grade students passing science and social studies declined; and the percent of 10th grade students passing writing declined.

Exhibit 2-28
Percentage of EISD Middle and High School Students Passing TAAS
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Grade/Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
6th-Reading	67.6%	76.9%	71.9%	85.0%	83.3%
6th-Math	61.3%	72.7%	75.3%	81.6%	88.2%
7th-Reading	83.5%	83.0%	77.1%	91.8%	89.9%
7th-Math	71.0%	83.0%	77.2%	87.1%	91.8%
8th-Reading	72.1%	79.9%	74.9%	92.8%	82.8%
8th-Writing	71.9%	76.5%	71.2%	68.9%	76.9%
8th-Math	66.7%	73.6%	78.7%	89.0%	81.3%
8th-Science	70.3%	84.1%	76.6%	87.1%	84.5%
8th-Social Studies	62.0%	63.0%	57.4%	71.7%	70.9%
10th-Reading	76.9%	87.2%	80.4%	87.5%	87.9%
10th-Writing	83.3%	89.6%	83.0%	89.8%	84.3%
10th-Math	80.3%	78.6%	71.8%	78.4%	85.7%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1994-95 through 1998-99 and preliminary TAAS results, May 2000.

The scores of all student groups in EISD declined from 1998-99 to 1999-2000. Compared to the state average for all students on the TAAS reading test, EISD's performance decreased from 3.1 percent below the state average in 1995-96 to 2.9 percentage points below in 1999-2000 (**Exhibit 2-29**).

Exhibit 2-29
Percentage of EISD Students in Grades 3-8 and 10 Passing TAAS
Reading Test
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Category	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
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All students	77.3%	83.0%	83.9%	88.3%	84.1%
African American students	51.9%	67.0%	67.5%	79.0%	77.9%
Hispanic students	64.4%	72.6%	75.2%	81.1%	75.3%
Anglo students	89.4%	91.7%	93.3%	94.6%	92.1%
Economically disadvantaged students	67.6%	73.0%	74.4%	80.9%	76.1%
State - all students	80.4%	84.0%	87.0%	86.5%	87.0%
Region 13 - all students	82.1%	85.6%	88.4%	87.0%	N/A

Source: TEA, AEIS 1994-95 - 1998-99 and preliminary TAAS results, May 2000.

All student groups in EISD, except Hispanic students, declined in the percent passing the 1999-2000 TAAS math test from 1998-99. Compared to the state average for all students on the TAAS math test, EISD exceed the state average every year except for 1997-98 and 1999-2000, when the EISD average was 2.2 percentage points below the state average (**Exhibit 2-30**). Compared to the regional average for all students, EISD exceeded the regional average for the first time in 1998-99.

Exhibit 2-30
Percentage of EISD Students in Grades 3-8 and 10 Passing TAAS
Math Test
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Category	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
All students	75.1%	81.2%	83.0%	86.7%	84.8%
African American students	52.4%	62.1%	63.6%	72.2%	66.0%
Hispanic students	63.0%	72.1%	76.0%	80.5%	81.7%
Anglo students	86.2%	89.7%	91.7%	93.4%	91.0%
Economically disadvantaged students	64.7%	72.0%	73.9%	79.2%	78.8%
State - all students	74.2%	80.1%	84.2%	85.7%	87.0%
Region 13 - all students	75.4%	81.4%	84.9%	85.4%	N/A

Source: TEA, AEIS 1994-95 - 1998-99 and preliminary TAAS results, May 2000.

Compared to the state and regional averages for all students on the TAAS writing test, the percent of EISD students passing the writing test declined since hitting a high point in 1996-97 (**Exhibit 2-31**). EISD's performance gap compared to the state average widened from 6.9 percentage points in 1995-96 to 8.0 in 1999-2000. Compared to the regional average, EISD remained behind by about the same number of percentage points.

Exhibit 2-31
Percentage of EISD Students Grades 3-8 and 10 Passing TAAS
Writing Test
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Category	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
All students	76.0%	83.9%	83.2%	80.4%	80.0%
African American students	65.4%	79.4%	69.4%	67.3%	70.6%
Hispanic students	60.5%	71.2%	75.8%	74.3%	70.7%
Anglo students	87.0%	90.9%	91.2%	87.1%	88.8%
Economically disadvantaged students	66.4%	73.2%	71.2%	64.5%	67.7%
State - all students	82.9%	85.3%	87.4%	88.2%	88.0%
Region 13 - all students	83.4%	86.4%	87.9%	87.7%	N/A

Source: TEA, AEIS 1994-95 - 1998-99 and preliminary TAAS results, May 2000.

Principals, counselors and teachers identified a number of factors that affected student performance during this period. First and foremost was the frequent change in leadership from the board and central administration. Since the early 1990s, the board membership turned over completely on two occasions and was distinctly divided during another two-year period between elections. During this time, EISD had three permanent superintendents and two acting superintendents. TEA also intervened at one point and assigned a monitor because the board was slow in hiring a superintendent, and the board was attempting to manage the district, a low-performing one, on its own.

This constant change in board membership and central administration also occurred on EISD campuses. Since 1995-96, there have been three high school principals, four principals and three assistant principals at the middle school and two principals at the elementary school. In 2000-01, there will be a new principal at the elementary school. Only at the primary school has the same principal been in place during the entire period, and that principal left at the end of the 1999-2000 year.

There was no leadership in the curriculum area. The last curriculum director served as interim superintendent in 1998 and was reassigned in 1999 to the Phoenix Learning Center. The director retired at the end of the 1998-99 year. From 1998 to May 2000, EISD had no full-time central curriculum leadership. Since coming to EISD in January 1999, the superintendent attempted to provide direction in this area, but he also had to focus on other major issues, such as contract management on construction of the new high school, developing a strategic focus and plan for the district and assembling a leadership team both centrally and on the campuses.

As a result of this void, principals had to develop their own curriculum. Several principals said that they didn't feel that their teachers were adequately prepared to address changes in the TAAS test, especially in math, because they lacked assistance from any central curriculum source and didn't have the time to incorporate additional information themselves.

In response to the statement, "The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects," forty-three percent of teachers responding to the TSPR written survey disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. Forty-five percent disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, "The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated," and 51 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, "The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it."

Also contributing to the fluctuating test scores, according to principals, are factions of teachers at schools with opposing approaches to preparing students in key subjects, such as reading. For example, one group favors phonetics and another favors a different teaching method. There is also no plan nor central focus to the guidance and counseling program, especially for at-risk students, constant teacher turnover in key subjects such as math and young, inexperienced teachers at critical grade levels.

Teachers responding to the TSPR written survey also placed responsibility for the problem of student achievement on the superintendent. Seventy-six percent of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, "The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional

leader." Fifty-three percent cited the central administration in general as not being supportive of the educational process.

The district's Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs) provide either no defined levels of expected performance or specific strategies on how to accomplish the expected performance outcomes. For example, the high school CIP has as its first goal to "increase the number of students mastering exit level TAAS." It does not describe current performance nor the expected amount of the increase desired.

At the elementary school, the first goal listed is "academic excellence for all students." The first outcome is to "be a recognized campus." However, the activities listed to achieve that goal are defined as "increase the TAAS reading and math scores of all populations to 80 percent or above." Nowhere does the plan state what efforts will be employed to achieve this goal, such as targeted staff development, benchmark testing or individualized student learning plans.

Chapter 2

A. STUDENT PERFORMANCE (PART 2)

The Curriculum and Instruction Department of Galveston ISD developed a multi-step process to achieve the goal of becoming a recognized district (**Exhibit 2-32**). The process is an organized plan that involves central administrative staff, principals and teachers in the process. The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction and the principals monitor implementation and student progress carefully.

Exhibit 2-32
Galveston ISD Process to Achieve Recognized Status
1999-2000

Strategy	Central Office Accountable For:	Principal Accountable For:	Shared Responsibility	Desired Outcome
Test scores	Provide disaggregated TAAS data to campuses	Review district and campus TAAS data, provide reports to campus departments and teachers and review objectives ranking from weakest to strongest.	Use TAAS data in formulating district and campus plans, communicate these plans to parents and students and align curriculum vertically and horizontally.	Data drives decisions and district and campus plans focus on each sub-group with specific objectives.
Instructional timeline	Develop district benchmark timelines that correspond to district curriculum.	Develop grade-level calendars in reading, math and writing at the beginning of each grading period that identify objectives.	Provide staff development and necessary support materials.	Instruction aligned with district assessment, benchmark objectives calendars and schoolwide low-to-high objectives.
Instructional	Develon	Teachers	Monitor	Dailv focus on

focus	district plan that reflects goals for instructional effectiveness.	document TAAS objective, and target and collaborative grade level planning occurs.	implementation of campus instructional focus.	TAAS integrated into all content areas.
Assessment	Prepare and disseminate benchmark tests and provide test results to campuses.	Administer benchmark tests, use tests for planning for instruction and conduct conferences with students based upon previous year results.	Review benchmark results with teachers.	Benchmark results discussed and plans and strategies revisited for effectiveness.
Tutorials for non-mastery students and enrichment for mastery students	Allocate funds for tutorials.	Design tutorials for non-mastery students, design enrichment for master students and communicate plan to parents.	Monitor implementation of tutorials and enrichment.	Increase passing rate of non-mastery students and expand curriculum for mastery students.
Maintenance and re-teaching	Assist with gathering instructional resources.	Document maintenance and re-teaching lessons in lesson plans.	Monitor implementation of maintenance and teaching instruction and activities.	Improved TAAS performance on specific objectives.
Monitoring	Visit classrooms and conduct benchmark conferences with principals.	Visit classrooms and conduct TAAS-focused meeting with teachers, teams and	Monitor the implementation of the campus TAAS initiative.	Discuss problems and successes in administrative workshops.

		departments.		
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Source: GISD assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction.

Galveston ISD developed the plan using Brazosport ISD as a model. Brazosport is rated as an exemplary district by TEA.

In May 2000, EISD hired a new executive director of academic services. That position is primarily responsible for all curriculum development and evaluation and all academic program oversight. Principals will be supervised by the executive director.

Recommendation 7:

Develop consistent approaches to delivering adopted curriculum, establish performance benchmarks for each grade level and school, and monitor and evaluate performance.

Principals and teachers need to be held accountable for consistently delivering adopted curriculum, for assessing student needs and for achieving gains in student performance.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director of Academic Programs meets with principals, assistant principals, department heads and lead teachers to discuss issues associated with the adopted curriculum and consistent delivery of that curriculum.	September-October 2000
2.	Based upon the meetings, the executive director prepares a list of issues to be addressed, necessary modifications to existing curricula, staff development requirements and any other issues.	November-December 2000
3.	The executive director reviews this information with principals, assistant principals, department heads and lead teachers. The group develops a plan to address them and performance measures to gauge progress.	January-February 2001
4.	The executive director presents the plan to the superintendent for review, modification and approval.	March 2001
5.	The superintendent approves the plan, with necessary modifications and presents it to the board for information and input.	April 2001
6.	The superintendent instructs the executive director to	May 2001

	implement the plan and establish the necessary monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms to support it.	
7.	The executive director implements the plan and conducts an in-service session for all principals, assistant principals and teachers at the beginning of the school year.	August 2001
8.	The executive director and principals meet monthly to monitor progress and address any problems.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

FINDING

EISD has had difficulty closing the performance gap between Anglo students and minority and economically disadvantaged students. **Exhibit 2-33** shows that while the performance gap in Elgin has narrowed between Anglo students and minority and economically disadvantaged students on the TAAS reading test, the gap began to widen again in 1999-2000 among Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students.

Exhibit 2-33
Gap in Percent Passing TAAS Reading Test, Anglo Students vs.
Minority and Economically Disadvantaged Students
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Category	Percentage Point Difference from Anglo Student Performance				
	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
African American students	-37.5	-24.7	-25.8	-15.6	-14.2
Hispanic students	-25.0	-19.1	-18.1	-13.5	-16.8
Economically disadvantaged students	-21.8	-18.7	-18.9	-13.7	-16.0

Source: TEA, AEIS 1994-95 through 1998-99 and preliminary TAAS results, May 2000.

Exhibit 2-34 shows that while the performance gap has narrowed between Anglo students and minority and economically disadvantaged students on the TAAS math test, the gap began to widen again in 1999-2000 among African American students.

Exhibit 2-34
Gap in Percent Passing TAAS Math Test, Anglo Students vs.
Minority and Economically Disadvantaged Students
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Category	Percentage Point Difference from Anglo Student Performance				
	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
African American students	-33.8	-27.6	-28.1	-21.2	-25.0
Hispanic students	-23.2	-17.6	-15.7	-12.9	-9.3
Economically disadvantaged students	-21.5	-17.7	-17.8	-14.2	-12.2

Source: TEA, AEIS 1994-95 through 1998-99 and preliminary TAAS results, May 2000.

Exhibit 2-35 shows that while the performance gap has narrowed between Anglo students and minority students on the TAAS writing test, for economically disadvantaged students the gap is greater now than it was in 1995-96. In 1999-2000, the performance gap between Anglo students and Hispanic students widened by 5.3 percentage points.

Exhibit 2-35
Gap in Percent Passing TAAS Writing Test, Anglo Students vs.
Minority and Economically Disadvantaged Students
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Category	Percentage Point Difference from Anglo Student Performance				
	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
African American students	-21.6	-11.5	-21.8	-19.8	-18.2
Hispanic students	-26.5	-19.7	-15.4	-12.8	-18.1
Economically disadvantaged students	-20.6	-17.7	-20.0	-22.6	-21.1

Source: TEA, AEIS 1994-95 through 1998-99 and preliminary TAAS results, May 2000.

In the needs assessment study conducted by Texas Educational Consultative Services, Inc., and completed in January 2000, the final report notes the following at EISD schools:

- Elgin Elementary School. "One other need cited by the [site-based decision making] committee was closing the achievement gap between 'white' and other disaggregated groups on the TAAS."
- Booker T. Washington Middle School. "...staff members mentioned the need for more increased writing instruction and smaller class size to provide skill-building activities and target weak academic areas. They also felt students need more individual tutoring assistance in core subjects..."
- Elgin High School. TECS made the following recommendation: "Explore strategies for reducing the achievement gap in minority TAAS results."

Among the reasons cited by EISD staff for the continuing performance gap were:

- The African American student comprises only about 11 percent of test takers on the elementary school campus. The small group size contributes to greater variability in results;
- Vertical teaming and curriculum alignment are needed, especially among the primary, elementary and middle schools;
- Inability of counselors to spend enough staff time on student-related issues versus administrative duties such as TAAS coordination, class scheduling, grade reporting and attendance at ARD meetings;
- A high mobility rate, approximately 23 percent;
- Lack of study skills;
- Large class sizes; and
- Few minority role models among EISD teachers.

Over half of the teachers responding to the TSPR survey did not support the statement, "Education is the main priority in our school district," and 40 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, "Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective."

Only 36 percent of the teachers responding to the TSPR survey felt that EISD had effective programs for students at risk of dropping out of school. Eight-two percent also cited teacher turnover as a factor contributing to inconsistent student performance. Since 1995-96, teacher turnover in EISD averaged 17.3 percent, steadily increasing to 23 percent in 1998-99.

Principals and teachers also said that the superintendent was not a "hands-on leader" and relied on the principals to correct problems and address student achievement issues. The superintendent would provide broad guidelines but was never closely involved in working with principals to address specific performance problems, either staff- or student-related.

Galveston ISD, a district where a majority of the students are minorities, addressed the performance gap between Anglo and minority and economically disadvantaged students through the use of several districtwide strategies, including:

- A standardized reading program in grades K-6 that stresses prevention and intensive early intervention to ensure all children can read at grade level by the end of the third grade;
- Increasing students' conceptual understanding of mathematics through rewriting the math curriculum for grades K-8, incorporating the standards of the National Council of Teachers of Math and the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills with emphasis in the area of oral and written communication of math concepts;
- Implementing a benchmark testing program using academic coordinators responsible for coordinating the program and working with schools and teachers to implement necessary teaching and learning strategies. The academic coordinators coordinate the benchmark testing, evaluate test results by school and teacher, provide information and learning strategies to principals and teachers and conduct staff development as requested; and
- Providing staff development focusing on TAAS.

Also, at specific campuses with high percentages of minority and economically disadvantaged students, Galveston ISD principals said the keys to successes are a clear focus on instructional improvement with high expectations for all students, a clearly defined curriculum of study designed to meet the needs of students, clear and constant accountability of teachers and students for progress, a school-wide set of test-taking strategies taught by teachers, and a campus focus on teaching and practicing necessary skills in reading and writing across content areas.

At one Galveston elementary school, the percent of minority students is 91 percent and the percent of economically disadvantaged students is 79 percent. The school has been open only three years but has already achieved Recognized status.

Recommendation 8:

Implement programs designed to narrow the performance gap between Anglo, minority and economically disadvantaged students.

EISD staff should identify districts and schools with similar percentages of minority and economically disadvantaged student populations that have also achieved Recognized or Exemplary status or acknowledgments for reading or math. EISD staff should visit these districts and schools and identify strategies that could work in Elgin ISD.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director of Academic Services identifies districts and schools with high percentages of minority and economically disadvantaged student populations that have also achieved Recognized or Exemplary status.	October 2000
2.	The executive director schedules visits to these districts.	October 2000
3.	The executive director and superintendent identify EISD staff members who should visit the selected districts.	October 2000
4.	The executive director and selected staff visit the selected districts.	November 2000-February 2001
5.	The executive director prepares a summary of the findings of the visits and potential strategies for use by EISD.	February 2001
6.	The executive director reviews the information with the EISD staff who participated in the visits.	March 2001
7.	The executive director incorporates comments and reviews the document with the superintendent.	April 2001
8.	The executive director includes any modifications from the superintendent and presents the strategies to the District Improvement Committee (DIC).	April 2001
9.	The DIC includes selected strategies in the District Improvement Plan (DIP) for presentation to the board.	May 2001
10.	The superintendent presents the DIP to the board for review and approval.	May 2001
11.	The board approves the DIP and instructs the superintendent to implement the plan with the 2001-02 budget.	June 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact will involve travel expenses for EISD staff and any substitute staff pay, especially if teachers are included in the EISD staff group visiting other districts. EISD should budget \$5,000 for this effort.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Implement programs designed to narrow the performance gap between Anglo, minority and economically disadvantaged students.	(\$5,000)	0	0	0	0

FINDING

Every student enrolled in a Texas public school in grades 3-8 and 10 must be given the opportunity to take the TAAS tests. There are circumstances under which some students are not tested. Also, of the students who are tested, not all students' test performances are considered for a school or district's accountability ratings. The reasons for exemption include:

- Students may take the test, but be excluded because they were not enrolled in that district by the last Friday in the previous October;
- Students may be excluded because they took the Spanish TAAS tests given in fifth or sixth grade, or the Spanish TAAS writing test in fourth grade;
- Students may be absent during every test administration;
- Students may receive a special education Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) exemption for every test; and
- Students may receive a limited English proficiency exemption (LEP) for every test.

Exhibit 2-36 shows the exemptions from TAAS for EISD, Region 13 and the state for 1997-98 and 1998-99. ARD exemptions are granted to individual special education students in a process controlled by the ARD committee on each campus. Each special education student receives an annual evaluation of their progress by the ARD committee, which includes the regular education teacher, the special education teacher, assessment staff (e.g., diagnostician, counselor) and an administrator empowered to commit the school district to whatever services are determined necessary by the ARD committee.

LEP exemptions are also granted to individual bilingual/ESL students by the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) on each campus. This committee is comprised of the same types of positions as the ARD committee, but instead of a special education teacher, the LPAC has a bilingual or ESL teacher.

Other exemptions are for students whose answer documents were coded with a combination of the not tested categories or whose testing was disrupted by illness or other events.

	98	99	98	99	98	99	98	99
Absent	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	1.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
ARD exempted	9.3%	28.4%	4.8%	13.2%	1.7%	5.0%	6.5%	16.9%
LEP exempted	0.0%	0.0%	6.5%	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%	4.8%	5.1%
Other	0.0%	1.5%	1.5%	2.9%	0.3%	3.4%	1.3%	1.7%
Total not tested	9.8%	29.9%	12.8%	23.1%	3.1%	8.5%	12.7%	23.8%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1997-98 - 1998-99.

The primary reason cited by principals for the increase in special education exemptions was the inclusion of the results of these students in TAAS scores for the first time in 1999. When in doubt about a student's capabilities, principals were reluctant to qualify them to take the TAAS.

Again, principals and teachers said that the lack of involvement and oversight, especially by the superintendent in the absence of a director of curriculum, hurt test scores.

According to the EISD director of Special Education, the district is considering methods to reduce the TAAS exemptions, including the following:

- ARD committee evaluates all available information prior to exemption:
 - Participation in regular education classes.
 - Extent of modifications implemented for success in general curriculum.
 - Exposure to and mastery of TEKS in regular education and resource classes.
 - Grades in all classes.
 - Scores on previous TAAS or released TAAS.
 - Scores on practice TAAS.
 - Performance on teacher administered reading inventories or other informal assessments.
 - Performance on norm-referenced tests administered as part of Special Education Three-year evaluation.
- District administers released TAAS as alternate assessment for many exempt students to give students practice in taking the TAAS and to have scores for ARD committee decisions.

- District includes special education students in reading labs, TAAS math remediation classes and tutoring sessions offered to all students.
- District includes special education students who are enrolled in regular education classes in TAAS warm-ups, practice exercises and benchmark testing.
 - District provides staff development on appropriate student participation in TAAS and the Special Education Alternative TAAS for ARD committee members.
 - District includes special education students in regular education summer school skill remediation.

Recommendation 9:

Implement plans to reduce TAAS exemptions for minority students and monitor results.

Assessing each student's strengths and weaknesses are the first critical step necessary to creating programs that can help those children succeed. If EISD's proposed plans are ineffective, then EISD should review what other districts have used to be successful in this area.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director, director and principals meet to discuss the methods and their implementation at each campus.	September - October 2000
2.	The executive director and the director incorporate the comments of the principals in their plan and present it to the superintendent for approval.	October 2000
3.	The superintendent approves the plan, with modifications, and directs the executive director and director to implement the plan.	October 2000
4.	The executive director and the director implement the plan and monitor the results.	November 2000 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

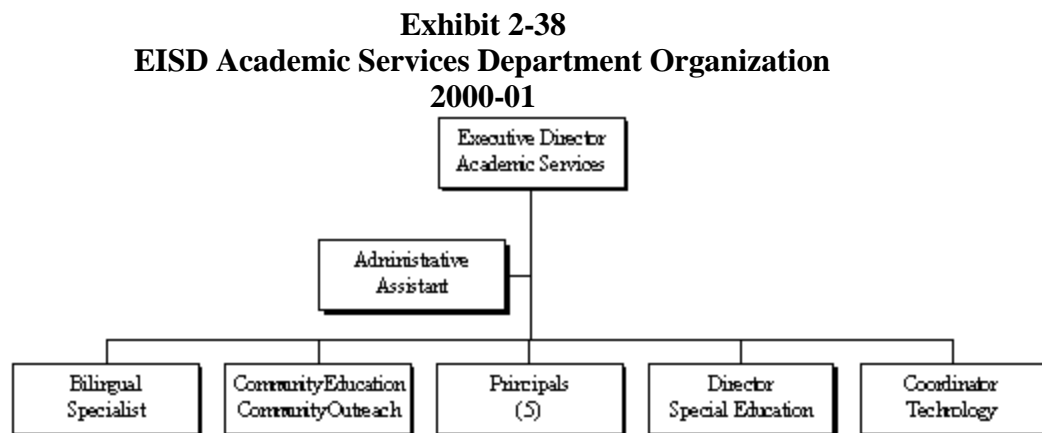
This recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

Chapter 2

B. CURRICULUM PROGRAMS AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

With board approval, the superintendent reorganized EISD central administration for the beginning of the 2000-01 school year. The reorganization created three major areas of administration: Academic Services, Business and Financial Services and Administrative Services. All are headed by executive directors.

The Academic Services Department manages the development and modification of curriculum, the delivery of educational services and the evaluation of programs in EISD. The executive director supervises all principals, bilingual/ESL education, community outreach, special education and technology staff (**Exhibit 2-38**).



Source: EISD superintendent.

The responsibilities of each of these positions are described in **Exhibit 2-39**.

Exhibit 2-39 **Responsibilities of EISD Academic Services Department Personnel**

Position	Key Areas of Responsibility
Executive director, Academic Services	Responsible for the development, implementation and monitoring of all academic programs, supervision of principals and supervision of all programs for special student populations.

Director, Special Education	Responsible for supervising all special education programs and serves as liaison to the Bastrop County Special Education Cooperative.
Community Education/Community Outreach	Coordinates all communications with organizations and groups in the district regarding EISD programs and functions.
Coordinator, Technology	Coordinates all instructional technology services within the district, including implementation of new programs and staff development.
Bilingual Specialist	Serves as lead teacher and administrator for all bilingual and ESL programs.

Source: EISD job descriptions and TSPR interviews.

The Texas Education Code prescribes certain criteria for staff development in a Texas school district (Subchapter J. Staff Development, Section 21.451). The key requirements are that staff development:

- Must include training in technology, conflict resolution strategies and discipline strategies;
- May include instruction as to what is permissible under law;
- Must be predominantly campus-based, related to achieving performance objectives; and
- Must be developed and approved by the campus site-based decision-making committee.

Campus staff development may include activities that enable the campus staff to plan together to enhance existing skills, to share effective strategies, to reflect on curricular and instructional issues, to analyze student achievement results, to reflect on means of increasing student achievement, to study research, to practice new methods, to identify students' strengths and needs, to develop meaningful programs for students, to appropriately implement site-based decision making, and to conduct action research.

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

- How needs for training will be identified;
- Specific training requirements;
- How campus-level staff development operates;
- A focus on staff development for student achievement;
- Criteria for how campus staff are to be reimbursed for attending training on their own time;
- Requirements for special programs training (e.g., gifted and talented, Title I, students with disabilities); and
- Administrator training policy.

Exhibit 2-40 shows EISD's districtwide and campus staff development program for 1998-99 and 1999-2000.

**Exhibit 2-40
EISD Staff Development
1998-99 and 1999-2000**

Level	Courses
Districtwide	Technology basics
	Understanding poverty
	Character education
	Climbing Toward Excellence
	Grade accounting
	Technology
	Sexual harassment
Primary school	ELIC
	LINKS
	Reading Renaissance (Accelerated Reader)
	Guided reading
	Technology: basic computer skills, E-class grade accounting, Internet, TIF grant strands
	Individually-assigned staff development
	Reading academies
Elementary school	Technology: learning to use In Focus, scanner, smart board, easy pro projectors, E-class grade accounting, Internet, email
	Gifted and talented program: identification of students and teaching methods

	Accelerated Reader
	Texas educators code of ethics
	Special education: identification and modifications
Middle school	Happy campers
	Thinking maps
	Tough kids
	Teach with technology
	Extraordinary meetings
	It's the law
High school	Focus training
	Cooperative learning
	Questioning and inquiry techniques
	Sexual harassment
	E-class grade accounting
	Socratic questioning
	Brain-based learning
	Cooperative discipline
	PDAS

Source: EISD.

FINDING

As a result of principals' monitoring the needs of EISD students, a number of new programs have been created, adopted or modified to meet specific needs.

Power Reading at the primary school is a reading intervention program that involves teams of teachers and educational aides who visit first and second grade classrooms four times each week to assist the classroom teacher in providing targeted support to bring all students to grade-level reading. A running record evaluation is conducted each quarter to establish each student's reading level based on the rate and accuracy with which each student reads. After the evaluation, students are regrouped based on their progress.

At the elementary school, Accelerated Reader originally started through the use of Title I, Part A funds. In 1996-97, the program was adopted school-wide. Points are awarded for reading books at grade level and answering questions using a computer-based test. At many school districts, the computer programs used to test student comprehension are in a classroom, limiting access during the day. The elementary school placed the test programs on computers in the library to give students greater flexibility to take the tests.

Skills building at the middle school is a new program initiated by the principal in 1999-2000. After the first six-weeks grading period, any student with less than a 75 in a core subject (reading, language arts, math, science or social studies) is pulled from an elective course for three weeks and placed in a study hall. Teachers are in the study hall for tutoring, not regular classroom teaching. The program attempts to catch students during the first semester whose grades would otherwise be so poor that even progress during the second semester would be insufficient to pass the course. According to the counselor responsible for implementing the program, potential retention students dropped from 80 at the end of the 1998-99 school year to 30 at the end of the 1999-2000 school year.

At the high school, students enrolled in the Telecommunications and Networking program learn and apply technical skills related to computer networking infrastructures. The foundation of the curriculum is based on the Cisco Networking Academy Program. The instructor then incorporates the secondary materials needed to satisfy the established TEKS for the course. The students are able to apply their acquired knowledge through the practical application labs enveloped in the curriculum increasing their knowledge and skill level with respect to network topologies, routers and switches. Upon successful completion of the two-year program, the students will have a field of experience from which to draw when taking the Cisco Certified Network Associate exam. Students are encouraged to augment their learning experience through related studies in A+ programming language certification, Microsoft certifications or amateur radio operator licensing. The goal is to assist the students in identifying future career and educational goals by establishing a foundation from which they are able to draw when making decisions with respect to technology-related fields.

COMMENDATION

EISD develops programs at all grade levels targeted at improving student achievement and increasing career opportunities.

FINDING

Program evaluation is comprehensive and should focus on program results and effectiveness, be independently conducted and examine issues including:

- Economy, efficiency or effectiveness of the program;
- Structure or design of the program to accomplish its goals and objectives;
- Adequacy of the program to meet its needs identified by the school board, governmental agencies or law;
- Alternative methods of providing program services or products;
- Program goals and objectives clearly linked to and supporting department, division and district priorities, strategic goals and objectives;
- Adequate benchmarks and comparisons have been set for student goals, program cost efficiency and cost effectiveness;
- Compliance with appropriate policies, rules and laws; and
- Adequacy and appropriateness of goals, objectives and performance measures used by the program to monitor, assess and report on program accomplishments.

Program objectives are measurable and adequately define the specific effect the program is expected to have on student achievement.

There is no regular program evaluation process in EISD. The executive director of Academic Services, a newly-created position, will be responsible for program evaluation.

Effective program evaluation processes in school districts describe standards applied to the evaluation of all district educational programs. They involve the preparation of written curriculum guides and pacing calendars to time learning objectives to meet benchmark testing efforts; preparation of curriculum matrices that identify TEKS requirements by grade level and subject area; vertical alignment, scope and sequencing of the curriculum to ensure adequate coverage of TEKS and mastery of TAAS objectives by grade level and subject matter; and evaluation of the success of programs in meeting student achievement needs.

In Waco ISD, district staff developed a What Works process that allows schools to use discretionary funds to implement programs if they meet one of three conditions:

- Listing in the What Works compendium developed after a comprehensive review of educational research;
- The site-based decision-making committee can provide documentation showing the program has produced desired outcomes under similar circumstances; or

- It is a pilot project for which research design is developed and used to measure results for a period of time not to exceed three years. The principal and site-based decision-making committee must agree to discontinue the program if results are not achieved.

The 1990 *Spring Independent School District Standard Process for Program Evaluation* describes standards applied to the evaluation of all educational programs in Spring ISD. Its intent is "to establish program evaluation as an expected, systematic and continuing process integrated with an organized program development cycle." The plan gathers information useful to improving, revising and determining the worth of programs. Two types of evaluation are included for these purposes: evaluation designed to improve the implementation of programs in progress and evaluation designed to make judgments regarding the merit of programs.

A select number of programs are reviewed each year. These program evaluations identify both strengths and concerns. Instructional and administrative staff and the board use evaluation results as the basis for program planning and revision. In addition to these evaluations, Spring ISD evaluates programs periodically through surveys of parents, teachers and students. Spring also annually surveys graduates. Specific staff responsibilities are identified at each organizational level, with overall program coordination invested in one district-level position.

Spring's five-year curriculum evaluation program was created based on *Standards for Evaluation of Educational Programs, Projects and Materials*, produced by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation. Variables to be addressed in the program evaluation process include:

- Measures of the Degree of Program Implementation;
- Measures of Student Performance;
- Measures of the Quality of Teacher Preparation and Development;
- Measures of Teacher Satisfaction and Concern;
- Measures of the Use, the Quantity, and the Quality of Materials and Resources;
- Measures of Unintended Effects;
- Measures of Student, Parent and Community Satisfaction; and
- Measures of Adequacy of Staffing, Facilities and Equipment

Program evaluation is a data-driven process and requires time to disaggregate and assess data from various national, state and local assessment tools.

Recommendation 10:

Develop a formal program evaluation process, clearly define roles and responsibilities and provide trained staff to lead the program.

The executive director of academic services should work with central office staff, principals and teachers in developing a rotational schedule of programs. A standard report format should be adopted, and a timeframe for accomplishment of the evaluations established.

Funds should be budgeted to provide contract data programming support or other assistance supporting program evaluation.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director of Academic Services meets with central office Curriculum and Instruction staff, principals and teachers to discuss the order of priority in which programs should be evaluated.	September 2000
2.	The executive director of Academic Services develops a rotational cycle, a standard report format, a schedule for completing the evaluations during the first year and reviews it with the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, central office curriculum and instruction staff, principals and teachers.	October 2000
3.	The executive director of Academic Services modifies the plan to reflect the input of the participants and presents it to the assistant superintendent for approval.	November 2000
4.	The superintendent approves the plan and authorizes the executive director of Academic Services to begin the process.	November 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

C. COMPENSATORY EDUCATION

Accelerated or compensatory education, as defined in Section 42.152 (c) of the Texas Education Code, is a program designed to improve and enhance the regular education program for students in at-risk situations. In determining the appropriate accelerated or compensatory program, districts must use student performance data resulting from the state assessment instruments and any other achievement tests administered by the district. Based on this needs assessment, district and school staff design the appropriate strategies and include them in the school and/or district improvement plan. By law, the improvement plan must include the comprehensive needs assessment, measurable performance objectives, identified strategies for student improvement, identified resources and staff, specified timelines for monitoring each strategy and formative evaluation criteria. Each district is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the locally designed program.

The criteria used to identify students in at-risk situations are defined in Section 29.081 of the Texas Education Code. Each student in grades 7-12 who is less than 21 years of the age and who: 1) was not advanced from one grade level to the next for two or more school years; 2) has mathematics or reading skills that are two or more years below grade level; 3) did not maintain an average equivalent to 70 on a scale of 100 in two or more courses during a semester, or is not maintaining such an average in two or more courses in the semester and is not expected to graduate within four years of the date the student begins ninth grade; 4) did not perform satisfactorily on an assessment instrument administered according to Subchapter B, Chapter 39; or 5) is pregnant or a parent. In addition, each student in pre-Kindergarten through sixth grade who: 1) did not perform satisfactorily on a readiness test or assessment instrument administered at the beginning of the school year; 2) did not perform satisfactorily on assessment instrument administered in conformity with Subchapter B, Chapter 39; 3) is a student of limited English proficiency, as defined by Section 29.052; 4) is sexually, physically or psychologically abused; or 5) engages in conduct described by Section 51.03(a), Family Code.

Also, students in any grade are identified as at-risk if they are not disabled and reside in a residential placement facility in a district in which the student's parent or legal guardian does not reside, including a detention facility, substance abuse treatment facility, emergency shelter, psychiatric hospital, halfway house or foster family group home.

Funding allocated according to state compensatory education is based on the number of educationally disadvantaged students in the district. The number of educationally disadvantaged students is determined by averaging the best six months' enrollment in the national school lunch program of free or reduced-price lunches for the preceding school year.

TEA's compensatory education guidelines allow districts to concentrate their compensatory education resources on one or a small number of campuses that serve at-risk students. These decisions are made for program reasons, relating to differences in academic performance and other considerations such as the number of economically disadvantaged or minority students on a campus.

FINDING

EISD does not allocate compensatory funds proportionally to the number of economically disadvantaged students enrolled in the school. Elgin Primary School, whose percent of eligible students is the highest at 64 percent receives the least per student allocation of compensatory funds and the second-smallest amount of total instructional funds.

The percent of EISD students classified either as economically disadvantaged or eligible for receiving free or-reduced meals is about 51 percent districtwide. EISD budgeted \$672,125, or 63 percent of the \$1.1 million in state compensatory funds for 1998-99 for use directly at a school (**Exhibit 2-41**).

Exhibit 2-41
EISD Schools, At-Risk Students and Compensatory Funding
1998-99

School	Number of Eligible Free-or-Reduced Lunch Students	Compensatory Funding	Compensatory Expenditures per Eligible Student	Non-Compensatory Instructional Funding	Total Instructional Funding	Total Enrollment	Total Instructional Expenditures per Student
Elgin Primary	528	\$140,747	\$267	\$2,411,460	\$2,552,207	828	\$3,082
Elgin Elementary	228	\$63,126	\$277	\$1,296,426	\$1,359,552	398	\$3,416
Washington Middle School	315	\$175,447	\$557	\$1,805,180	\$1,980,627	645	\$3,071
Phoenix	9	\$147,821	\$16,425	(\$19,195)	\$128,626	24	\$5,359

Learning Center							
Elgin High School	256	\$144,984	\$566	\$2,786,666	\$2,931,539	746	\$3,930
Total	1,336	\$672,125	\$2,697	\$8,280,426	\$8,952,551	2,641	\$3,390

Source: EISD business manager, May 2000

Federal funding is based upon the poverty level in the geographical area in which the school district is located. Title I, Part A funding is for helping disadvantaged children at risk of failure to meet high standards; Part C is for education of migrant students; Title II, Part B, Eisenhower funds are for professional development; Title IV is for safe and drug-free schools and Title VI is for innovative education program strategies. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act authorized these entitlements in 1965, amended them on several occasions and last re-authorized them in October 1994. Funds the district received in each of these programs are identified in **Exhibit 2-42**.

TEA and the federal government provide very specific guidelines for using schedule 5B in determining which services will be provided and amount of funds used at each school. Schedule 5B of the Title I application requires districts to rank order their schools based on the percent of students in the free and-reduced lunch program.

EISD submits an annual program evaluation for all Title funds and TEA reviews data submitted through PEIMS to ensure equity and that compensatory funds are being used to supplement and not supplant regular education funds.

Exhibit 2-42
EISD Federal Program Funds
1997-98 through 1999-2000

Title	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
I	\$423,739	\$423,817	\$423,817
II	\$10,072	\$13,217	\$12,996
IV	\$13,708	\$14,141	\$11,254
VI	\$13,568	\$15,307	\$15,772
Total	\$461,087	\$466,482	\$463,839

Source: EISD business manager, May 2000

Title I, Part A programs are designated as either school-wide assistance, which means the funds can be used throughout the school to upgrade the entire educational program as long as the uses help meet the needs of the targeted students, or targeted assistance, which means the funds are used for a designated purpose, such as a computer lab, that serves the targeted students.

To qualify as a school-wide assistance school, 50 percent of the student population must be identified as economically disadvantaged. Elgin Primary and Elgin Elementary School are school-wide assistance schools. Washington Middle School and Elgin High are targeted assistance schools serving 315 and 256 students, respectively.

EISD implements a variety of compensatory education programs (**Exhibit 2-43**).

Exhibit 2-43
EISD Compensatory Education Programs
1999-2000

Program	Description	School Location
CEI Labs	CEI is a comprehensive CD-ROM-based program for elementary students in language arts and math. The curriculum provides individualized instruction.	Washington Middle School
Reading Programs	The Stevenson Reading Program, Morgan Phonics and the AR Reading Program	Elgin Primary, Elgin Elementary School
Power Reading	A local program sends three adults into each classroom to work with groups of two to six students in reading for 30 minutes each day.	Elgin Primary School
Jostens Computer Lab for Reading	This lab has software, which employs whole language approach to reading with skill instruction in phonics and vocabulary.	Elgin Primary School
After School Tutorials	Extra help in math and reading	Elgin Primary School, Elgin Elementary School, Washington Middle School

Texas Scottish Rite Reading Program	An Alphabetic Phonics program	Elgin Primary School, Elgin Elementary School
EDL Online	A computer reading tutorial	Elgin High School
Optional Extended Year (OEY)	OEY provides students with additional instructional time to master the state's content standards and student performance standards. Students served by the program are not likely to be promoted to the next grade level for the succeeding school year because they do not meet district standards or policies for promotion.	Elgin Primary School Elgin Elementary School Washington Middle School

Source: EISD Primary School principal, May 2000.

Recommendation 11:

Evaluate programs funded with compensatory education funds and direct funds to successful programs and areas of greatest need.

Program evaluation begins by setting goals and performance measures and then monitoring progress and regularly making adjustments to achieve the greatest success. Funding should be used for successful programs and unsuccessful programs must be modified or discontinued. Programs should be targeted to students identified as at-risk of academic failure or dropping out of school based on criteria in state and federal law.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Academic Services and principals evaluate all compensatory instruction programs, identify successful programs and modify or eliminate unsuccessful programs.	October 2000
2.	The director of Academic Services redirects compensatory funding to schools with greatest need for implementation of successful programs.	2001 Budget Timeline
3.	The director continues evaluation of all programs for effectiveness.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

D. BILINGUAL/ENGLISH-AS-A-SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) PROGRAM

Federal and state laws require districts to provide Bilingual/ESL programs to students whose first language is not English. These programs provide additional strategies and help for Limited-English-Proficient (LEP) students to become competent in comprehending, speaking, reading and composing the English language.

EISD employs 10 bilingual teachers who serve 208 students in bilingual education classes in Pre-K through fifth grade. The Bilingual/ESL program assists students who have limited English proficiency (LEP) transition gradually from speaking Spanish to proficiency in English. Districts implement bilingual programs in pre-K through third grade or K through fifth grade, when districts transition students into an ESL program.

EISD implements a bilingual program at Elgin Primary at School and Elgin Elementary School. A bilingual teacher delivers instruction in English and Spanish based on the academic needs of each student enrolled in the program. The classes are self-contained, mixed-age classes. **Exhibit 2-44** details EISD's model of instruction for Bilingual Education.

Exhibit 2-44
EISD Bilingual/ESL Model of Instruction
1999-2000

Grade Level	Spanish Instruction	English Instruction
Pre-K-first grade	Oral language acquisition of concepts and skills shall be 75 percent in Spanish	Oral language acquisition of concepts and skills shall be 25 percent in English
Second grade	Oral language acquisition of concepts and skills shall be 50 percent in Spanish	Oral language acquisition of concepts and skills shall be 50 percent in English
Third grade	Oral language acquisition of concepts and skills shall be 25 percent in Spanish	Oral language acquisition of concepts and skills shall be 75 percent in English
Fourth through fifth	Oral language acquisition of concepts and skills shall be 20	Oral language acquisition of concepts and skills shall be 80

grade	percent Spanish	percent in English
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Source: EISD Bilingual/ESL specialist, April 2000.

In EISD two ESL-certified teachers serve 88 students in the ESL program at Washington Middle School and Elgin High School (**Exhibit 2-45**). The high school ESL teacher also serves as the district specialist of Bilingual/ESL Education. Students in the ESL program do not receive services all day as students in the bilingual program, because the ESL students are in a transition to English. As a result, the ESL program needs fewer teachers.

ESL students at Washington Middle School enroll in an ESL class in lieu of their regular language arts class. Some high school students are enrolled in an ESL class and others receive assistance from the ESL teacher during their other course class times.

**Exhibit 2-45
EISD Bilingual and ESL Students by Grade Level
1999-2000**

Grade Level	Number of Students
Primary and elementary school (grades K-5)	208
Middle school (grades 6-8)	59
High school (grades 9-12)	29
Total	296

Source: EISD Bilingual/ESL Education specialist.

The percentage of Bilingual/ESL students is higher in EISD than all but one of its peer districts and the regional average. Del Valle and the state have higher percentages of Bilingual/ESL students than EISD (**Exhibit 2-46**).

**Exhibit 2-46
EISD, Peer District, Region 13 and State Students in Bilingual/ESL
Program
as a Percentage of Total Enrollment
1998-99**

Entity	Bilingual
---------------	------------------

	/ESL
Del Valle	14.8%
State	12.1%
Elgin	11.7%
Manor	10.0%
Region 13	7.2%
Taylor	6.9%
Bastrop	3.5%
Leander	2.2%

Source: TEA AEIS 1998-99.

Expenditures for the Bilingual/ESL program increased from 1995-96 through 1997-98. EISD's director of business said in 1998-99 that EISD changed reporting procedures to report only the bilingual stipends and supplies. He said the increase from 1998-99 to 1999-2000 was due to an increase in the stipends, technology and an increase in insurance. The number of Bilingual/ESL students increased 16 percent from 1995-96 to 1999-2000 (**Exhibit 2-47**).

Exhibit 2-47
EISD Bilingual/ESL Education Expenditures
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Category	1995-96 Actual	1996-97 Actual	1997-98 Actual	1998- 99 Actual	1999- 2000 Budget
Bilingual/ESL expenditures	\$257,641	\$371,639	\$634,616	\$43,467	\$88,569
Bilingual/ESL students served	256	274	270	309	296
Bilingual/ESL expenditures per student	\$1,006	\$1,356	\$2,188	\$141	\$299

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1995-96 through 1998-99 and EISD PEIMS coordinator and director of Business.

FINDING

A small percent of ESL students meet minimum expectations on the TAAS and show improvement on alternative assessments. A greater percentage of students in the Bilingual Program meet minimum expectations on the TAAS compared to students in the ESL program. Eighty-two percent of third grade bilingual students taking Spanish TAAS Reading passed and 100 percent passed third grade English TAAS reading. Ninety-two percent passed the fifth grade Reading TAAS. One hundred percent of third grade bilingual students taking either the Spanish TAAS math passed and bilingual students taking the English TAAS math passed at a rate of 81 percent at third grade and 100 percent at fifth grade.

Region Education Service Center 13, Division of Curriculum, Instruction and Priority Schools performed an Instructional Program Review for EISD. A finding in the report read "Some ESL students were asked to leave class and sit in the hall during class time. These students reported in their interview that this has taken place all year. After the teacher gives instruction to the rest of the class, he brings work for the ESL students to do. He grades it, and they correct it. When asked if they thought the work was hard, they laughed and said, "No." Because they were not fluent in English, they could not keep up with the class. The students indicated that they had learned English on their own and with each other's help."

Texas Educational Consultative Services, Inc. of Austin found in January 2000 LEP students in the high school received less than the required one period per day ESL methodology.

Pre-K through sixth grade students in both the bilingual and ESL programs take the Idea Proficiency Test (IPT) annually in both English and Spanish to determine their growth in oral language. At third through fifth grade, students in both programs take either the TAAS in English or Spanish. Students may exit from Bilingual/ESL programs if they pass the reading portion of the grade-appropriate English TAAS test and the writing portion of the grade-appropriate English TAAS test (at available grades).

ESL students had passing rates in English TAAS Reading ranging from 20 percent at the sixth and tenth grades to 56 percent at the seventh grade. No ESL students in third, fourth and fifth grades took the TAAS. **Exhibit 2-48** illustrates the number of Bilingual/ESL students tested and the percent passing.

Exhibit 2-48
Percentage of EISD Bilingual/ESL Students Passing TAAS
1998-99

Grade	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
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/ Subject	of Bilingual Students Tested	Passing	of ESL Students Tested	Passing
Spanish TAAS				
Third/Reading	11	82%	0	NA
Third/Math	14	100%	0	NA
Third/ Reading	0	NA	0	NA
Fourth Math	0	NA	0	NA
Fourth Writing	0	NA	0	NA
English TAAS				
Third/Reading	14	100%	NA	NA
Third/Math	16	81%	NA	NA
Fourth/ Reading	13	92%	NA	NA
Fourth Math	15	100%	NA	NA
Fourth Writing	NA	NA	NA	NA
Fourth/Writing	NA	NA	NA	NA
Fifth/Reading	NA	NA	NA	NA
Fifth/Math	NA	NA	NA	NA
Sixth/Reading	NA	NA	15	20%
Sixth/Math	NA	NA	15	27%
Seventh/Reading	NA	NA	9	56%
Seventh/Math	NA	NA	9	78%
Eighth/Reading	NA	NA	0	50%
Eighth/Math	NA	NA	0	NA
Eighth/Writing	NA	NA	5	NA
Tenth/Reading	NA	NA	5	20%
Tenth/Math	NA	NA	5	20%
Tenth/Writing	NA	NA	2	40%
Eleventh/Reading	NA	NA	2	100%
Eleventh/Math	NA	NA	2	100%
Eleventh/Writing	NA	NA	1	0%

Twelfth/Reading	NA	NA	1	100%
Twelfth/Math	NA	NA	1	0%
Twelfth/Writing	NA	NA		100%

Source: EISD Bilingual/ESL specialist, April 2000.

Bilingual/ESL students can be exempted by the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC), which is located at each school and comprised of at least an administrator, a teacher and a parent of an LEP student. The committee reviews the status of each bilingual and ESL student in the school to determine proficiency. The committee functions similar to the ARD committee for special education. For students who have been enrolled continuously in school beginning at least in the first grade, the LPAC is discouraged from exempting the student and/or administering TAAS in Spanish for more than two years.

Students exempted from taking TAAS must take an alternative assessment chosen from a list of assessments approved by TEA. Released TAAS tests from previous administrations may be used when appropriate. LEP exemptions are not permitted from the exit level test. EISD administers the IPT Proficiency test and Released TAAS (**Exhibit 2-49**). Fifty percent of students taking alternative assessments showed improvement.

Exhibit 2-49
Results of Alternative Assessments of EISD Bilingual/ESL Students
1997-98

Grade	Type of Student	Measure Used	Number Tested	Number Showing Improvement
Reading				
3rd	Bilingual	IPT or Released TAAS	12 IPT 8 Release TAAS	65
4th	Bilingual	IPT or Released TAAS	24 IPT 20 Release TAAS	611
5th	Bilingual	IPT or Released TAAS	15 IPT 15 Release TAAS	810
3rd	ESL	IPT	1	1
6th	ESL	Release TAAS	2	2
7th	ESL	Release TAAS	8	4

8th	ESL	Release TAAS	5	4
Math				
3rd	Bilingual	Release TAAS	7	4
4th	Bilingual	Release TAAS	1	0
5th	Bilingual	Release TAAS	19	8
3rd	ESL	Release TAAS	11	10
5th	ESL	NA	NA	NA
6th	ESL	Release TAAS	2	2
7th	ESL	Release TAAS	8	4
8th	ESL	Release TAAS	4	3

Source: EISD Bilingual/ESL Education specialist, April 2000.

Mount Pleasant ISD implements a modified dual language model. The model pairs a bilingual teacher, certified as fluent in both English and Spanish, with an ESL teacher, certified in teaching techniques that assist students in gaining proficiency in English. The bilingual teacher provides instruction in Spanish language arts, and the ESL teacher teaches math and oral English. The pupil/teacher ratio in the secondary ESL classes should be evaluated also.

Recommendation 12:

Evaluate the ESL program and make changes to better meet the needs of ESL students.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Academic Services and the Bilingual/ESL specialist evaluate all available test data and progress of LEP students to determine strengths and weaknesses of program.	September 2000
2.	The director of Academic Services visits model programs and determines strategies for improvement.	October 2000
3.	The director of Academic Services uses the evaluation data and information gained from model programs to amend the curriculum, the strategies for delivery of the curriculum and method of scheduling.	November 2000
4.	School principals establish goals for future performance and implement the revised program.	January 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

E. CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION (CATE)

According to Section 29.181 of the Texas Education Code, each Texas school district must offer career and technology education to their students. Career and Technology Education is a curriculum designed to prepare students to manage the dual roles of family member and wage earner. CATE courses should prepare students to gain entry-level employment in a high-skill, high-wage job or continue in post-secondary education. CATE includes training in areas such as health sciences and technology, marketing, industrial technology and trade, and industrial occupations. Although enrollment in CATE declined from 1995-96 to 1999-2000, it is a popular option for students in EISD. The career and technology director manages the CATE program as part of his overall responsibilities.

About 18 percent of all high school students in EISD enroll in CATE courses. This percentage is higher than the region and state averages. EISD enrollment in CATE programs decreased during the past five years while both the regional and state averages increased (**Exhibit 2-50**).

Exhibit 2-50
EISD, Region 13 and State Students Enrolled in CATE Programs
as a Percentage of Total Enrollment
1995-96 through 1998-99

Entity	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Elgin	28.5%	22%	19.2%	18.2%
Region 13	15.8%	15.8%	17.5%	16.3%
State	15.7%	16.9%	17.3%	17.4%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1995-96 - 1998-99.

TEA's Public Education Information Management System submission requires districts to track the numbers of students enrolled in CATE programs by the number of courses taken. Duplication is possible, because students may enroll in more than one CATE course. **Exhibit 2-51** compares EISD to its peer districts in the number of students enrolled in one or more CATE courses. EISD ranks in the middle of its peer districts in the percentage of students enrolled in CATE programs and better than the region and state averages.

Exhibit 2-51
EISD and Peer District Students Enrolled in CATE Programs
as a Percentage of Total Enrollment
1998-99

Entity	CATE Students
Manor	24.1%
Taylor	20.3%
Bastrop	19.2%
Elgin	18.2%
State	17.8%
Region 13	16.2%
Del Valle	12.3%
Leander	10.9%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1998-99.

Expenditures for the CATE program increased 129 percent from 1995-96 to 1999-2000, while student enrollment decreased 25 percent (**Exhibit 2-52**). The director of business said increases were due to an increase of staff in 1997 and 1998, salary increases each year and insurance premium increases in 2000.

Exhibit 2-52
EISD CATE Expenditures
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Category	1995-96 Actual	1996-97 Actual	1997-98 Actual	1998-99 Actual	1999-00 Budget	Percentage Change
CATE expenditures	\$309,368	\$467,514	\$586,068	\$604,637	\$602,024	95%
CATE students served	728	563	502	481	547	(24.9)%
CATE expenditures per student	\$425	\$830	\$1,167	\$1,257	\$1,101	159%

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1995-96 - 1998-99 and EISD PEIMS coordinator and EISD director of Business.

Compared to its peer districts EISD spends the second lowest dollar amount on its CATE program (**Exhibit 2-53**). Its per student expenditure of \$1,257 is the second-highest among its peer group.

**Exhibit 2-53
EISD and Peer District CATE Expenditures
1998-99 Budget**

Entity	CATE Expenditures	Expenditures per Student
Del Valle	\$1,238,762	\$1,793
Elgin	\$604,637	\$1,257
Taylor	\$722,038	\$1,236
Bastrop	\$1,139,435	\$1,017
Leander	\$1,316,487	\$1,017
Manor	\$495,201	\$866

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1998-99.

EISD is undertaking a series of initiatives to address the needs of its non college-bound students. According to the principal at Elgin High School, one-third of the graduates go on to college and an even lower percent actually completes college. As a result, there is a strong need for courses that will prepare students for alternative careers.

FINDING

EISD developed some unique CATE courses such as Agricultural Biotechnology, Animal Bio-Med Science and Intergenerational Professions. Agricultural Biotechnology is a course designed to introduce the basics of molecular biology. Instruction includes technical information and skill development in cell biology, recombinant DNA techniques, plant and animal biotechnology and career opportunities while in Animal Bio-Med Science students learn about animal health and animal services.

Intergenerational Professions trains students to be caregivers for individuals and group care of young children and the elderly. This course

provides opportunities for supervised workplace experience in addition to the regular classroom instruction.

EISD implemented a telecommunications and networking lab program (Cisco Lab) in 1999-2000. This two-year program prepares students to pass a computer network certification test. Students learn the basics of computer networking, cabling, configuring information routers and troubleshooting problems. With this certification, a student qualifies for employment in an area where there is a critical shortage of qualified workers. The program is named after the Cisco Corporation, a major entity in the technology arena.

EISD also offers work-based education programs in five areas: Administrative Procedures, Agriculture, Careers in Education, Home Economics and Trades and Industry. Work-based education programs allow students to receive credit toward graduation requirements while employed.

COMMENDATION

EISD is developing programs to address critical needs areas in the workforce.

Chapter 2

F. GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION PROGRAM

Since 1987, state law has required that all Texas school districts have educational programs to serve the needs of gifted and talented students and that programs be available in all districts and at all grades. Gifted and talented students are characterized as having high levels of achievement, intellectual and academic ability, creativity, leadership skills and talent in the visual and performing arts.

Districts are required to have a systematic process for identifying gifted and talented students. TEA issues guidelines for the identification of gifted and talented students in an effort to ensure that these students receive a quality education. The process must include quantitative as well as qualitative evaluation tools and instruments. Funding for the identification of gifted and talented students and programs is available through the Texas Foundation School Program. This program is intended to provide gifted and talented programs for students from various cultural, linguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds.

EISD and all peer districts have enrollments in the gifted and talented program lower than the regional and state averages (**Exhibit 2-55**). EISD has a higher percentage than all but one of the peer districts.

Exhibit 2-55
EISD, Peer District, Region 13 and State Students in
Gifted and Talented Program as a Percent of Total Enrollment
1998-99

Entity	Gifted and Talented
State	8.4%
Region 13	7.7%
Leander	7.6%
Elgin	5.6%
Bastrop	5.5%
Manor	4.8%
Taylor	4.5%
Del Valle	2.8%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1998-99.

EISD expenditures for the gifted and talented program (G/T) are described in **Exhibit 2-56**. Total expenditures and per-student expenditures increased by 60 and 23.8 percent respectively since 1995-96. The number of students in the program increased by 29.6 percent during the same period.

Exhibit 2-56
EISD Expenditures for the Gifted and Talented Education Program
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Category	1995-96 Actual	1996-97 Actual	1997-98 Actual	1998-99 Actual	1999- 2000 Budget	Percentage Change
Gifted and talented expenditures	\$92,526	\$113,752	\$74,652	\$128,137	\$148,360	60.0%
Gifted and talented students served	125	120	139	148	162	29.6%
Gifted and talented Expenditures per student	\$740	\$948	\$537	\$866	\$916	23.8%

Source: TEA, PEIMS 1995-96-1998-99 and EISD.

The EISD Gifted Education program (Discovery) serves students in grades 1-8 who are performing, or have the potential to perform, at very high levels relative to their peers. The elementary and middle schools serve G/T identified students in pull-out programs also. In a pull-out program, students leave a regular classroom to join students from other classrooms to receive instruction from a G/T-certified specialist. In grades K-1, G/T students attend G/T classes one day each week for three hours. In grades 2-3 the G/T students attend G/T class once per week for 4.5 hours. The emphasis is on problem solving, whole brain approaches to learning and task commitment. The curriculum includes content-specific instruction, which incorporates creative, intellectual and leadership skills. High school students enroll in pre-advanced placement and advanced placement classes.

Teachers, counselors, parents or other interested persons nominate students for Discovery after completion of the *Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students* evaluation. Special effort is made to secure nominations of students who have special needs. The nomination process for services provided is ongoing with screening of students occurring no less than twice each year.

Students who meet initial screening criteria are evaluated for the program based on a combination of achievement test scores, aptitude test scores, teacher and parent ratings and a creativity test score (**Exhibit 2-57**).

Exhibit 2-57
Criteria Used to Qualify Students for
the EISD Gifted and Talented Program

Criteria	Test	Score
Achievement	TAAS or Iowa Test of Basic Skills	Score in the top 1-3% 96th percentile on the total score
Aptitude/Intelligence	Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test or Raven	Score in the top 1-3% 96th percentile
Teacher Ratings	Behavioral characteristic checklist	Score in the top 1-3% 96th percentile
Parent Ratings	Behavioral characteristic checklist	Score in the top 1-3% 96th percentile
Creativity Test	Torrence	Score in the top 1-3% 96th percentile

Source: EISD Gifted and Talented Manual.

The principal at each school is responsible for organizing a Screening and Selection Committee composed of a school administrator, teachers from each school grade level, a counselor and the G/T coordinator who will chair the committee. Students who do not qualify for the program but have a high screening performance may file for formal reconsideration.

The selection committee places students who are unable to maintain satisfactory performance in the program on furlough. The purpose of such a furlough is to provide the student an opportunity to attain performance goals established by the selection committee. The student and/or parent request a furlough. A furlough is granted for nine weeks, a semester or the remainder of the school year as deemed appropriate by the selection

committee. If the student is not ready to reenter the program at the end of the furlough, the student is taken out of the program.

FINDING

Minority students are not represented in the gifted and talented program in percentages commensurate to their percent of the overall student population. About one-fourth of the program's participants are minority students while more than 55 percent of the district's enrollment are minority students (**Exhibit 2-58**).

Exhibit 2-58
EISD Gifted and Talented Program Enrollment Percentage
by Ethnicity Compared to Total Enrollment by School
December 1999

School	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Other
Elgin High School				
Total enrollment	49.5%	14.1%	35.8%	
G/T enrollment	13.3%	4.7%	1.5%	
Washington Junior High School				
Total enrollment	48.5%	11.6%	40.0%	
G/T enrollment	11.8%	3.9%	3.8%	
Elgin Elementary School				
Total enrollment	44.1%	16.2%	37.9%	
G/T enrollment	8.5%	0.0%	4.6%	
Elgin Primary School				
Total enrollment	39.6%	15.0%	44.8%	
G/T enrollment	5.7%	1.5%	2.1%	
Total				
Total enrollment	45.1%	13.9%	40.2%	0.8%
G/T enrollment	74.7%	6.2%	17.9%	0%

Source: EISD director of Human Resources.

In response to a 1998 complaint with the Office of Civil Rights, EISD is attempting to increase the representation of minorities in the gifted and talented education program. EISD prepared a brochure in both English and Spanish to explain the G/T program and its benefits. EISD distributed these brochures and made presentations at parent education meetings, the African American Parent Committee and the Chamber of Commerce to encourage nominations of minority students.

After testing, a Talent Pool is formed. These students meet with the G/T teacher to work on creative skills and analogies once each week for one hour over 12 weeks. For students who do not initially qualify, a procedure is in place for formal reconsideration. Formal reconsideration may be filed for the following reasons: the student's home language is not English, the student has a disability or scores four or better on three of the six criteria.

Several districts use alternative instruments to identify minority students for the G/T program. Galveston ISD uses Aprenda, which is the Spanish equivalent of the Stanford Achievement Test. Alief ISD uses the Woodcock Munos, the Spanish version of the Woodcock Johnson verbal IQ test. Alief ISD is amending its criteria to use only one unified nonverbal intelligence test, Naglieri, for all students. Rather than having a definitive cut-off score for qualifying, Alief ISD awards differentiated points from the seventh stanine through the ninth stanine.

The State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students, published by TEA, provides guidelines for student assessment. The Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented and the Region 13 Education Service Center also can provide assistance.

Recommendation 13:

Amend G/T assessment criteria to ensure that all student populations have access to G/T assessment and services.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Academic Programs contacts TEA's Division of Gifted/Talented Education for assistance in redesigning a program to follow <i>State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students</i> and increase minority participation.	September 2000
2.	The director of Academic Programs forms a committee of G/T teachers to research procedures used by model districts and amends the identification criteria for G/T.	September 2000
3.	The director of Academic Programs recommends the proposed changes to the superintendent.	November 2000

4.	The superintendent approves the plan and recommends it to the board for approval.	November 2000
5.	The board approves the revised plan for implementation.	December 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

To implement this recommendation, the district would have to purchase additional assessment instruments for each school. The cost of such a test is approximately \$215. The fiscal impact would be a one-time cost of \$215 X 4 schools = \$860.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Establish expanded criteria for identification of G/T candidates.	(\$860)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Chapter 2

G. SPECIAL STUDENT POPULATIONS

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 require all public school districts that receive federal funds to establish central and school processes to identify students with learning disabilities or special learning needs so that accommodations can be made to assist them in having equal learning opportunities. This includes students in special education and students with dyslexia, attention deficit and/or hyperactivity disorders, among others. It includes accommodations such as additional instruction in a particular subject through a resource teacher, additional time to complete assignments and oral exams versus written exams.

EISD employs a director of special education, 27 special education teachers and three speech therapists to deliver special education programs. EISD delivers these services to special education students through a variety of methods summarized in **Exhibit 2-59**.

Exhibit 2-59 EISD Special Education Instructional Settings 1999-2000

Instructional Setting	Description
Mainstream	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inclusion: Special education students receive instruction in all regular education classes with modifications and support such as assistance from a teacher's aide, assistive technology, monitoring by a special education teacher, etc.• Inclusion-Itinerant Support: Special education students are included in regular classes. An itinerant special education teacher goes to the class to assist the students.
Resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resource Room: Eligible students receive special education instruction and/or related services in a special education class for some subjects- less than 50 percent of the school day.• Content Mastery: A classroom staffed with a special education teacher. Special education students from regular classes may leave the class to receive additional

	help in the content mastery class.
Self-contained	<p>Students receive 50 percent or more of their instruction in classes with other special education students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life Skills: Classes for elementary students with significant delays who need academic and daily living skills instruction. • Community-Based Instruction: Classes for secondary students with significant delays who need academic instruction, daily living skills instruction and work experience. • Adaptive Behavior Classes: Classes for students with emotional/behavioral disabilities who need structure and social skills training along with academic instruction. • Resource Classes: If students receive 50 percent or more of their instruction in special education resource classes, their instructional setting is self-contained.
Vocational Adjustment Class	Students receive special education, academic, or job-related instruction while placed in a full-time or part-time job with regularly scheduled supervision by a special education teacher.
Off Home Campus	Students from more than one school district receive special education instruction and related services in a single location (Adaptive Behavior classes and classes for the severe and profoundly handicapped).
Residential Care and Treatment Facility	Special education services are provided at a school district campus for eligible students with disabilities who reside in approved care and treatment facilities (including licensed foster homes) and whose parents do not reside within the boundaries of the school district providing educational services to the students.
Homebound	Special education services are provided at home for students expected to be confined for a minimum of four consecutive weeks as documented by a licensed physician or for those infants and toddlers with visual and/or auditory impairments whose developmental levels are such that they are not capable of participating in special education classes.
Hospital class	Twin Oaks Treatment Center. Special education services are provided at hospital bedside for students expected to be confined for a minimum of four consecutive weeks as documented by a licensed physician or for those infants and

	toddlers with visual and/or auditory impairments whose developmental levels are such that they are not capable of participating in special education classes.
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Source: EISD director of Special Education Cooperative.

EISD's special education student population is 14 percent of the total student population. In December 1999, EISD had 431 students in special education across all its schools and special centers. This percentage is above the state and the regional averages of 12.8 and 12.1 percent. Three of the five peer districts have a higher percent than Elgin (**Exhibit 2-60**).

Exhibit 2-60
EISD, Peer District, Region 13 and State Students in Special Programs
as a Percentage of Total Enrollment
1998-99

Entity	Special Education
Taylor	18.2%
Del Valle	15.1%
Manor	14.2%
Elgin	14.2%
Bastrop	14.0%
Region 13	12.8%
State	12.1%
Leander	11.6%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1998-99.

In December 1999, EISD had 431 students in special education across all its schools and special centers (**Exhibit 2-61**).

Exhibit 2-61
EISD Special Education Students by School
December 1999

School	Number of	Percent Of Total	Types of Services
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	Students	Enrollment	
Elgin High School	107	14.3%	Assessment, assistive technology, community based instruction, content mastery, counseling, Focus, homebound, Lifeskills (if this is the proper name of a program use Lifeskills, if not use life skills), mainstream, occupational therapy, orientation and mobility, physical therapy, RDSPD (spell out), resource, special transportation, speech therapy, teacher for visually impaired, transition, VAC (spell out).
Washington Middle School	118	18.1%	Assessment, assistive technology, community based instruction, content mastery, counseling, homebound, occupational therapy, physical therapy and speech therapy, Lifeskills, orientation and mobility, mainstream, behavior intervention, RDSPD, resource, teacher for the visually impaired, self-contained, transitions and special transportation.
Elgin Elementary School	65	16.2%	Assessment, assistive technology, content mastery, counseling, homebound, occupational therapy, physical therapy and speech therapy, Lifeskills, orientation and mobility, mainstream, RDSPD, resource, teacher for the visually impaired, itinerant/consultative inclusion self-contained and special transportation.
Elgin Primary School	111	13.2%	Assessment, assistive technology, counseling, homebound, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, Lifeskills, itinerant/consultative inclusion, orientation and mobility, mainstream, RDSPD, resource, teacher for the visually impaired, PPCD (spell out), self-contained and special transportation.
Phoenix Learning Center	4	16%	Assessment, assistive technology, counseling, homebound, mainstream, occupational therapy, orientation and mobility, physical therapy, RDSPD, special transportation, speech therapy, teacher for the visually impaired.

			transition, VAC.
PAC (Co-operative)	5	100%*	Assessment, assistive technology, counseling, homebound, inclusion with consultation, Lifeskills, occupational therapy, orientation and mobility, physical therapy, RDSPD, special transportation, speech therapy, teacher for the visually impaired, transition, VAC.
CLASS (co-operative)	1	100%*	Assessment, assistive technology, counseling, homebound, inclusion, lifeskills, occupational therapy, orientation and mobility, physical therapy, RDSPD, special transportation, speech therapy, teacher for the visually impaired, transition.
Total	431	16.1%	

Source: EISD director of Special Education.

* All students in the co-operative schools are special education students.

Expenditures for special education increased 161 percent from 1995-96 through 1998-99. The number of students served increased 29 percent and the per-student expenditure increased from \$2,358 in 1995-96 to \$4,847 in 1998-99, or 105.6 percent (**Exhibit 2-62**). EISD's director of business said the increase was a result of staffing increases in 1997, 1999 and 2000, salary increases each year, health insurance premium increase in 2000 and the purchase of two special education buses.

Exhibit 2-62
EISD Expenditures for the Special Education Program
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Category	1995-96 Actual	1996-97 Actual	1997-98 Actual	1998-98 Actual	1999-00 Budget	Percentage Change
Special education expenditures	\$785,208	\$1,265,933	\$1,,531,125	\$1,732,988	\$2,050,399	161%
Special education students served	333	355	375	375	431	29.0%

Special education expenditures per student	\$2,358	\$3,566	\$4,083	\$4,621	\$4,847	105.6%
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Source: TEA, PEIMS 1995-96 through 1999-2000.

Compared to its peer districts, EISD spends the lowest in gross dollars on the special education program and is the second-lowest in per-student expenditures (**Exhibit 2-63**).

Exhibit 2-63
EISD Special Education Program Expenditures vs. Peer Districts
1998-99 Budget

Entity	Special Education Expenditures	Expenditures per Eligible Student
Del Valle	\$6,303,924	\$7,399
Manor	\$2,127,878	\$6,314
Leander	\$7,586,751	\$5,526
Bastrop	\$4,011,222	\$4,904
Elgin	\$1,732,988	\$4,621
Taylor	\$2,176,202	\$4,153

Source: TEA, PEIMS 1998-99.

FINDING

EISD is a member of the Bastrop Special Education Cooperative, and has been a member since the mid-1970s. Bastrop, La Grange and Smithville ISDs also participate as members of the cooperative. Bastrop ISD serves as the fiscal agent.

The goal of the Bastrop County Special Education Cooperative is the inclusion of all students with disabilities into the general education program when it meets the identified needs of each student. The cooperative is committed to establishing family and community partnerships that in turn lead to success for all students.

The cooperative employs a director, three clerical staff, 13 assessment staff and three itinerant teachers: a homebound teacher, a visual itinerant

teacher and an auditory itinerant teacher. In 1986, the cooperative developed the Pine Street Alternative School for students with emotional disturbance in order to bring students back from nonpublic school (residential) placement. Bastrop Co-op provides two programs for students with severe and profound disabilities, Community, Life, Academic and Social Skills (CLASS), one elementary and one secondary. Seven teachers, seven aides and one associate psychologist staff Pine Street and two teachers and six aides staff the CLASS program. Five EISD students attend Pine Street and one student attends CLASS.

The cooperative is planning to reduce the size of Pine Street Alternative School considerably by providing a program at each home school and transitioning the students back to their home school. In 1999-2000, in the high school EISD began FOCUS, a model for inclusion of students with severe emotional and behavioral disorders in the regular classroom rather than in self-contained classes. Students who exhibit serious behavior problems benefit from the structured process of redirection or refocusing process that allows them to shape their school day into small segments. Trained redirectors teach students to modify misbehaviors into appropriate behaviors. The program will be expanded to other EISD schools in the future.

The member districts pay into the Co-op annually. Fixed costs have been divided equally between the districts, regardless of the amount of students served. Maintenance and operation costs have been prorated to each district depending upon the number of students served through special education as of the December 1 Child Count date. In 1999-2000 more of the Co-op costs were moved from the fixed cost category to the shared cost percent of usage configuration, due to increasingly disparate sizes of member districts. EISD's costs for 1999-2000 were budgeted at \$215,960 for 395 students (from a December 1998 count).

EISD, a member of the Bastrop County Special Education Cooperative, participates in the cooperative Regional Day School Program for the Deaf (RDSPD), with Region 13 Education Service Center serving as fiscal agent. RDSPD was created in 1973 by the Texas Legislature and is supervised by TEA's Division of Services for the Deaf. RDSPD staffs a cluster school in Giddings ISD with two certified teachers and certified interpreters who serve students with auditory impairments in regular classes.

RDSPD provides an Auditory Itinerant teacher who serves students attending classes in Elgin ISD. Of the 11 Bastrop County Cooperative students receiving direct services from RDSPD, EISD has one student receiving itinerant services. Three of the 14 students receiving consultative services are EISD students. No students from EISD attend the cluster

school in Giddings ISD. The per pupil fees for direct-serve students is \$7,016 and for consult students the fee is \$318.

COMMENDATION

EISD uses cooperatives to provide quality services at reasonable costs to students with special needs.

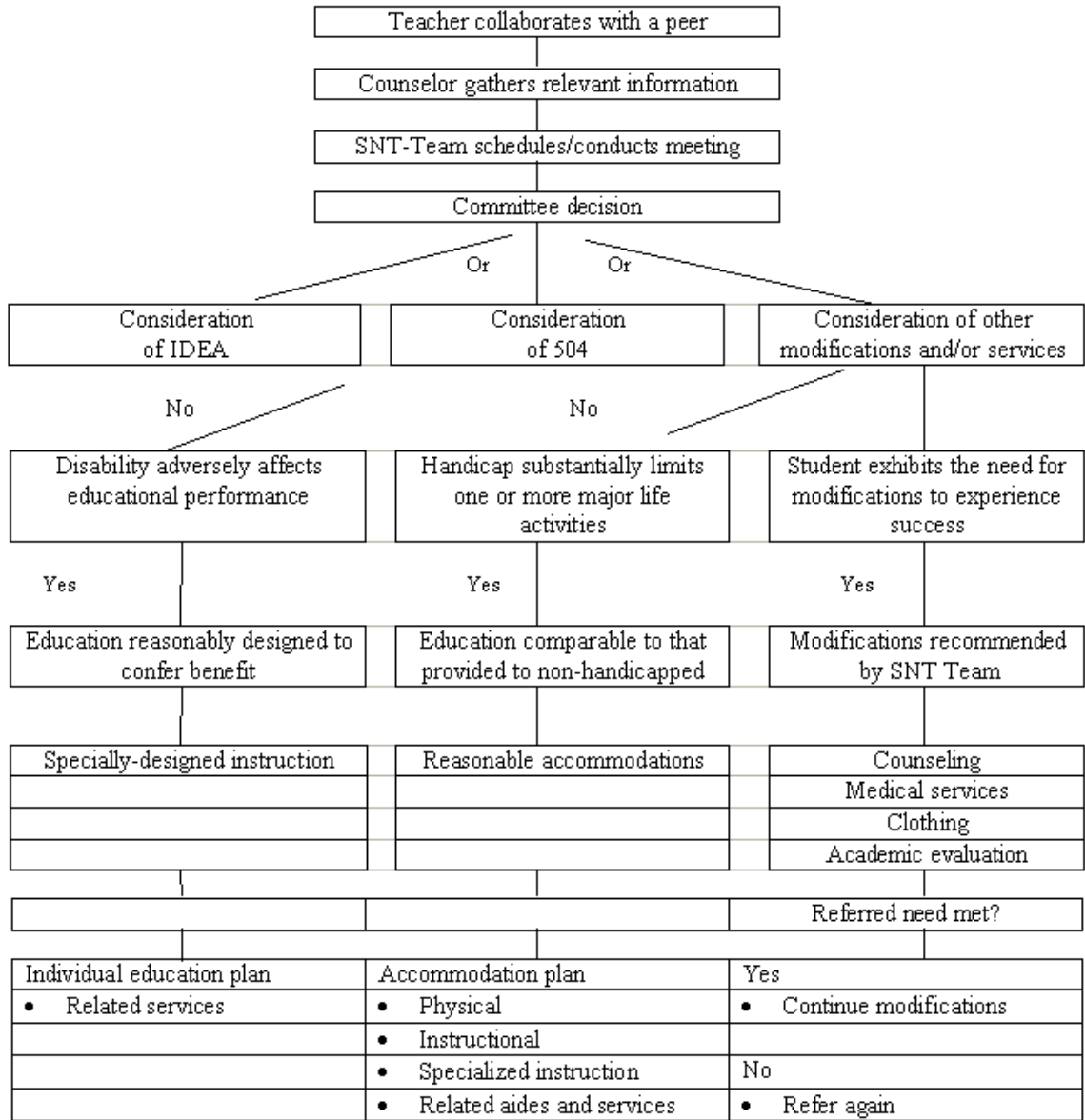
FINDING

Elgin ISD began a pre-referral intervention process in 1999-2000 designed to ensure instructional strategies are appropriate for student success prior to referral for assessment. The process promotes collaboration among parents, students school and district level instructional, support and administrative staff members.

The process, called Student Needs Team (SNT), is a four-level process that requires the teacher to first collaborate with a peer to determine additional strategies and interventions used in the classroom. The teacher also makes contact with the parent at this point. If these strategies are unsuccessful, the teacher contacts the counselor for a Level 2 data collection. At level 2, the information from Level 1 and the SNT data packet completed in level 2 are considered. Level 3 initiates the first SNT meeting. The SNT is a multidisciplinary group composed of school resources, parents and support specialists who collaboratively review the information gathered by the classroom teacher in Levels 1 and 2. Using the combined knowledge of the SNT members, the SNT lists strategies and supports to be used and schedules a follow-up meeting in three to six weeks. At level 4, if the student is making sufficient progress to conclude the process, the classroom teacher documents successful strategies in the student's cumulative folder. Referral to Section 504, dyslexia or special education is initiated if the student does not make sufficient progress.

Parents requesting special education assessment are encouraged to participate in the SNT process; however, if parents desire assessment, the referral is processed through the school counselor (**Exhibit 2-64**).

**Exhibit 2-64
EISD SNT-Team Referral Process**



Source: Bastrop Co-op director of Special Education.

The SNT Team has four options to consider. These options are to be considered from least restrictive to most restrictive in the following order:

- Implement school modifications for a pre-determined amount of time;
- Refer to the dyslexia committee on school;
- Initiate 504 referral process; and
- Initiate special education referral process.

The team strives to maintain a preventive and positive focus to ensure success for all students.

COMMENDATION

EISD developed a process for identifying individual student needs, devising appropriate modifications and accomplishing desired learning and achievement levels within the least restrictive environment.

Chapter 2

H. DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT AND ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code addresses discipline, law and order in Texas public schools. The original provisions were adopted in 1995 as part of the revision of the Texas Education Code. The Legislature amended these provisions in 1997 and 1999.

Under Section 11.252, each school district must have a district improvement plan that includes a discipline management plan. Chapter 37 provides additional guidelines that districts can use in formulating their own policies.

Alternative education programs (AEPs) became mandatory with the adoption of Chapter 37 in 1995. Section 37.008 of the Texas Education Code provides detailed information on the provision of such programs.

Each school district shall provide an alternative education program:

- In a setting other than a student's regular classroom;
- On or off of a regular school campus;
- For students who are assigned to the alternative education program to be separated from students who are not assigned to the program;
- Focusing on English language arts, mathematics, science, history and self-discipline;
- Meeting students' educational and behavioral needs; and
- Provides supervision and counseling.

An alternative education program may provide for a student's transfer to a different campus, a school-community guidance center or a community-based alternative school.

On-campus AEPs must use certified personnel, however, off-campus AEPs may use instructional personnel as they choose for students who do not receive special education or bilingual education services.

An off-campus AEP is not required for compliance with the school-day length provision, however, funding is based on attendance in the same manner as other programs. Off-campus programs must be conducted in a separate facility from all campuses serving students in the regular education program.

An AEP may not be held in the same room as an in-school suspension program or any other room that contains students not assigned to the AEP. Districts may continue to provide transportation services and allow students to engage in activities such as eating in the same cafeteria with other students.

Districts develop local policies that explain how the district will provide for a student's educational needs, and provide counseling services for students during placement in an AEP.

EISD's discipline management program is coordinated through the superintendent with help from by campus administrators. The superintendent, or his designee, is responsible for conducting student hearings for violations of the Student Code of Conduct and monitoring and tracking student disciplinary actions, including referrals to alternative education programs and expulsions.

Each school distributes EISD's Student Code of Conduct to principals, teachers, students and parents at the beginning of each school year to ensure that everyone is familiar with the district's disciplinary process and consequences for misbehavior. The Student Code of Conduct is printed in English only.

The superintendent, principals and assistant principals are responsible for enforcement of the district's discipline management policies and procedures.

EISD has two alternative education programs. The Phoenix Learning Center (PLC) serves grades 9-12. In 1999-2000, 25 students were enrolled. A disciplinary, on-campus program for middle and high school students is located at the high school campus. The on-campus program operates from 2:00-8:00 p.m. and usually has anywhere from five to 20 students for varying lengths of time.

PLC is a dropout recovery program for students meeting one or more of the state's criteria for being in at-risk situations: 1) was not advanced from one grade level to the next for two or more school years; 2) has mathematics or reading skills that are two or more years below grade level; 3) did not maintain an average equivalent to 70 on a scale of 100 in two or more courses during a semester, or is not maintaining such an average in two or more courses in the current semester, and is not expected to graduate within four years of the date the student begins ninth grade; 4) did not perform satisfactorily on an assessment instrument administered under Subchapter B, Chapter 39; or 5) is pregnant or a parent.

The PLC curriculum is competency-based- designed in concert with the student's level of achievement, using the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) as the base. A minimum of 20 hours of instruction per week at the center is required, however, students work under a flexible schedule around their work and other commitments. Almost all of the instruction is one-on-one and computer assisted.

FINDING

Bastrop County, the cities of Bastrop, Elgin and Smithville, and the Bastrop, Elgin, McDade and Smithville Independent School Districts entered into an interlocal agreement and memorandum of understanding in 1999 to develop and participate in the Bastrop County Juvenile Boot Camp. The purpose of the boot camp is to serve as a dropout prevention program for adjudicated youth. Students in the boot camp stay on track for graduation, and stay out of the legal system.

An 11-member board serves as the policy-making body and includes the district attorney, county-court-at-law judge, county judge, a representative of the Centex Regional Juvenile Services Department, the city managers of Bastrop, Elgin and Smithville, and the superintendents of Bastrop, Elgin, McDade and Smithville. There are also five ex-officio, or non-voting, members of the board: the police chiefs of Bastrop, Elgin and Smithville, the sheriff and the county auditor.

The project was a pilot project from March through May 1999, and served less than 10 students. In 1999-2000, the program served 39 students. The student day is 10 hours and consists of an academic and boot camp program.

The academic program is five hours per day and is a self-paced, computer-based program. Students can earn up to 2.5 credits a semester.

The boot camp part of the program is also five hours per day and consists of drill, physical and ceremony training.

Expenditures for 1999-2000 were \$189,244 and an estimated \$177,784 for 2000-01. A Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program grant pays \$13,654 and special education funds provide \$15,000. The remaining revenues are based on a per space charge, an estimated \$5,679 per space for 20 spaces for the 2000-01. The participating cities divide one space equally, the county pays for 10 spaces, EISD pays for five spaces, Bastrop ISD and Smithville ISD pay for two spaces each and McDade ISD pays a daily fee whenever it uses the program.

COMMENDATION

The boot camp developed by EISD and other Bastrop County governmental organizations is an effective way to provide dropout prevention for adjudicated youth that keeps program costs to a minimum.

FINDING

The district has not standardized the discipline process on all campuses to provide consistent application of discipline.

The 1999-2000 Student Code of Conduct includes standards for student conduct and potential discipline applications (**Exhibit 2-65**), general misconduct violations and the consequences for committing such violations and the procedures for removal from the regular educational setting. The code of conduct also explains how discipline will be handled for students with disabilities.

**Exhibit 2-65
Standards for Student Conduct
EISD Student Code of Conduct 1999-2000**

Standards for Student Conduct	Examples of Discipline Management Techniques
Demonstrate courtesy even when others do not.	Oral correction.
Behave in a responsible manner, always exercising self-discipline.	Cooling-off time or time out.
Attend all classes, regularly and on time.	Seating changes within the classroom.
Prepare for each class; take appropriate materials and assignments to class.	Counseling by teachers, counselors or administrative personnel.
Meet district or campus standards of grooming and dress.	Parent-teacher conferences.
Obey all campus and classroom rules.	Rewards or demerits.
Respect the rights and privileges of other students and of teachers and other district staff.	Detention.
Respect the property of others, including district property and facilities.	In-school suspension.
Cooperate with or assist the school staff in	Out-of-school suspension.

maintaining safety, order and discipline.	
Avoid violations of the Student Code of Conduct.	<p>Placement in a disciplinary alternative education program.</p> <p>Assigned school duties such as scrubbing desks or picking up litter.</p> <p>Withdrawal or restriction of bus privileges.</p> <p>School-assessed and school-administered probation.</p> <p>Corporal punishment.</p> <p>Referral to an outside agency and/or legal authority.</p>

Source: EISD Student Code of Conduct, 1999-2000.

EISD'S Student Code of Conduct lists general misconduct violations for which discipline management techniques can be applied, including: disobeying rules for conduct on school buses, cheating or copying the work of another, displaying a fire alarm, gambling, possessing a firearm, making false threats, possessing or using tobacco products, violating computer use policies and possessing material that is pornographic. With the exception of a section entitled "Removal from the Regular Education Setting," that describes offenses that could result in either out-of-school suspension or placement in an alternative education program, the code of conduct does not outline levels of violations and consequences for each level of offense.

Principals said that application is left to individual judgment. Interviews with principals identified at least three different methods of applying discipline management (**Exhibit 2-66**).

Exhibit 2-66
EISD Discipline Management Systems Used by Principals

	System		
Step	1	2	3
First step	Teacher-student conference	Cooling-off or time out	Teacher-student conference

Next step	Cooling-off or time out	Parent-teacher-principal conference	Parent-teacher-principal conference when student reaches 10 demerits
Next step	Parent-teacher conference	Referral to alternative education program	In-school suspension (three days) when student reaches 20 demerits
Next step	Principal-student conference: principal assesses options, such as lunch detention, recess detention	None	In-school suspension (three days) when student reaches 30 demerits
Next step	In-school suspension (length varies from half day to two days)	None	In-school suspension (three days) when student reaches 40 demerits
Next step	In-school suspension (length varies from half day to two days)	None	Placement in alternative education program when student reaches 50 demerits
Next step	Placement in alternative education program or out-of-school suspension	None	None

Source: TSPR interviews with principals.

Sixty-two percent of teachers responding to the TSPR written survey disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, "Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct." Comments teachers included on their surveys:

- "The dress code and discipline procedures are improperly managed."
- "There is an extremely high teacher turnover ratio due primarily to below-par leadership, poor discipline management at the administrative level and an acceptance of general mediocrity."
- "Poor discipline at middle school."
- "The high school discipline plan is not equally/fairly enforced. There is in effect NO discipline at the high school."
- "The discipline plan is not followed consistently which makes the teachers unsure of discipline management. Lack of support in discipline issues makes teachers' jobs exponentially more difficult."

- "Student discipline is horrible: a. Discipline is not effective, b. Discipline is not applied fairly, c. There are too many loopholes in the system (parent complaints etc.) to let disruptive students 'off the hook'."
- "Teacher morale is very low. Inconsistent and weak discipline"

Recommendation 14:

Develop a standardized approach to applying discipline in each EISD school.

The approach should define a specific progression of discipline alternatives for repeat offenders. Alternatives within each level should be identified to allow limited discretion by the principal. The approach should also recognize different grade levels from one school to the next.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director of Academic services facilitates a committee comprised of parents, teachers, students, principals, assistant principals and EISD's attorney that proposes a standardized list of violations and disciplinary consequences for the entire district and forwards the proposal to the superintendent, all principals and assistant principals.	October 2000
2.	The superintendent, principals and assistant principals review the proposal and provide suggestions for improvement.	November 2000
3.	The executive director and selected members of the committee revise the standardized list based on the suggestions and forward the final version to the superintendent for approval.	December 2000
4.	The board reviews and approves the standardized list of violations and disciplinary consequences with any necessary changes.	January 2001
5.	The executive director incorporates the standardized list into the student code of conduct. The student code of conduct is re-written focusing on a standardized list of offenses and consequences.	February 2001
6.	All campuses conduct a districtwide effort to communicate the new information in the code of conduct. Posters are placed in the halls by campus administrators to ensure that all students know the punishment for the various offenses.	March-April 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 3

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines the personnel department functions of the Elgin Independent School District (EISD) in the following areas:

- A. Recruitment, Retention and Turnover
- B. Operations
- C. Salary Administration
- D. Policies and Procedures

Factors critical to the success of any personnel or human resources function include recruitment of qualified candidates for all positions, the efficient processing of all personnel actions, appropriate staffing and salary administration of all district functions and compliance with state and federal personnel laws.

BACKGROUND

In most public school districts, a personnel or human resources staff manages employee-related tasks, including:

- Development of wage and salary schedules;
- Administration of salary systems that include placement of positions on the salary schedules, and periodic review of the schedules to ensure they are competitive with other area employers;
- Classification of all positions;
- Development of job descriptions for all positions and the periodic update/modification of job descriptions to reflect changes in responsibilities;
- Development of personnel staffing tables and review of staff allocation formulas;
- Administration of an employee grievance process;
- Recruitment of personnel to fill vacant positions;
- Maintenance of required employee records;
- Administration of certification and permit processes;
- Issuance of contracts and non-renewal or dismissal notices;
- Placement of substitutes;
- Recruitment and placement of student teachers;
- Development of board policies regarding personnel issues;
- Development and administration of an employee benefits program; and
- Preparation of periodic reports to address local board and state reporting requirements.

In EISD, the director of Human Resources supervises the personnel function and is responsible for coordinating recruiting, responding to employee relations issues, updating personnel policies, responding to employee grievances, and managing and updating the salary plan. Other positions that report to the director are a human resources assistant, a leave coordinator and a benefits coordinator. The key responsibilities of the other positions are:

- Assistant. The assistant accompanies the director on recruiting trips, completes all arrangements for the trips (e.g., lodging, schedules), monitors the recruiting budget, prepares and distributes employee contracts, conducts criminal history checks using an outside vendor, receives and processes all applications, serves as the records management officer for EISD, maintains all employee personnel files, serves as the certification officer, maintains and updates employee service records, and posts all job vacancies.
- Leave coordinator. The leave coordinator handles placement of substitute teachers, updates information on employee leave (e.g., vacation, sick, personal, hardship, Family Medical and Leave Act) and processes all associated paperwork.
- Benefits coordinator. The benefits coordinator reviews all employee benefit options with new employees, enrolls new employees in health benefit programs and in the Teacher Retirement System, updates changes in coverage, prepares disability and workers compensation claims, responds to employee problems regarding claims and prepares information for open enrollment meetings.

Employees will often take on the responsibilities of others during peak work times.

In discharging these responsibilities, the director of Human Resources involves department and campus personnel in conducting recruiting visits, soliciting applicants, and conducting candidate interviews. In some instances, certain personnel-related activities are handled by other departments exclusively or in conjunction with the director of Human Resources (**Exhibit 3-1**).

Exhibit 3-1
EISD Personnel Management Responsibilities

Responsibility	Department or Position Involved
Recruiting staff	Human Resources
Hiring staff	Human Resources; all departments participate

Background checks	Human Resources
Reference checks	Human Resources
Initial salary determinations	Superintendent, executive directors and director of Human Resources
Salary adjustment calculations	Human Resources
Compensation studies	Human Resources
Attendance monitoring (employees)	All departments
Benefits administration	Human Resources
Employee grievances	All departments; Human Resources
Training/staff development	Human Resources; Curriculum and Instruction
Termination	All departments; Human Resources
Planning for staffing levels	Superintendent; Board; Human Resources

Source: EISD Interviews and job descriptions.

EISD must comply with federal laws governing human resources management, including the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), which governs wages and hourly payments; the Americans with Disabilities Act, which requires employers to provide reasonable accommodation to any employee or job applicant who has a disability; and the Equal Employment Opportunity Act, which prevents employers from making hiring and firing decisions based upon age, race, religion, gender or other factors not related to performance. There are also state laws governing school district personnel administration in employee grievances, due process, termination and contract renewal (Section 21, Texas Education Code).

Payroll made up 76 percent, or more than three-fourths of EISD's 1998-99 budget (**Exhibit 3-2**).

Exhibit 3-2
EISD Expenditures by Category
1998-99 through 1999-2000

Category	Percent of Total Expenditures	
	1998-99	1999-2000 Budget

Payroll costs	74%	76%
Professional and contracted services	7%	7%
Supplies and materials	9%	8%
Other operating expenses	2%	3%
Debt service	7%	6%
Capital outlay	2%	0%

Source: TEA, AEIS Reports, 1998-99 and PEIMS, 1999-2000.

Note: Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

For the Academic Excellence Indicate System (AEIS), TEA categorizes school district staff into three groups: 1) professional staff, which includes teachers, professional support staff, campus administrators and central administrators; 2) educational aides; and 3) auxiliary personnel.

Exhibit 3-3 describes the total number of full-time equivalent positions (FTEs) for the district for 1994-95 through 1997-98 and the budgeted total for 1998-99. Total EISD staffing increased at a faster rate of growth than that of the student population (16.2 percent in staff versus 5.4 percent in enrollment) since 1994-95. Central administrative and professional support staff grew the fastest, while the largest increase in staff was in auxiliary employees. The smallest percent increase was in the number of teachers and educational aides dropped by more than 20 percent.

Exhibit 3-3
EISD Staff FTEs
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Staff Category	Actual				Budgeted	Percent Change
	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	
Teachers	181.0	189.8	191.4	197.9	200.2	10.6%
Professional support	20.2	20.1	21.2	27.0	29.3	45.0%
Campus administration	7.6	8.2	9.2	9.2	8.5	11.8%
Central administration	3.8	3.8	5.7	4.0	5.9	55.3%
Educational aides	28.6	33.9	39.6	41.7	22.4	-21.7%

Auxiliary staff	85.3	91.5	92.3	86.9	114.8	34.6%
Total staff	328.0	347.2	359.4	367.2	381.1	16.2%
Total students	2,551	2,559	2,606	2,638	2,688 (1)	5.4%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1995-96 through- 1998-99, and PEIMS 1999-2000.
(1) End of first semester 1999.

For EISD, central administrative staff includes the following positions: superintendent, executive directors and directors. Campus administration includes principal and assistant principal. Professional support includes therapist, counselor, librarian and nurse. Auxiliary staff includes maintenance personnel, custodians and cafeteria workers.

Exhibit 3-4 compares EISD's percent of employees budgeted for each group in the 1999-2000 school year with its peer districts employee budgets. EISD had the fourth-highest percent of teachers, the second-lowest percentage of professional support staff and campus administrators, the highest percent of central administrators and the third-highest percent of educational aides and auxiliary staff.

Exhibit 3-4
EISD Staffing Compared to Peer Districts
1999-2000

District	Teachers	Professional Support	Campus Administrators	Central Administrators	Educational Aides	Auxiliary Staff
Leander	54.3%	7.2%	2.1%	1.1%	5.7%	29.5%
Del Valle	52.4%	7.4%	2.5%	0.9%	5.6%	31.3%
Bastrop	50.1%	7.3%	2.5%	0.6%	10.6%	28.8%
Elgin	50.1%	6.8%	2.3%	1.1%	10.6%	29.1%
Taylor	43.9%	7.8%	2.4%	0.9%	16.5%	28.5%
Manor	43.8%	6.5%	2.8%	0.9%	12.3%	33.6%

Source: TEA, PEIMS 1999-2000.

The total number of teachers in EISD increased 10.6 percent from 1995-96 through 1999-2000 (**Exhibit 3-5**). Only the number of teachers with 11 or more years of experience increased; all other categories of teachers decreased in numbers.

Exhibit 3-5
EISD Teacher FTEs by Years of Experience
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Total Years of Experience	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	Percent Change
Beginning teachers	11.4	13.9	6.9	20.3	9.0	-21.1%
1-5 years	52.1	47.0	47.0	41.8	46.9	-10.0%
6-10 years	39.3	42.8	43.5	33.5	38.3	-2.5%
11-20 years	53.8	57.1	63.5	64.7	69.3	28.8%
More than 20 years	24.4	29.1	30.4	37.7	36.8	50.8%
Total	181.0	189.8	191.4	197.9	200.2	10.6%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1995-96 - 1998-99, and PEIMS 1999-2000.

Since 1995-96, EISD has hired more experienced teachers (**Exhibit 3-6**). In 1998-99, the average level of experience of EISD teachers surpassed the state and regional averages for the first time.

Exhibit 3-6
EISD, Region 13 and State Average Years of Teaching Experience
1995-96 through 1998-99

Entity	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	Percent Change
Elgin	10.2	10.9	11.5	11.9	1.9%
Region 13	11.6	11.6	11.6	11.6	0%
State	11.7	11.7	11.8	11.8	.85%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1995-96 through 1998-99, and PEIMS 1999-2000.

The salaries for EISD professional personnel are described in **Exhibit 3-7**. Professional personnel include teachers, professional positions (e.g., counselors, diagnosticians), and central and campus administrative personnel. By comparison to peer districts, EISD teachers have the highest average salary, professional support personnel have the third lowest average salary, campus administrators have the third highest average salary and central administrators have the lowest average salary.

Exhibit 3-7
EISD, Region 13, State and Peer District
Average Actual Salaries of Professional Personnel
1999-2000

Entity	Teachers	Professional Support	Campus Administration	Central Administration
Elgin	\$37,519	\$41,568	\$52,638	\$61,667
Del Valle	\$36,232	\$41,866	\$58,266	\$66,965
Bastrop	\$35,132	\$42,590	\$52,625	\$75,984
Manor	\$34,667	\$42,858	\$53,501	\$62,800
Taylor	\$34,211	\$39,208	\$50,855	\$62,476
Leander	\$30,914	\$41,565	\$52,575	\$64,578

Source: TEA, PEIMS 1999-2000.

From 1995-96 to 1999-2000, the salaries of EISD's professional personnel increased significantly, led by professional support staff salaries, which grew 43.8 percent (**Exhibit 3-8**).

Exhibit 3-8
EISD and State Average Salaries of Certified Personnel Other than
Teachers
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Category of Personnel	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	EISD Percent Change
Professional support	\$28,901	\$29,739	\$32,020	\$31,166	\$41,572	43.8%
Campus administration	\$45,175	\$46,472	\$48,227	\$52,444	\$51,391	13.8%
Central administration	\$52,571	\$55,983	\$55,970	\$56,283	\$60,402	14.9%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1995-96 - 1998-99, and PEIMS 1999-2000.

The director of Human Resources and a variety of other EISD employees carry out the following personnel functions:

Any employee required to have a commercial driver's license is subject to drug and alcohol testing. Teachers, coaches and other employees who primarily perform duties other than driving are subject to testing requirements when they are driving. The program is coordinated by the director of transportation, and tests are administered by EISD for bus drivers and other EISD personnel who drive district vehicles.

Staff development activities are predominantly handled by the executive director of Academic Services and by individual campuses based upon campus performance objectives. The director of Human Resources provides limited training regarding personnel-related matters.

For each central administration department, the department head allocates an annual training budget based upon historical usage or requests for specific training. The department head recommends appropriate training for staff personnel and notifies the appropriate senior staff member.

Salary supplements are provided to individuals assuming additional academic responsibilities, such as Academic Decathlon advisor, class sponsor or debate sponsor, or co-curricular responsibilities, such as band director or cheerleader sponsor, or athletic responsibilities. Salary supplements range from \$500 for a department chair to \$5,000 for a band director stipend.

Group insurance is available to full-time employees and includes: health, dental, life, supplemental life, workers compensation, unemployment compensation and cafeteria plan coverage. Prior to annual enrollment each employee receives an information packet on the available coverages and options and the associated costs. The district makes an annual contribution to cover a portion of the insurance premium cost.

EISD's plan is self-funded, with stop loss coverage of \$20,000. HealthSmart is the care provider network used by EISD. Health Administrative Services serves as the district's third party administrator in designing and managing the plan and also serves as the claims administrator. The benefit plan is coordinated by the benefits coordinator, who reports to the director of Human Resources.

Other employee benefits, such as personal leave, sick leave, local leave, temporary disability, family and medical leave, military leave and jury duty also are provided. These benefits are described in the annual employee handbook.

The district maintains a set of personnel policies and updates them in accordance with changes mandated by the federal and state governments and TEA. Each employee receives the annual employee handbook, which

reflects all current EISD personnel policies. Each employee must sign a document indicating his/her receipt of the handbook. Copies of the signed sheets are maintained at each campus and at work sites.

Information Systems conducts criminal history reviews for all positions.

Chapter 3

A. RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND TURNOVER

A February 1999 TEA study titled, *Texas Teacher Recruitment and Retention Study*, said "Texas is experiencing a teacher shortage that is a serious and growing problem." According to the report, the primary factors causing the shortage are rising student enrollments, decreasing enrollment in teacher programs and a lack of state and local resources to maintain competitive salaries.

The report says districts respond to shortages first by filling vacant positions with teachers certified in other fields, then districts hire teachers on emergency permits or staff classes with long-term substitutes. According to the TEA study, these actions may have consequences for student performance.

FINDING

EISD is a member of the Personnel Services Cooperative of Central Texas (cooperative), which is managed by Region 13. Started in 1997-98, the cooperative has 25 member school districts: Bastrop, Burnet, Comal, Del Valle, Eanes, Elgin, Gonzales, Hays, Hutto, Johnson City, Lago Vista, Lake Travis, Lexington, Liberty Hill, Luling, Manor, New Braunfels, Pflugerville, Round Rock, Round Top-Carmine, San Marcos, Schertz-Cibolo-Universal City, Smithville, Taylor and Waco.

The cooperative assists school districts with recruiting, selecting and hiring teachers. According to the director of the cooperative, the cooperative has several advantages: reduction in paper due to an almost entirely electronic application and distribution process; decreased staff time associated with recruitment and applicant processing; increased number of applicants from what a district could generate itself; and information availability seven days per week, 24 hours per day. EISD fills 30 to 50 teacher vacancies each year.

Each district pays a one-time membership fee and an annual maintenance fee. Both fees are based upon average daily student attendance (**Exhibit 3-9**). EISD joined the cooperative in 1999-2000, paid an initial membership fee of \$5,000, and pays a \$6,500 annual maintenance fee.

Exhibit 3-9
Region 13 Personnel Services Cooperative Fee Schedule
1999-2000

Average Daily Attendance (ADA)	Membership Fee	Maintenance Fee
Less than 500	\$1,500	\$1,500
501 1,000	\$2,500	\$2,500
1,001 1,500	\$3,000	\$3,000
1,501 2,000	\$4,000	\$5,000
2,001 3,000	\$5,000	\$6,500
3,001 4,000	\$6,000	\$7,500
4,001 7,000	\$7,500	\$10,000
7,001 12,000	\$10,000	\$12,500
12,001 30,000	\$12,500	\$15,000
30,001+	\$0.40/ADA	\$1.00/ADA

Source: Region 13 Personnel Services Cooperative director.

The member districts receive a number of brochures each spring to take with them on teacher recruiting trips. The brochure describes how the cooperative works, details how to apply and provides one page of information on each member district, such as location, number of schools and accountability ratings, awards/distinctions and salary ranges.

Member districts distribute the brochures at each college or university recruiting trip or at each job fair they attend. Member districts may also distribute additional information about their district.

Interested applicants complete a resume in a prescribed format, which they submit to the cooperative. Guidelines for completing the resume are provided in the cooperative's brochure. In completing the resume, applicants are encouraged to be as specific as possible about the types of

positions in which they are interested. As of May 2000, the cooperative had received 4,500 applications, compared to 3,000 in 1999.

Once a resume is received and scanned into the system, the system generates a letter to the candidate. The letter thanks the applicant for their interest in the cooperative and provides the name of each member district and an identification number. The applicant is instructed to call an 800 number and participate in a 25 minute automated telephone interview. The questions in the interview were prepared by the human resource staff of the member districts based upon criteria they felt was most important.

Interactive voice recognition (IVR) software is used to ask the questions, score each response, and assign a point total to the candidate. At the conclusion of the interview, the applicant is asked to select, using the identification number provided in the thank you they received, to which districts he/she wants their information to be available. According to the director, one-third of the applicants selects all cooperative members.

When the telephone call is completed, the applicant's portfolio is complete.

Each member district completes a written requisition form that identifies vacancies in the district with qualifications for each position. The form is updated regularly. The cooperative uses Resumix software to match words in the requisition with like words in the resumes of applicants. From that match, a district can select all the applicants who qualify for a vacant position in a selected district, or the district can select only those with a given point total on the IVR interview.

According to the director of the cooperative, 4,516 resumes were received through April 30, 2000 for applicants looking for teaching positions for the 2000-01 school year. Of that total, 21 percent of the applicants were from outside Texas, locations that cooperative members would seldom, if ever, visit on recruiting trips. This percentage is more than double that received from out-of-state applicants the prior year. According to the director, this increase is due to two factors: the cooperative is recruiting in more locations outside of Texas, and it is using an electronic resume builder on its Web site.

COMMENDATION

EISD uses the Region 13 Personnel Services Cooperative to expand the availability of teacher applicants.

FINDING

Teacher turnover in EISD is high. From 1995-96 through 1998-99, turnover averaged 17.3 percent per year and reached its highest level, 23 percent in 1998-99. During this same period, the average teacher turnover in districts in Region 13 and statewide was 13.5 percent.

Eighty-two percent of the teachers responding to the TSPR written survey disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, "Teacher turnover is low." Fifty-one percent of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, "Highly qualified teachers fill job openings."

Teachers identified three key areas are contributing to recent turnover: (1) politics by the board and superintendent, (2) the management style of the superintendent, and (3) overall communication in the district, especially lack of input from teachers and other campus staff. Teacher and community comments are detailed in **Appendix B**.

Organizations that have low turnover among key personnel usually have a board and superintendent who work together, continuous communication between the central office and campuses, effective site-based decision-making committees, and a leadership style that broadens and encourages input from all levels in the district. Among the examples of successful strategies employed by other organizations:

- In Spring ISD, a former superintendent who served as superintendent for 16 years in the district spent about half his time in schools talking with principals and teachers to encourage their input and help identify any issues, concerns or problems.
- In Pearland ISD, the board president continually monitors the activities of other board members as part of the role of president to ensure the lack of micromanagement by board members.
- The Harris County Department of Education provides a service to area districts through its governance section in which board members and senior district staff are interviewed individually about concerns and working relationships. The results of the interviews are arrayed and sessions are facilitated with both groups to address key items.
- In Bastrop ISD, the superintendent and assistant superintendents meet with principals each week to allow them to raise issues and provide input.
- In Galveston ISD, principals representing all grade levels participate as active members in weekly meetings of the district's administrative team.
- In Clear Creek ISD, the central administration conducts an annual evaluation of the organizational health of each campus to determine the effectiveness of the working relationship between

the principal and teachers, and to identify any issues that need to be addressed through staff development or other means.

- At the Mental Health Mental Retardation Authority of Harris County, which employs more than 1,200 people, the executive director meets in group meetings with managers and personnel at all organization levels each week to answer questions or respond to concerns.

Other districts use regular communication tools, such as district newsletters, to keep employees informed and to seek input. The Texas Association of School Boards developed a series of self-policing policies for school boards to use to avoid political and micromanagement intrusion.

Recommendation 15:

Evaluate the efforts of other districts to foster communication and involvement at all organizational levels, and develop an approach that involves the board, superintendent and district staff, especially teachers.

Tools that work elsewhere can be a starting point for EISD. They should be modified to fit the culture of EISD.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent meets with key administrative staff to review concerns voiced by teachers.	October 2000
2.	The superintendent assigns the responsibility of surveying other districts and organizations about procedures or processes that could be effective in EISD to the executive director of Administrative Services.	October 2000
3.	The executive director collects information and shares it with key administrative staff.	October - December 2000
4.	The superintendent uses the information to develop a process for EISD that will address issues raised by teachers and other staff.	January - February 2001
5.	The superintendent reviews the approach with key administrative staff and incorporates appropriate modifications.	February 2001
6.	The superintendent presents the approach to the board, teachers and district staff and requests input.	February - March 2001

7.	The superintendent incorporates the comments, as appropriate, finalizes the approach and presents it to the board and district staff.	April 2001
8.	The board approves the approach and directs the superintendent to implement it.	May 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 3

B. OPERATIONS

FINDING

EISD had a human resources audit conducted by the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) Personnel Services Division in April 1999. Prior to that time, the district did not have a human resources department. Instead, personnel-related functions were divided among various positions in the central office.

TASB recommended a series of changes within several categories(**Exhibit 3-10**).

Exhibit 3-10
Implementation Status of Key Audit Recommendations

Category	Recommendation	Implementation Status
Department organization	Create a position to oversee, manage and administer the human resources function.	Implemented: director of Human Resources
	Commit resources to train and provide the necessary staff to support this position.	Implemented: three positions created
Employment	Assign the human resources manager the responsibility of posting all position vacancies.	Implemented
	Assign the human resources manager the responsibility of developing a procedure for receiving, reviewing and tracking all applications	Implemented
	Obtain criminal history information on all persons hired by the district.	Implemented
	Train all hiring supervisors in reference checking techniques.	Implemented
	Develop new employee orientation process.	Implemented

Employee recruitment	Develop a comprehensive approach which uses the Internet, university placement offices, job fairs and other sources.	Implemented: Job fairs, Internet
	Assess effectiveness of stipends in recruiting employees in hard-to-fill areas.	In progress: have stipends for bilingual teachers only; evaluating others
Substitute employee system	Place the hiring of substitute employees in the Human Resources Department.	Implemented
	Develop training for all substitute employees.	In progress
Professional development	Identify training needs for all employees.	In progress
	Provide supervisory training.	Implemented
Employee relations	Develop a district employee handbook.	Implemented
	Develop an exit interview format.	Implemented
	Annually analyze exit interviews to determine implications.	Implemented
	Ensure that at-will employees have a process to file complaints.	Implemented
	Implement an employee recognition program.	Implemented
Leave administration	Move leave administration from the business office to the Human Resources Department.	Implemented
Benefits administration	Designate a position to be the liaison with major insurance providers.	Implemented
	Develop a wellness program.	Implemented
Legal compliance	Place responsibility with regard to certification with the human resources manager.	Implemented
Employee performance evaluation	Ensure that supervisors receive training on appraisal procedures.	Implemented

	Develop a program to improve employee performance.	Implemented
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Source: TASB Human Resource Audit for Elgin ISD, April 1999 and interviews with EISD staff.

COMMENDATION

EISD has aggressively implemented a human resources program that meets all current and potential employee needs.

Chapter 3

C. SALARY ADMINISTRATION

Professional positions in school districts are under contract to the district for a specified number of work days in a year. These positions include teachers, central office administrators, campus administrators and campus professionals (e.g., nurses, counselors, librarians). Since most of these positions do not work a full 12-month period, their contract specifies a number of days and often a daily rate of pay for that period.

For example, a teacher working a 187-day contract earning \$30,000 annually would have a daily rate of \$160.428. The daily rate of pay becomes important if an incumbent in one of these types of positions works additional days beyond those required in the contract. For example, teachers may work summer school or develop curriculum during the summer.

The rate of pay for the positions that are not 12-month positions, such as teachers and counselors, changes based upon experience and level of degree attained. The salary schedule begins with a salary for no experience and either a bachelor's degree, a master's degree or a doctorate. An additional annual stipend is paid for a master's or doctorate degree, usually \$500-\$2,000, depending upon the location of the district and the competitiveness of that market. The schedule extends to 40 years of experience in some districts, but 30 years experience is usually the most common top level.

FINDING

For the 1999-2000 fiscal year, the superintendent developed a system that indexes the salaries of principals, assistant principals, the curriculum director, the special education director, and the PEIMS coordinator to the salary of an EISD teacher. Salaries for librarians and speech therapists are also based upon the teacher salary, but these positions receive an additional stipend, and are not indexed.

The index works by establishing the teacher salary as 1.00. For example, a beginning EISD teacher in 1999-2000 received \$28,000 annually or \$149.733 per day for 187 days in the contract. Multipliers are then used to index every other position relative to the 1.00 established for a teacher position. In EISD's system, an assistant elementary school principal with the same level of experience is indexed at 1.05 of the teacher salary and receives a daily rate of \$157.219, or \$35,532 annually for a 226-day

contract ($1.05 \times \$149,733 = \$157,219 \times 226 \text{ days} = \$35,532$). The index relationship of all EISD positions is described in **Exhibit 3-11**.

Exhibit 3-11
EISD Salary Index System
1999-2000

Position	Index Multiplier
Teacher	1.00
Assistant principal, primary or elementary school	1.05
Principal, primary or elementary school	1.10
Assistant principal, middle school	1.10
Principal, middle school	1.15
Assistant principal, high school	1.15
Principal, high school	1.20
Special education director	1.20
PEIMS coordinator, with high school diploma	0.85

Source: EISD salary schedules for the 1999-2000 school year.

Only teachers receive an additional stipend for degrees or college credit earned. A teacher with a master's degree receives \$1,500 annually; a teacher with a master's degree and an additional 45 credit hours toward a doctorate degree receives \$2,000 annually; and a teacher with a doctorate degree receives \$2,000 annually.

The executive director of Administrative Services, under which the Human Resources Department is located, knew why the index system was established but did not play a role in establishing it. The executive director of Administrative Services referred all questions to the executive director of Business and Financial Services.

The executive director of Business and Financial Services, who was responsible for implementing the system, said that the superintendent created the index relationship of the positions. According to the executive director, no regional salary survey was used to document the relationship of the positions to the base teacher salary.

According to the superintendent, no salary schedule was in place when he came to EISD. Instead, salaries were negotiated with individuals.

The superintendent wanted a system that would give a specific salary assignment rather than a salary range with low, middle and high points. The superintendent felt from experience that the salary range approach was more difficult to administer and provided too much opportunity for abuse.

The superintendent contacted peers in other Texas school districts to get information about salary systems. Based upon this information, the superintendent developed the index system. The superintendent varied the index by position, based upon his familiarity with the workload at different levels, and for responsibilities such as co- and extra-curricular activity requirements at the middle and high schools (such as athletics, University Interscholastic League sponsored events including band, choir, debate).

According to the superintendent, the index system still does not bring EISD up to the level of other area districts. Over time, the superintendent wants the system to become competitive with area districts for teacher and administrative salaries.

The superintendent said the board would not support the index system if it rewarded certain principals who were disliked in the community. As a compromise to introduce the index system, the superintendent recommended giving those principals an increase of \$1,500 rather than the full increase included in the index schedule.

Principals said they did not understand the basis for the index system. There is no written information accompanying the salary schedules that describes the system or its basis. Several principals said they were not involved in any meetings to discuss the change in the system nor to discuss any concerns. The superintendent and the executive director of Administrative Services said there were presentations of the system at meetings the principals attended.

According to standards established by the American Association of School Personnel Administration (AASPA), in order to be equitable and not expose a district to legal challenge, salary schedules need to be based upon the qualifications, performance and experience of the employee. The AASPA recommends a continuing study of salary competitiveness, written statements setting forth the interpretation and administration of compensation plans and interpreting the salary schedule through staff meetings or personal conferences.

The Texas Association of School Boards conducts salary studies and develops compensation plans for many Texas school districts each year, including Bastrop and Smithville in 1999. Accompanying their

recommendations are clear, complete discussions of how they developed the recommendations, other districts or employers that were used for comparing position salaries and alternatives for implementing recommendations. The information is helpful in understanding the nature of any problem and how the recommendations address them.

Recommendation 16:

Develop written information that clearly defines the basis of the index system and how the index multipliers are determined.

At a minimum, information about the basis for the index system, how the multipliers for non-teaching positions were developed and how the salaries compare to the local market should be recorded and available to both district personnel and the public.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent prepares a summary of information used in the development of the EISD salary schedule and distributes it to affected staff.	November 2000
2.	The superintendent meets with EISD staff to discuss the schedules.	January 2001
3.	The superintendent meets with individual EISD staff to address any continuing questions and/or concerns.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The middle school principal was the elementary school principal in 1998-99, and was transferred to the middle school for the 1999-2000 school year. The former middle school principal was reassigned to be the principal at the elementary school.

Although the salary index system shows the middle school principal's index is 1.15 and the elementary school principal's index is 1.10, the salaries of the two incumbents were not changed for 1999-2000, even though their assignments were reversed. The middle school principal is still earning the salary of an elementary principal, and the elementary principal is still earning the salary of a middle school principal.

The executive director of Business and Financial Services said that the index system was not fully implemented in 1999-2000. The superintendent said that if a principal was already in EISD prior to 1999-2000, then that principal would receive a salary increase but not the full extent of the increase provided in the new index system. However, if a person came into a principal position from another position or another district, then that person would receive the full salary indicated by the index system. The executive director of Business and Financial Services said that the superintendent intended to fully implement the index system in 2000-01. The current salaries of the principals and the salary indicated in the index system for 1999-2000 and 2000-01 are described in **Exhibit 3-12**.

Exhibit 3-12
EISD Principals' Current Salaries
and Salaries Indicated in Salary Schedule

Principal Position	Current Salary	Schedule Salary	
		1999-2000	2000-01
Primary school	\$53,283	\$57,962	\$58,228
Elementary school	\$58,150	\$59,956	\$59,956
Middle school	\$52,430	\$60,597	\$60,875
High school	\$59,751	\$59,751	\$60,911

Source: EISD executive director of Business and Financial Services.

Only the high school principal is paid at the level indicated in the salary schedule. The middle school principal's salary is the furthest from the salary indicated in the schedule, \$8,445 or 13.8 percent below the salary in the schedule.

Incumbents in positions performing similar work are required by law to be paid equally unless valid and demonstrable differences in work performed are provided. Variations in pay for similar work cannot be made for age or gender considerations. Paying incumbents in the same positions differing salaries based upon when they were employed by the district is also not a valid reason for paying different salaries.

Recommendation 17:

Adjust all EISD salaries to the level required for the position based upon the salary schedule adopted by the district.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director of Business and Financial Services identifies positions that are paid less than the stated salary and reviews these positions with the superintendent.	October - November 2000
2.	As part of the budget planning process, the executive director computes the differential in salaries that must be provided to bring all salaries in line with the adopted salary schedule and reviews this information with the superintendent.	January 2001
3.	The superintendent presents this information to the board and recommends that the changes be made retroactive to the beginning of the 2001-02 fiscal year.	March 2001
4.	The board approves the recommendation and instructs the superintendent to make the changes for the coming year.	July 2001
5.	The executive director makes the changes to the payroll system.	August 2001 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

According to the executive director of Business and Financial Services, the cost of bringing all EISD employees onto the appropriate level of the index schedule would be \$26,772 (**Exhibit 3-13**).

Exhibit 3-13 Annual Cost of Fully Implementing EISD Salary Index System 2000-01

Position	1999-2000 Salary	2000-01 Index Salary	Difference
High school principal	\$59,751	\$60,911	\$1,160
High school assistant principal	\$50,290	\$52,953	\$2,663
High school assistant principal	\$38,518	\$40,027	\$1,509
Middle school principal	\$52,430	\$60,875	\$8,445
Middle school assistant principal	\$50,290	\$54,772	\$4,482
Elementary school principal	\$58,150	\$59,956	\$1,806
Primary school principal	\$53,283	\$58,228	\$4,945
Primary school assistant principal	\$50,520	\$52,282	\$1,762
Total			\$26,772

Source: EISD executive director of Business and Financial Services.

Benefits are not included in this estimate, since the positions are already established positions with benefits provided under the current budget.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Adjust all EISD salaries to the level required for the position based upon the salary schedule adopted by the district.	(\$0)	(\$26,772)	(\$26,772)	(\$26,772)	(\$26,772)

Chapter 3

D. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

FINDING

The district uses the Regional Service Center Computer Cooperative (RSCCC) computer system. According to the benefits coordinator, who reports to the director of human resources, only one user can be on the system at a time. According to the executive director of Business and Financial Services, the RSCCC system was originally designed as a single-user system, and was not designed to be networked or have multiple users on the system at the same time.

It previously took long periods of time (how long?) for the benefits coordinator to make updates to employee information, which meant the payroll clerks did not have access to the system during that time. The executive director of Business and Financial Services, to whom payroll reports, requested the Human Resources Department use a separate, stand-alone module of RSCCC so that business office personnel could use the main system regularly.

Using the stand-alone module, the benefits coordinator must first manually complete hard copy information on all changes in employee information, such as new hires, name changes, additional dependents and insurance coverage. The hard copy information is sent to payroll according to monthly deadlines set by payroll. Payroll then enters the data into RSCCC and runs employee checks.

The entire employee payroll run is then sent back to the benefits coordinator to update the stand-alone system. Typically, the run requires 14 computer diskettes. The benefits coordinator must go through the entire employee list, take the changes in information off the diskettes and transfer the information into the stand-alone system.

Recommendation 18:

Integrate the benefits information with the payroll system.

If the RSCCC system limits the use of the system to one user at a time, specified times could be set aside each week when the benefits coordinator could use the system, enter information and not disrupt the work of the business office staff.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director for Human Resources meets with the executive director of Business and Financial Services to determine how to enlarge the RSCCC system to allow multi-user access or to adjust the RSCCC system to accommodate use by personnel outside of the business office.	November 2000
2.	The executive director for Human Resources and the executive director of Business and Financial Services develop a plan that will accomplish integration of all payroll and benefits information.	November 2000
3.	The executive director for Human Resources and the executive director of Business and Financial Services present the plan to the superintendent for approval.	November 2000
4.	The superintendent approves the plan and instructs the executive directors to implement it.	January 2001
5.	The executive directors implement the plan.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews facilities use and management for the Elgin Independent School District (EISD) in the following areas:

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

A comprehensive facilities, maintenance and energy management program coordinates all the physical resources in the district. The program must effectively integrate facilities planning with all other aspects of school planning. The most effective and efficient plant operations and maintenance programs involve facilities managers in strategic planning, design and construction. Additionally, all facilities departments should operate under clearly defined policies and procedures.

Facilities use and management managers ensure that district facilities are designed and built in a way that enhances the educational process and meets other needs, such as maintaining equipment in peak operating condition; providing a clean school and working environment; ensuring facilities comply with local, state and federal building regulations; and minimizing the district's utility costs.

Efficient facilities operations help districts keep up with changes in enrollment and instructional program needs, and are essential to building public trust and confidence in district management.

BACKGROUND

Elgin ISD is located in the northwestern part of Bastrop County. The district encompasses the City of Elgin and extensive undeveloped, rural area.

According to a December 1999 study by DeskMap Systems, Inc., the City of Elgin grew 23.8 percent from 1990 to 1998, compared to a state growth rate of 15.4 percent.

EISD owns and operates 15 facilities within the district (**Exhibit 4-1**), with a total square footage of 296,768. Most of the facilities are close to each other in the center of Elgin. The one exception is Booker T. Washington Middle School, which is on the south side of the city. The district is building a new high school for the 2001-02 school year. When

completed, the new high school will have a capacity of 1,100 to 1,200 students and will have 150,000 square feet of space.

**Exhibit 4-1
EISD Facilities
1999-2000**

Facility	Year Built	Square Footage	Capacity		
			Number of Students	Number of Classrooms	
				Permanent	Portable
Elgin High School, building #1	1964	128,570	606		6
Elgin High School, building #2	1976				
Elgin High School, building #3 and #4	1980				
Elgin High School, field house	1983				
B.T. Washington Middle School, main building	1960	59,510	606		9
B.T. Washington Middle School, gymnasium	1960				
B.T. Washington Middle School, field house	1983				
Elgin Elementary School, main building	1929	38,993	618		8
Elgin Elementary School, gymnasium	1926				
Elgin Elementary School, library	1926				
Elgin Primary School	1983	62,844	606		3
Maintenance storage building	1945	6,851	N/A	N/A	N/A
Administration office	1966		N/A	N/A	N/A
Athletic weight room/storage	1986		N/A	N/A	N/A

Support services	1989		N/A	N/A	N/A
Total		296,768	2,436		26

Source: Texas Association of School Boards facilities evaluation, 1996 and EISD director of Maintenance.

EISD maintenance and custodial expenditures are described in **Exhibit 4-2**.

Exhibit 4-2
EISD and Peer District Maintenance and Custodial Budgets
1999-2000

District *	Maintenance and Custodial Budgets
Del Valle	\$4,055,726
Bastrop	\$3,770,675
Elgin	\$1,673,475

Source: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, 1999-2000.

**Information from Leander, Manor, and Taylor ISD's was not available.*

EISD's student population has grown 5.4 percent since 1995-96, while the maintenance and custodial budget increased 35.0 percent during the same period. However, the district's expenditures were lower than peer districts' expenditures (**Exhibit 4-3**).

Exhibit 4-3
EISD and Peer District Maintenance and Custodial Budgets
1995-96 through 1999-2000

District	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	Percentage Change
Elgin	\$1,239,760	\$1,437,549	\$1,578,442	\$1,591,170	\$1,673,475	35.0%
Del Valle	\$3,278,860	\$3,374,552	\$3,422,761	\$3,385,633	\$4,055,726	23.7%
Bastrop	\$3,073,609	\$3,201,057	\$3,085,807	\$3,309,984	\$3,770,675	22.7%

Leander	\$4,809,544	\$5,362,254	\$5,309,503	\$6,159,741	Not Available	-
Manor	\$1,080,309	\$1,406,209	\$1,542,944	\$2,109,474	Not Available	-
Taylor	\$1,735,794	\$1,946,304	\$1,713,310	\$1,936,100	Not Available	-

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1995-96 through 1999-2000.

Exhibit 4-4 shows that the largest dollar increases in the maintenance and custodial budget were in payroll and contracted services.

Exhibit 4-4
EISD Maintenance and Custodial Budget
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Object	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	Percentage Change
Payroll	\$526,753	\$609,164	\$700,114	\$726,018	\$803,236	52.5%
Contracted services	\$557,845	\$614,346	\$647,300	\$666,365	\$627,790	12.5%
Supplies and materials	\$121,384	\$169,250	\$178,802	\$161,092	\$158,449	30.5%
Other operating costs	\$32,959	\$30,755	\$25,060	\$23,997	\$42,000	27.4%
Capital outlay	\$819	\$14,034	\$27,166	\$13,698	\$42,000	\$21,788%
Total	\$1,239,760	\$1,437,549	\$1,578,442	\$1,591,170	\$1,673,475	35.0%

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1995-96 through 1999-2000.

Chapter 4

A. FACILITIES PLANNING

A school district's long-range comprehensive master plan is a compilation of district policies, information and statistical data that provides a basis for meeting the changing educational needs of a community. The master plan becomes the district's policy statement for allocating resources, and offers potential alternatives for facility improvement.

Effective school facilities master planning incorporates the following elements:

Facility Capacity: The capacity of each school facility should be established by setting standards that govern student/teacher ratios and the amount of square feet required per student in a classroom. These standards also should deal with the minimum size of core facilities (such as gyms, cafeterias and libraries) so schools do not overload these facilities or overuse portable classrooms.

Facility Inventory: An accurate facility inventory is an essential tool for managing the usage of school facilities. Each school inventory should identify the use and size of each room. This enables planners to accurately set the capacity of each school. Modifications to schools should be noted in the inventory so it can be kept up to date.

Enrollment Projections: Effective planning requires accurate enrollment projections. These projections should be made for at least five years. Accurate projections require planners to examine neighborhood demographics and track new construction activity in the district. Many school planners work with county and city planners to track growth patterns.

Attendance Zones: While the use of portable classrooms can temporarily alleviate overcrowding due to fluctuations in enrollment, they can become a detriment to the educational program if they are overused as a way to handle overloading of core facilities. An effective enrollment management plan calls for adjustments in attendance zones whenever they prove necessary. While such adjustments often prove unpopular with parents and students, they are necessary if all students are to have appropriate access to school facilities.

Capital Improvement Master Plan: Effective planning requires the district to anticipate its future needs and balance these against resources. A capital master plan charts future improvements to school facilities and

identifies funding sources for them. The planning process, which should involve the community, should identify district goals and objectives and prioritize projects based upon those goals and objectives.

FINDING

The EISD board has not approved a long-range facilities master plan. The district is completing a new high school that should open for the 2001-2002 school year. At that time, the middle school will move to the current high school, the elementary school will move to the middle school and the administration and Support Services will be relocated to the current elementary school building.

No new facilities have been built in EISD since 1989, and no new classroom facilities have been completed since 1983, when the primary school opened. In July 1996, the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) conducted the most recent evaluation of each facility (**Exhibit 4-5**). Only one of EISD's facilities, the middle school fieldhouse, was considered by TASB appraisers to be in good condition. The rest of the facilities were rated average.

Exhibit 4-5
TASB Evaluation of EISD Facilities
July 1996

Facility	Year Built	Condition
Elgin High School, building #1	1964	Average
Elgin High School, building #2	1976	Average
Elgin High School, building #3 and #4	1980	Average
Elgin High School, field house	1983	Average
B.T. Washington Middle School, main building	1960	Average
B.T. Washington Middle School, gymnasium	1960	Average
B.T. Washington Middle School, field house	1983	Good
Elgin Elementary School, main building	1954	Average
Elgin Elementary School, gymnasium	1926	Average
Elgin Elementary School, library	1926	Average
Elgin Primary School	1983	Average
Maintenance storage building	1945	Average

Administration office	1966	Average
Athletic weight room/storage	1986	Average
Support services	1989	Average

Source: TASB evaluation of EISD facilities, July 1996.

The project team conducted a tour of each EISD facility as part of the review. During that tour, the project team noted a series of facilities issues:

- The elementary school, built in 1929, is two stories tall, and serves fourth and fifth grade students. Two-story schools are not recommended for elementary grades due to safety concerns, especially fires.
- The high school is made up of three separate buildings, and according to the principal, access to the many entrances cannot be controlled.
- Lockers were old and had not been repainted in several of the schools for many years.
- The general appearance of the schools was poor. The schools had stained or missing ceiling tiles, unbuffed floors and holes in several walls.

The December 1999 DeskMap Systems study projected that the City of Elgin grew at a rate of 23.8 from 1990 to 1998. According to the same study, Bastrop County is expected to grow from an estimated population of 55,488 in 2000, to 78,423 in 2010, a 41.3 percent increase. The study also indicated that the biggest factors influencing growth in Bastrop County will be the movement/relocation of businesses and families from Austin.

Eighty-two percent of EISD teachers responding to a TSPR written survey disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, "The district plans facilities far enough in the future to support enrollment growth." Seventy percent disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, "The quality of new construction is excellent."

TEA recommends a facilities planning process model to assist districts in organizing and planning for facility growth (**Exhibit 4-6**). This type of planning process allows a variety of planning issues to be identified and addressed in the development of a master plan.

Exhibit 4-6
TEA Recommended Facilities Planning Process

Program Element	Mission	Responsibilities	Deliverables
Planning	Needs Assessment	Identify current and future needs	Demographics, enrollment projections, facilities survey, boundary, funding, education program, market, staff capability, transportation analysis
	Scope	Outline required building areas; develop schedules and costs	Programming, cost estimating, scheduling, cost analysis
	Strategy	Identify structure	Facilities project list, master schedule, budget plan, organization plan, marketing plan
	Public Approval	Implement public relations campaign	Public and media relations
Approach	Management Plan	Detail roles, responsibilities, and procedures	Program management plan and systems
	Program Strategy	Review and refine details	Detailed delivery strategy
	Program Guidelines		Educational specifications, design guidelines, CAD standards

Source: Planning model recommended by TEA.

EISD's efforts do not address external factors such as community attitudes and internal factors such as financing alternatives. Fifty-six percent of teachers responding to the survey disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, "Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning." Thirty-four percent of principals and assistant principals shared the same viewpoint as teachers.

There is no timetable or cost estimate for moving the various schools and the renovations required.

Recommendation 19:

Develop a long -range facilities master plan.

The district should establish a facilities committee to identify and prioritize facilities needs in concert with the opening of the new high school. The committee should have 25 to 30 members, including EISD administrators, teachers, maintenance staff and members of the community representing each of the schools, the developing areas outside Elgin and residents who do not have children in EISD schools. Principals should work with the committee to confirm the priorities set out in the draft plan prepared by the superintendent.

Each year the master plan must be reviewed and updated by EISD staff to reflect changing priorities and events. The facilities committee should review the update to ensure it reflects the needs and priorities of the district and community.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Board of Trustees establishes a committee and nominates citizens from across the community to participate.	October 2000
2.	The superintendent selects EISD staff to serve on the committee.	October 2000
3.	The superintendent, director of Maintenance and the executive director of Business and Financial Services serve as support to the committee, and schedule the initial meeting.	October 2000
4.	The committee establishes a meeting schedule, reviews the needs assessment documents, and if necessary, conducts a tour of all facilities.	December 2000
5.	The committee prepares a priority list of facilities needs and holds meetings at each school to gather feedback from parents and residents.	January 2001
6.	The committee includes the community input in their recommendations and combines the priorities into a recommended master plan.	February 2001
7.	The executive director of Business and Financial Services and the director of Maintenance provide cost data for each recommended item and recommend a schedule for accomplishing the plan based upon the projected financial capabilities of the district.	March 2001
8.	The superintendent reviews the plan and recommends approval to the board.	March 2001
9.	The board reviews the plan, makes modifications, approves the overall plan and directs the superintendent to implement items	April 2001

	scheduled for the first year of the plan.	
10.	The superintendent updates the plan annually, reviews the cost information and presents recommendations to the board.	Annually

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

B. MAINTENANCE AND CUSTODIAL OPERATIONS

The Maintenance Department maintains the facilities for routine repairs and cleanliness. The department has 33 positions including a director, custodial supervisor, office manager, general laborer/carpenter, general laborer/locksmith, plumber, Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC)/electrician, four grounds crew members, a crossing guard and 21 custodians. The department contracts for regular inspection, lubrication and routine work on air conditioning units with more than five tons in capacity, pest control services, glass replacement and tree trimming.

The department operates out of a metal building behind the high school campus. The building serves as both the warehouse and mechanical center, as well as office space for the director, supervisor and paraprofessional.

Custodial duties should be coordinated with the school program and skilled labor so that work during school hours is done with a minimum of disturbance to pupils and other school personnel. There are many custodial tasks that need to be performed on a regular basis, including:

- Regulating the heating and/or air conditioning equipment as required;
- Unlocking doors, opening windows for ventilation and turning on lights;
- Setting up rooms for special activities;
- Cleaning restroom facilities, replacing all commodities and making sure dispensers work properly;
- Cleaning classrooms, teachers' lounges and other areas;
- Performing special tasks within the classrooms based upon teacher requests;
- Moving furniture;
- Disposing of trash; and
- Locking doors and gates, closing windows, turning off lights, etc., to school buildings and grounds.

Duties of a weekly, monthly or quarterly nature should be defined and scheduled. Tasks that may be included in this classification include:

- Lubricating equipment;
- Cleaning interior walls;
- Painting indoor areas;
- Waxing floors and cleaning carpeting;

- Washing windows and blinds and arranging for drapery cleaning; and
- Resurfacing floors and refinishing furniture.

FINDING

EISD maintains 296,768 total square footage at 15 facilities. Maintenance Department staff handle most routine repair needs for the district, and the director of Maintenance contracts with various vendors for HVAC work for units with more than five tons in capacity and pest control (**Exhibit 4-7**).

**Exhibit 4-7
EISD Vendors Used for Contract Work
1999-2000**

Vendor	Type of Work
YPS	Air conditioning
Elgin A/C	Air conditioning and heating
McDade Tree Service	Tree trimming
Floyd's Glass	Glass repairs
The Pest Patrol	Pest control services
Post Oak Communications	Telephone service

Source: EISD director of Maintenance.

The director of Maintenance continually reviews the cost of outside vendors both within the Elgin area and in Austin. Based upon the material need or the type of labor, the director identifies the lowest cost alternatives.

When the prior electrician left for another employer during the 1999-2000 school year, the director of Maintenance hired a person with both electrical and HVAC experience. This situation has allowed the Maintenance Department to eliminate one outside contractor.

The Association of Physical Plant Administrators (APPA) developed a set of staffing standards for crafts positions based upon gross square footage in a district's facilities. EISD Maintenance Department staffing is compared to these standards in **Exhibit 4-8**.

Exhibit 4-8
EISD Maintenance Department Craftspeople Compared to APPA
Standard
1999-2000

Craft	EISD Current Staffing	APPA Standard	Recommended Staffing
General maintenance mechanic	0.0	1:500,000 gross square feet (GSF)	0.5
HVAC mechanic	0.5	1:450,000 GSF	0.5
Plumber	1.0	1:390,000 GSF	1.0
Electrician	0.5	1:380,000 GSF	1.0
Carpenter and locksmith	1.0	1:200,000 GSF	1.0
Painter	0.0	1:200,000 GSF	1.0
General maintenance workers	1.0	1:500,000 GSF	0.5
Total	4.0		4.5

Source: EISD Maintenance Department and Association of Physical Plant Administrators.

COMMENDATION

EISD's Maintenance Department uses a combination of external vendors and internal staff to cost-effectively meet the needs of the district.

FINDING

The Maintenance Department uses the Applied Computer Technologies 1000 automated work order system. The director and office manager implement updates to the system as they are issued.

All work orders must be processed manually. Principals and central office departments submit work order requests by facsimile to the Maintenance Department. The director reviews each work order, establishes a priority and assigns it to one of the maintenance employees. No written information exists to distinguish priorities among work orders.

When the work is completed, the employee who completed the work fills in the work order form with a description of the job and the amount of time necessary to complete it. If items have been purchased to complete the work, the director authorizes the purchase in advance, the office manager gets a purchase order number from the executive director of Business and Financial Services and the office manager provides that purchase order number to the employee.

When the employee completes the work and turns the work order form in to the secretary, an invoice for any purchases also is submitted. The office manager enters each work order into the system. The office manager also files the hard copy of the work order form along with a portion of the purchase order.

Written work order priorities help principals and other district personnel determine the severity of a problem and communicate the problem to the Maintenance Department. As the number of facilities at EISD increases, it will be difficult to communicate these priorities manually.

Through May 5, 2000, the department processed 1,601 work orders for the 1999-2000 school year (**Exhibit 4-9**).

Exhibit 4-9
EISD Work Orders
1999-2000 (1)

Facility	Total
Elgin High School	438
Booker T. Washington Middle School	362
Elgin Elementary School	291
Elgin Primary School	383
Other	127
Total	1,601

Source: EISD director of Maintenance.
(1) Through May 5, 2000.

Principals said the Maintenance Department is not responsive to their needs. One principal had to wait several weeks to have a structural problem that was a safety issue fixed, and another indicated that an outside firm had to be used to trim trees. According to another principal, structural

issues are addressed "as maintenance deems appropriate. I must call them constantly to get their attention."

Sixty percent of principals and assistant principals responding to a TSPR survey and 43 percent of the district's teachers rated the regular maintenance of the facilities poorly (**Exhibit 4-10**). Sixty percent of the principals and assistant principals and 39 percent of the teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed that district schools are clean.

Exhibit 4-10
Evaluation of Facilities Maintenance by
EISD Principals, Assistant Principals and Teachers

Survey Statement	Principals' and Assistant Principals Response		Teachers' Response	
	Strongly Agree or Agree	Strongly Disagree or Disagree	Strongly Agree or Agree	Strongly Disagree or Disagree
Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	40%	60%	48%	43%
Repairs are made in a timely manner.	40%	60%	51%	43%
Schools are clean.	40%	60%	58%	39%
Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	66%	20%	68%	15%

Source: TSPR survey, April-May 2000.

Recommendation 20:

Evaluate the quality of current maintenance work, identify opportunities to improve service and develop a plan to implement changes.

The director of Maintenance should meet with the principals to identify service problems. Key issues at each school should be prioritized and a plan to address them developed. The director should monitor the work to ensure it is done properly.

The director should develop a set of work order priorities and communicate the priorities, along with examples of types of work for each category, to the principals. A response time should be associated with each

priority, and a follow-up/feedback approach should be developed to let principals know the status of their work orders.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Maintenance meets with the principal of each school, tours the facility and identifies all problems.	October 2000
2.	The director prioritizes the identified problems by school, reviews the priorities with the principal at each school and modifies the priority list as necessary.	November 2000
3.	From the list of maintenance needs at each school, the director establishes an overall priority list based upon different categories of need, such as health risk; projects that will alleviate potential hazardous or life-threatening conditions; and routine maintenance projects.	November - December 2000
4.	The director establishes a budget and a timeline to address the maintenance needs based upon the priority list and reviews the budget with the executive director of Administrative Services.	January 2000
5.	The executive director makes modifications, as necessary, and recommends the approval of the work to the superintendent.	February 2001
6.	The superintendent approves the work, directs the director of Maintenance to begin addressing the problems and directs the director to budget any additional funds needed to complete the work for the next fiscal year.	March 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with the preparation of the priority work list; however, once the projects are identified and approved, the district will need to budget necessary funds over the next two fiscal years to address the problems.

FINDING

Exhibit 4-11 describes how the custodial staff is assigned to facilities.

**Exhibit 4-11
EISD Custodial Staff by Facility
1999-2000**

Facility	Number	Work
----------	--------	------

	of Custodians	Hours
Elgin High School	5.5	Two from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. Three from 2 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. One from 4:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. for portable buildings
Booker T. Washington Middle School	5.0	Two from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. Three from 2 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.
Elgin Elementary School	2.0	One from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. One from 2 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.
Elgin Primary School	5.0	Two from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. Three from 2 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.
Phoenix Center, field houses	1.0	6 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Business office, maintenance facility, two portable buildings at the elementary school	1.0	6 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Total	19.5	

Source: EISD director of Maintenance.

The Association of School Business Officials (ASBO), using widely accepted industry standards, has developed cleaning guidelines or standards for schools that a district can tailor to its needs depending upon the type of facility, facility use and types of surfaces to be cleaned (**Exhibit 4-12**). These standards identify the type of facility, the daily use, the types of surfaces to be cleaned and an estimate of the time necessary to complete each task.

Exhibit 4-12
Examples of Recommended Custodial Work Standards
Established by the Association for School Business Officials

Space	Service	Unit Measure	Work Rate Time
Classrooms (average size)	routine clean	850 sq. ft.	24 minutes
Offices - resilient floor	routine clean	1,000 sq. ft.	24 minutes

Offices - carpet	routine clean	1,000 sq. ft.	24 minutes
Floors	dust mop	1,000 sq. ft.	12 minutes
	damp mop	1,000 sq. ft.	20 minutes
	spray buff - daily	1,000 sq. ft.	20 minutes
	spray buff - weekly	1,000 sq. ft.	40 minutes
	spray buff - monthly	1,000 sq. ft.	120 minutes
	light furniture scrub	1,000 sq. ft.	240 minutes
	medium furniture scrub	1,000 sq. ft.	300 minutes
	heavy furniture scrub	1,000 sq. ft.	400 minutes
Bathrooms	three or fewer commodes, urinals and wash basins	each	4.5 minutes
	more than three	each	3.0
Stairs	damp mop	1 flight	12 minutes
	wet mop	1 flight	35 minutes
	hand scrub	1 flight	48 minutes
	dust handrails	1 flight	2 minutes
	dust treads	1 flight	6 minutes
Walls	wash	1,000 sq. ft.	210 minutes
	wash heavy soil	1,000 sq. ft.	290 minutes
Blinds	dust	each	15 minutes

	damp dust	each	30 minutes
	wash	200 sq. ft.	340 minutes
Windows - single pane	wash	1,000 sq. ft.	240 minutes
Windows - multi-pane	wash	1,000 sq. ft.	320 minutes
Light fixtures - fluorescent	dust	4 ft.	5 minutes
Light fixtures - egg crate	wash	4 ft.	40 minutes
Light fixtures - open	wash	4 ft.	20 minutes
Light fixtures - incandescent	dust	each	5 minutes
Light fixtures - incandescent	wash	each	15 minutes

Source: Custodial Methods and Procedures Manual, ASBO.

Applying the standard of one custodian per 20,000 gross square feet adopted by ASBO, **Exhibit 4-13** shows the variance between current EISD custodial staffing and the recommended total. Based upon the square footage at each facility, EISD has 4.5 more custodians than the ASBO standards recommend.

Exhibit 4-13
BISD Custodians by Campus Compared to ASBO Standard
1999-2000

Facility	Square Footage	Full-time Equivalent Custodians (1)		Variance Above(+) Below (-) Standard
		Current	Recommended	
Elgin High School	128,570	5.5	6.5	-1.0
Booker T. Washington Middle School	59,510	5.0	3.0	+2.0

Elgin Elementary School	38,993	2.0	2.0	0.0
Elgin Primary School	62,844	5.0	3.0	+2.0
Other	6,851	2.0	0.5	+1.5
Total	296,768	19.5	15.0	+4.5

Source: EISD director of Maintenance and Custodial Methods and Procedures Manual, ASBO.

(1) One FTE equals eight hours of work.

Although the figures show EISD is overstaffed at the high school, middle school and primary school, only three custodians work during the late afternoon and evening hours. The custodial supervisor and the director of Maintenance said several factors prevent the custodial staff from being used more effectively:

- The primary school has area rugs in each classroom. The custodian must carry a vacuum and a mop into each room to complete cleaning, which takes additional time;
- At the primary school, a custodian must staff the cafeteria and pick up trays at both breakfast and lunch;
- At the primary school, there are numerous accidents in the cafeteria due to overcrowding that involve additional cleaning; and
- At the middle school, there are nine portable buildings located on two areas of the campus. Since all but one are double classrooms, the facility is basically three buildings.

Also, the director of Maintenance must use two members of the grounds crew at both the primary and elementary schools during lunch (10:45 a.m. through 12:30 p.m.) to support the custodians at each facility. Given the number of students in the primary school, the two assigned daytime custodians are busy in other areas of the facility. Since the gym serves as the cafeteria for the elementary school and there are classes right after lunch, the one daytime custodian cannot clean the gym, lift and store the tables and respond to needs in other parts of the school.

The project team conducted a tour of each EISD facility as part of the review. During that tour, the project team noted two cleanliness issues:

- The cafeteria and at least one entryway at the middle school were dirty and cluttered with trash; and

- The high school courtyard had debris and stains from garbage that had been pulled along the sidewalk.

According to one principal, "the facility is constantly dirty." In the written surveys of teachers, principals and assistant principals, the maintenance of facilities was considered poor.

Cleaning is inhibited because there are not enough personnel assigned to work during the evening. In California, the State Department of Education developed a guide for school districts, entitled *Business Services Guide*, which provides recommended procedures in all operational areas of a district excluding instruction. In the custodial area, the procedures recommend custodial work schedules that emphasize late afternoon and evening work hours. According to the guide, daytime cleaning limits custodians' ability to thoroughly clean certain areas or take the time necessary to complete time-consuming tasks.

Recommendation 21:

Eliminate one custodial floater position and hire two part-time custodians.

Shifting one daytime custodian to late afternoon and evening would increase the night crews to at least four custodians at the high school, middle and primary schools. Given the other factors that impede efficient cleaning, such as rugs, age of the facilities and multiple portable buildings, four custodians should be an adequate number. This reassignment should enable EISD to eliminate one floater position responsible for portable buildings.

By hiring two part-time custodians to work the lunch periods at both the primary and middle schools, one grounds crew member at each school can be freed for normal work. The part-time custodians could be drawn from bus drivers seeking to become full-time employees and qualify for benefits, or from residents seeking limited employment.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Maintenance and the custodial supervisor reassign one custodian at the high school, middle and primary school from daytime to late afternoon/evening work.	October 2000
2.	The director of Maintenance and custodial supervisor hire two part-time custodians to work the lunch periods at the primary and middle schools.	October 2000
3.	The director of Maintenance and the custodial supervisor	October 2000

	adjust staffing accordingly and grounds crew members are reassigned to regular work.	
4.	The custodial supervisor develops a checklist of key areas to be cleaned in each school and reviews it with each principal.	November 2000
5.	The custodial supervisor requests each principal complete the checklist weekly to provide input on the work of the custodial crews.	December 2000
6.	The custodial supervisor reviews the principal responses and makes adjustments by school as necessary.	December 2000 and ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of this recommendation is the difference in the cost of hiring two part-time custodians for three hours each day for nine months, and the savings of eliminating one custodian floater position. The salary of the custodian floater is \$14,560 plus benefits at 15 percent of salary, or \$2,184, for a total savings of \$16,744. Two part-time custodians will cost \$7 per hour x 3 hours a day x 185 days x 2 people = \$7,770. Since the part-time custodians are not working 1,000 hours, the district will not have to pay benefits costs. Thus, the net savings to the district will be \$8,974.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Eliminate one custodian floater position.	\$16,744	\$16,744	\$16,744	\$16,744	\$16,744
Hire two part-time custodians.	(\$7,770)	(\$7,770)	(\$7,770)	(\$7,770)	(\$7,770)
Net savings	\$8,974	\$8,974	\$8,974	\$8,974	\$8,974

Chapter 4

C. ENERGY MANAGEMENT

FINDING

EISD does not have an energy management plan. Since 1998-99, EISD has implemented a series of energy management practices:

- Johnson Controls installed controls on all heating, ventilation and air conditioning units;
- American Lighting retrofitted all lighting with T8 lamps with electronic ballast;
- Kalwall panels were installed over all windows at the middle and high schools to block ultraviolet rays from entering the classrooms; and
- The new high school will be outfitted with the same controls and systems.

EISD utility bills increased from \$329,684 in 1994-95 (actual costs) to \$463,050 in 1999-2000 (budgeted costs), a 40.5 percent increase. Only one new facility, the maintenance warehouse, was built during that period.

The district has not had a energy management audit, such as those performed by the State Energy Conservation Office (SECO), which is part of the Comptroller's office. SECO provides free energy management audits to public sector entities, including school districts. The audits provide detailed recommendations of equipment and procedures to implement that can serve as the basis for an energy management plan, and the estimated time for payback of the cost of these items through energy savings.

Recommendation 22:

Have SECO conduct an energy management audit of all EISD facilities that do not have installed controls.

The audit should serve as the basis for an energy management plan. Based upon EISD's financial situation, the plan should be phased in over a period of time and monitored by the Maintenance Department.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Maintenance contacts SECO and schedules	September
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	an audit.	2000
2.	SECO completes the audit and provides EISD with a report.	September-October 2000
3.	The director of Maintenance reviews the report and prepares a recommended implementation plan for the executive director of Administrative Services.	November 2000
4.	The executive director of Administrative Services approves the plan and recommends approval by the superintendent.	December 2000
5.	The superintendent approves the plan and recommends approval by the board.	December 2000
6.	The board approves the plan and directs the superintendent to implement the plan.	January 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

Assuming utility bills could be reduced by 10 percent after the audit, EISD could save \$46,305 annually ($\$463,050 \times .10 = \$46,305$). Savings in the first year assumes time to complete the audit and make energy use changes.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Have SECO conduct an energy management audit of all EISD facilities that do not have installed controls.	\$23,152	\$46,305	\$46,305	\$46,305	\$46,305

Chapter 5

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the financial operations of the Elgin Independent School District (EISD) in the areas listed below.

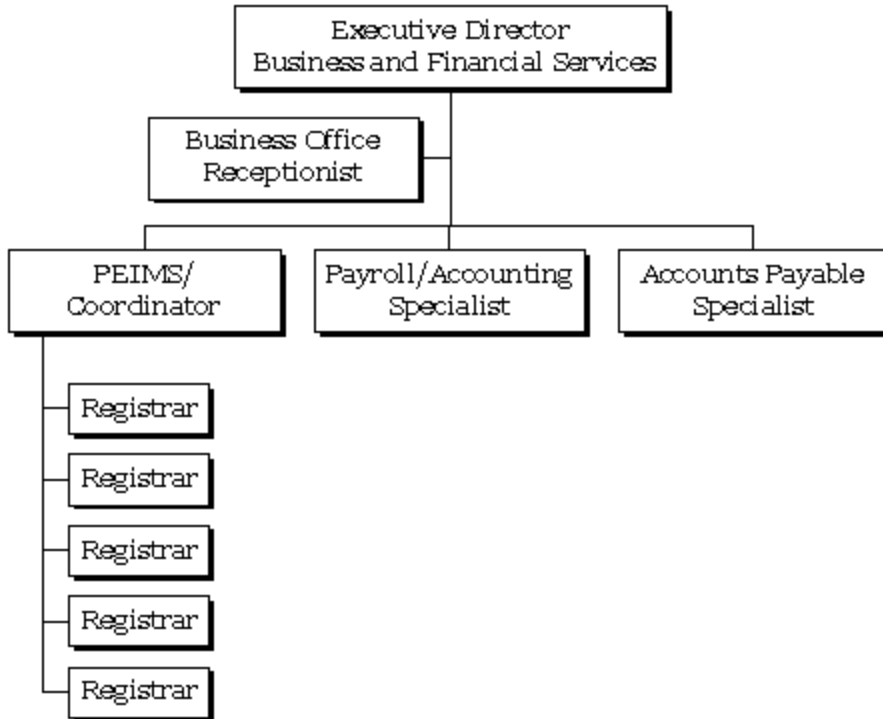
- A. Financial Management Practices
- B. Financial Reporting and Budgeting
- C. Payroll
- D. Cash and Investments
- E. Fixed Assets
- F. Purchasing and Contract Management

Successful financial management operations ensure that a school district receives all available revenue from the state and federal governments; maintains a record of sound financial decisions and adequate and equitable budget allocations; issues timely, accurate and informative reports on the district's financial position; maintains adequate internal controls; employs a skilled, well-trained staff; and maintains a consistent record of favorable reports from its external auditors.

BACKGROUND

The executive director of Business and Financial Services is responsible for major business functions and payroll. The position also supervises an administrative receptionist and five district registrars. **Exhibit 5-1** shows the organizational structure summary of EISD's Business and Financial Services.

Exhibit 5-1
Organization of Business and Financial Services



Source: EISD director of Business and Financial Services.

The executive director of Business and Financial Services reports directly to the superintendent and supervises nine clerical employees. Because the district is small, the superintendent is very involved in Business and Financial Services activities.

EISD maintains its accounting records on the Regional Service Center Computer Cooperative (RSCCC) software, which is supported by Regional Education Service Center XIII ("Region 13"). The district contracts with Region 13 for automated financial systems support at an annual cost of \$24,980.

Region 13 support personnel visit the district when EISD needs assistance with financial software. The district has access to all RSCCC modules, including accounting and finance, budgeting, payroll, fixed assets and purchasing. The district now uses the RSCCC software for monthly accounting, payroll and financial reporting. This system uses a series of options, or menus, to allow a district to choose the level of detail it prefers to use in maintaining its business records.

The RSCCC software can generate a wide variety of management information reports in four general categories: summary reports, fixed

asset/inventory reports, vendor/purchase order reports and journals/checks/detailed ledger reports. Summary reports are most useful for board members and district administrators and include a summary of general ledger activity, comparisons of revenue to budget, budget status by organization (for example, by department or school) and budget status by program (for example, by technology or athletics).

The executive director of Business and Financial Services is responsible for cash management and investment activities and handles all cash receipts and transfers. EISD's investment strategy is simple, and the district uses a government investment pool to deposit excess funds that are not needed in regular bank accounts.

Almost 31 percent of EISD's property value is in undeveloped land. This figure compares to 9.4 percent on average for other districts in Region 13 and 7.3 percent for the entire state. Bisd has less business and residential property value than the state, most peer districts and regional averages (**Exhibit 5-2**).

Exhibit 5-2
EISD, Region 13, State and Peer District Property Values
by Category as a Percentage of Total Property Value
1998-99

Entity	Business	Residential	Land	Oil and Gas	Other
Elgin	20.1%	46.4%	30.9%	0.0%	2.6%
Bastrop	21.7%	48.3%	26.7%	0.2%	3.2%
Taylor	38.0%	52.1%	9.8%	0.0%	0.2%
Region 13	32.0%	57.5%	9.4%	0.6%	0.5%
Del Valle	63.7%	25.8%	9.3%	0.0%	1.3%
Leander	15.3%	75.3%	9.2%	0.0%	0.1%
State	40.7%	47.2%	7.3%	4.1%	0.6%
Manor	83.6%	9.9%	5.9%	0.0%	0.7%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1998-99. Includes general, debt service, and food service funds.

In 1998-99, Texas school districts budgeted an average of 47.8 percent of their funds from the local property tax and 44.3 percent in revenue from

the state. In EISD, those percentages were 28.3 and 63.1 percent, respectively. The averages for the region are 65.7 percent and 27 percent, respectively (**Exhibit 5-3**). Compared to the region, state and peer districts, EISD is deriving less revenue from the local property tax and is getting a comparatively larger percentage from the state.

Exhibit 5-3
EISD, Region 13, State and Peer District
Sources of Budgeted Revenue as a Percentage of Total Budgeted
Revenue
1998-99

Entity	Local Property Tax	Other Local And Intermediate	State	Federal
Elgin	28.3%	4.9%	63.1%	3.7%
Bastrop	36.2%	4.3%	56.6%	2.9%
Taylor	35.1%	6.0%	56.1%	2.9%
State	47.8%	4.4%	44.3%	3.4%
Region 13	65.7%	4.8%	27.0%	2.4%
Leander	67.0%	5.1%	26.6%	1.4%
Del Valle	66.8%	4.8%	24.4%	4.0%
Manor	88.5%	3.2%	6.5%	1.9%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1998-99. Includes general, debt service, and food service funds.

Over the past three years (1996-97 through 1999-2000), local property tax revenue as a source of funds for EISD has increased from 24.6 to 27.0 percent of total revenues. At the same time, state revenue has decreased from 65 percent to 63.3 percent of total revenues (**Exhibit 5-4**). Federal funds have decreased slightly from 3.8 to 3.6 percent of total revenues.

Exhibit 5-4
EISD Sources of Revenue as a Percentage of Total Revenue
1996-97 - 1999-2000

Source of Revenue	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	Percentage Change
Local property tax	24.6%	25.3%	27.0%	27.0%	9.8%

Other local and intermediate	6.6%	7.2%	6.6%	6.1%	-7.6%
State	65.0%	63.4%	62.6%	63.3%	-2.6%
Federal	3.8%	4.0%	3.8%	3.6%	-6.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Source: District Annual Financial and Compliance reports for 1996-97, 1997-98, 1998-99 and EISD budget for 1999-2000. Includes general, debt service and food service funds.

The local property tax rate has increased by 4.5 percent over the last four years while the total number of students has increased by 4.8 percent. Local property values have increased by 39.8 percent for this same period (Exhibit 5-5).

Exhibit 5-5
EISD Tax Rates, Assessed Property Values
and Per Student Property Values and Debt Service Costs
1996-97 - 1999-2000

Category	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	Percent Change
Maintenance and operations tax rate	\$1.25	\$1.13	\$1.22	\$1.38	10.7%
Interest and sinking fund tax rate	\$0.16	\$0.16	\$0.27	\$0.09	-43.8%
Total tax rate	\$1.41	\$1.29	\$1.49	\$1.47	4.5%
Total property value (000's)	\$252,992,805	\$279,432,999	\$299,631,782	\$353,564,325	39.8%
Total Students	2,559	2,611	2,638	\$2,682	4.8%

Value per student	\$98,864	\$107,021	\$113,583	\$131,829	33.3%
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Source: District Annual Financial and Compliance Reports for 1996-97, 1997-98, 1998-99, district financial data for 1999-2000 and TEA, AEIS 1996-97 - 1998-99.

Compared to all peer districts, the state and the region, EISD has a lower property value per student and a lower tax rate (**Exhibit 5-6**).

**Exhibit 5-6
EISD Tax Rate and Property Value per Student
Compared to Peer Districts, Region 13 and the State
1998-99**

Entity	Tax Rate	Value per Student
Manor	\$1.59	\$650,093
Del Valle	\$1.68	\$273,124
Region 13	\$1.57	\$260,338
Leander	\$1.63	\$222,411
State	\$1.54	\$190,769
Taylor	\$1.52	\$136,464
Bastrop	\$1.60	\$131,815
Elgin	\$1.49	\$113,583

Source: TEA, AEIS 1998-99.

On the expenditure side, **Exhibit 5-7** shows how EISD budgeted funds were distributed in 1998-99 compared to the region and the state averages. EISD spent comparatively more on instruction, instructional leadership, food services and co-curricular activities, while spending comparatively less on security, debt service and capital outlay.

**Exhibit 5-7
EISD, Region 13 and State Expenditures by Function
as a Percentage of Total Expenditures (in thousands)
1998-99**

Function	Elgin		Region 13		State of Texas	
	Amount	Percent	Amount	Percent	Amount	Percent
Instruction	\$8,713	52.3%	\$762,050	49.0%	\$11,830,069	51.3%
Instructional related services	\$362	2.2%	\$33,580	2.2%	\$611,978	2.7%
Instructional leadership	\$397	2.4%	\$18,122	1.2%	\$284,266	1.2%
School leadership	\$734	4.4%	\$76,510	4.9%	\$1,208,860	5.2%
Support services - student	\$631	3.8%	\$54,638	3.5%	\$902,584	3.9%
Student transportation	\$610	3.7%	\$48,106	3.1%	\$577,964	2.5%
Food services	\$968	5.8%	\$76,050	4.9%	\$1,149,708	5.0%
Co-curricular/extracurricular activities	\$565	3.4%	\$32,037	2.1%	\$524,145	2.3%
Central administration	\$554	3.3%	\$55,507	3.6%	\$859,514	3.7%
Plant maintenance and operations	\$1,576	9.5%	\$136,431	8.8%	\$2,304,705	10.0%
Security and monitoring services	\$2	0.0%	\$4,640	0.3%	\$114,989	0.5%
Community services	\$119	0.7%	\$14,023	0.9%	\$214,598	0.9%
Data processing services	\$53	0.3%	\$4,252	0.3%	\$47,278	0.2%
Total operating expenditures	\$15,284	91.7%	\$1,315,946	84.7%	\$20,630,658	89.4%
Debt service	\$1,105	6.6%	\$196,652	12.7%	\$1,763,445	7.6%
Capital outlay	\$272	1.6%	\$41,853	2.7%	\$678,240	2.9%
Total non-operating expenditures	\$1,377	8.3%	\$238,505	15.3%	\$2,441,685	10.6%
Total Expenditures	\$16,661	100.0%	\$1,554,451	100.0%	\$23,072,343	100.0%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1998-99. Includes general, debt service and food service funds.

On a per-student basis over the past four years, expenditures have increased by 14.3 percent (**Exhibit 5-8**). Instruction and instructional leadership spending has increased by 19.6 percent or \$581 per student,

while school leadership spending has increased by 27.8 percent or \$69 per student. Other operating costs have increased by 36.8 percent or \$555 per student, and non-operating expenditures, which include capital outlay and debt service costs, have increased by 4.5 percent or \$57 per student.

Exhibit 5-8
EISD Expenditures Per Student
1996-97 - 1998-99

Expenditure Category	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	Percent Change
Instruction and instructional leadership	\$2,872	\$2,970	\$3,270	\$3,453	19.6%
School leadership	\$209	\$248	\$263	\$278	27.8%
Central administration	\$231	\$221	\$208	\$210	-9.5%
Other operating	\$1,277	\$1,510	\$1,681	\$1,832	36.8%
Total operations	\$4,589	\$4,949	\$5,422	\$5,773	23.9%
Total non-operations	\$486	\$3,734	\$422	\$543	1.5%
Total per student	\$5,075	\$8,683	\$5,844	\$6,316	14.3%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1996-97 - 1998-99.

Exhibit 5-9 shows EISD's 1999-2000 expenditures by function.

Exhibit 5-9
EISD Total Budgeted Expenditures by Function 1999-00 School Year

Function (Code)	Elgin	Percent of Total
Instruction(11,95)	\$9,888,113	53.9%
Instructional Related Services(12,13)	\$431,877	2.4%
Instructional Leadership(21)	\$389,012	2.1%
School Leadership(23)	\$819,033	4.5%
Support Services-Student(31,32,33)	\$738,005	4.0%
Student Transportation(34)	\$815,522	4.4%
Food Services(35)	\$1,046,140	5.7%
Cocurricular/Extracurricular Activities(36)	\$672,752	3.7%

Central Administration(41,92)	\$684,122	3.7%
Plant Maintenance and Operations(51)	\$1,631,475	8.9%
Security & Monitoring Services(52)	\$2,571	0.0%
Data Processing Services(53)	\$108,183	0.6%
Debt Service	\$1,072,389	5.8%
Capital Outlay	\$0	0.0%
Other*	\$59,043	0.3%
Total Budgeted Expenditures	\$18,358,237	100.0%

Source: PEIMS Data, TEA.

**Expenditure not listed above and non-operational expenditures such as community and parental involvement services.*

The business manager and Business Office staff are responsible for the district's asset and risk management. This includes cash management and investing activities, maintaining fixed assets records and management of long-term debt. The Human Resources director and the Human Resources Department are responsible for administration of the district's employee benefit programs as well as the workers' compensation program.

The State of Texas uses countywide appraisal districts to determine the taxable values of properties within each taxing jurisdiction. The Bastrop Central Appraisal District (BCAD) performs these services for the district. The district also contracts with BCAD for the collection of its property taxes. Daily tax collections are deposited directly to the Lone Star Liquidity Plus Fund.

EISD's property and casualty insurance coverage is purchased using the competitive bidding process. The district's independent insurance agent is Whorton Insurance Services, and the carrier is Penco Insurance. Coverage, provided for a three-year period (renewable each year), includes liability for facilities, equipment and vehicles, personal injury, professional and general liability, loss of property, crime and student accident insurance. Property value insured increased from \$16,630,898 to \$17,461,259, or 5 percent, from 1999 to 2000. **Exhibit 5-10** summarizes coverage levels purchased by the district, deductibles and contribution rates for 1998-99 and 1999-2000.

Exhibit 5-10
EISD Property and Casualty Insurance Coverage and Contributions
1998-99 through 1999-2000

Type	1999-2000 Liability Limits	Deductible	1998-1999 Contribution	1999-2000 Contribution	Difference Increase/ (Decrease)	Percent Change Increase/ (Decrease)
Property						
• Building/ Personal Property	Replacement Cost \$17,461,259	\$1000				
• Musical Instrument s	\$296,516	\$500				
• Camera Schedule	\$75,000	\$1000				
• Electronic Data Processing	\$580,229	\$500				
• Contractors Equipment	\$44,874	\$250				
• Storage tank - Pollution liability	\$1 million per occurrence and aggregate	\$5000	\$22,418	\$18,908	(\$3,510)	(15.7%)
General Liability	\$1,000,000 per occurrence; \$10,000 medical	\$1000	\$3,465	\$4,003	\$538	15.5%
School Professional Legal	\$1,000,000 per	\$1000	\$4,846	\$6,237	\$1,391	28.7%

Liability and Bonding	occurrence \$1,000,000 annual aggregate					
Commercial Automobile	\$2,000,000 Combined Single Limit	\$500 Collision; \$250 Comprehensive	\$13,838	\$11,276	(\$2,562)	(18.5%)
Total			\$44,567	\$40,424	(\$4,143)	(9.3%)

Source: EISD business manager.

EISD's workers' compensation plan is a partially self-insured program administered by Texas Political Subdivisions (TPS). TPS is a member-owned self-insurance program chartered specifically to help Texas public entities manage their insurance risks through self-funded programs.

Exhibit 5-11 summarizes premiums and claims incurred for the workers' compensation program.

Exhibit 5-11
Workers Compensation Premiums and Claims Incurred
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Year	Premiums Paid	Claims Incurred (Valued as of January, 2000)
1995-96	\$139,560	\$55,180
1996-97	\$126,900	\$67,109
1997-98	\$131,362	\$218,172
1998-99	\$133,336	\$126,902
1999-2000	\$149,184	\$79,186

Source: Texas Education Agency, Public Education Information Management System, and EISD Business manager.

Group health insurance is provided to employees who normally work more than three hours per day and 15 hours per week, and to their dependents through a self-funded program administered by Health Administration Services. As required by state statute, the district carries stop-loss coverage for both individual and aggregate losses.

Prior to enrollment, employees receive information regarding the coverage options available and the associated costs. The district covers the entire cost of employees' health insurance, \$175 per month. Voluntary supplementary insurance benefits, the cost of which is the responsibility of the employee, are offered and include dental, vision, life, cancer and long- and short-term disability. The district also provides a Section 125-cafeteria plan, unemployment compensation and workers' compensation insurance.

Section 125 of the Internal Revenue Code allows the purchase of certain fringe benefits before taxes are calculated, reducing the employees' overall tax liability. A Section 125 plan is often referred to as a cafeteria plan or flexible benefits plan, and typically includes such premiums as health, dental, cancer and medical/dependent care reimbursement. EISD makes this benefit option available to employees, allowing them to deduct premiums for health, dental, vision and cancer coverage. The district also offers flexible spending accounts for reimbursement of eligible medical expenses and dependent care expenses to all eligible employees. A third-party administrator, Pension Consultants & Administrators, processes the reimbursement claims.

Exhibit 5-12 provides a summary of the key plan provisions of the district's self-funded health insurance program.

**Exhibit 5-12
Summary of EISD Medical Plan Benefits
1999-2000**

Benefit	In-Network Plan Provision	Out-of-Network Plan Provision
Co-payment Office Visits	\$10	\$10
Lifetime Maximum	\$1,000,000	Unlimited
Calendar Year Deductible	None	None
Hospitalization Deductible	None	\$500 per person, \$1500 per family
Maximum Out of Pocket, Per Plan Year	\$850	\$1800
Supplemental Accident Charge Benefit	\$300 maximum per accident	\$300 maximum per accident
Hospital Services		

• Room and Board	90%	80% after deductible
• Intensive Care	90% after co-payment	80% after deductible
Skilled Nursing Facility	90%	80% after deductible
Physician Services		
• Inpatient	90%	80% after deductible
• Office visits	100% after co-payment	80% after deductible
• Surgery	90%	80% after deductible
Home Health Care	90% 180 visits per plan year	80%, 180 visits per plan year
Hospice Care	90% after co-payment	80% after co-payment
Ambulance Service	80%; \$750 ground or \$1500 air	90%, \$750 ground or \$1500 air
Jaw Joint / TMJ	N/A	N/A
Wig after Chemotherapy	80%	80% after deductible
Occupational or Speech Therapy	N/A	N/A
Physical Therapy	90%	80% after deductible
Durable Medical Equipment	80%	80% after deductible
Prosthetics/Orthotics	N/A	N/A
Spinal Manipulation	\$500 per plan year	\$500 per plan year
Mental Disorders		
• Inpatient	90% after co-payment; 45 days per plan year*	80% after co-payment; 45 days per plan year*
• Outpatient	90% after co-payment; 60 days per plan year*	80% after co-payment; 60 days per plan year*
Substance Abuse		
• Inpatient	90% after co-payment; \$2000 per plan year	80% after co-payment; \$2000 per plan year

• Outpatient	90% after co-payment; \$48 per visit, \$1200 per plan year	80% after co-payment; \$48 per visit, \$1200 per plan year
• Inpatient/Outpatient Combined	\$15,000 lifetime maximum	\$15,000 lifetime maximum
Preventive Care		
• Routine Well Adult Care	100% after co-payment; \$500 per plan year	N/A
• Routine Well Newborn Care	90% after deductible	80% after deductible
• Routine Well Child Care	100% after co-payment; \$500 per plan year	N/A
Organ Transplants	90% after deductible	80% after deductible
Pregnancy	100% after co-payment	80% after deductible
Prescription Drugs: Generic/Name Brand	\$5/\$10	\$5/\$10

Source: EISD Human Resources Office records.

**Limits do not apply to serious mental illnesses, such as schizophrenia, paranoid and other psychotic disorders, bipolar disorders, major depressive disorders and schizo-affect disorders which shall be covered at the same levels as physical illnesses.*

Exhibit 5-13 details employee out-of-pocket costs for premiums.

Exhibit 5-13
EISD Full-Time Employee Monthly Premiums for Medical Coverage
1999-2000

Category	Premiums
Employee only	\$0
Employee + children	\$95

Employee + spouse	\$210
Employee + family	\$285

Source: EISD Human Resources office.

Exhibit 5-14 summarizes EISD's and selected peers' employee cost for medical insurance.

Exhibit 5-14
EISD and Selected Districts Employee Cost for Medical Insurance
1999-2000

		Cost to Employee			
District	Amount of Premium Paid by the District	Employee Only	Employee and Children	Employee and Spouse	Employee and Family
Elgin					
Self-funded	\$175.00	\$0.00	\$95.00	\$210.00	\$285.00
Austin					
AMIL HMO	\$154.00	\$0.00	\$166.17	\$160.00	\$316.00
Nylcare HMO	\$154.00	\$8.79	\$184.54	\$231.50	\$362.87
AMIL PPO	\$154.00	\$53.16	\$276.69	\$336.56	\$503.74
AETNA PPO	\$154.00	\$57.47	\$285.65	\$346.76	\$517.42
Bastrop					
Humana HMO	\$154.00	\$39.48	\$213.58	\$232.92	\$465.06
Del Valle					
PPO 1	\$160.00	\$0.00	\$108.90	\$147.50	\$252.00
PPO 2	\$160.00	\$0.00	\$140.00	\$186.00	\$307.00
PPO 3	\$160.00	\$34.40	\$203.04	\$257.12	\$406.54
Leander	--	--	--	--	--
Manor	--	--	--	--	--
Round Rock					
EPO	\$209.99	\$6.61	\$228.90	\$328.08	\$394.21

PPO	\$209.99	\$0.00	\$198.17	\$317.96	\$360.45
Taylor	\$160.00	\$31.87	\$189.35	\$308.60	\$368.57

Source: Telephone survey conducted by TSPR, April 2000.

The business manager is responsible for the issuance of bonds and other debt instruments as well as management of debt service. The district issued bonds most recently in 1997, totaling \$15.7 million for the construction of a new high school. This issue represented the entire authorization as approved by voters in 1997.

Exhibit 5-15 presents the district's outstanding debt at the end of fiscal 1999.

Exhibit 5-15
Schedule of Outstanding Debt, August 31, 1999

Description	Original Issue	Interest Rates	Outstanding Principal and Interest, 8/31/99
Unlimited Tax Refunding Bonds, Series 1987 Premium Capital Appreciation Bonds	\$1,559,982	6.75%-7.10%	\$915,002
Unlimited Tax School Building & Refunding Bonds, Series 1997	\$15,670,000	4.35%-5.00%	\$29,465,773
Totals		N/A	\$30,380,775

Source: EISD annual financial statements.

Chapter 5

A. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The executive director of Business and Financial Services has worked for the district five years and has developed financial management procedures designed to ensure accurate financial reporting and that assets are safeguarded. Because the district is small, the superintendent spends a good deal of time working with the executive director of Business and Financial Services in managing the district's finances.

EISD's Business and Financial Services employees include the executive director of Business and Financial Services and four Business and Financial Services employees with total salaries and benefits of \$211,225 (**Exhibit 5-16**). Five registrars report to the executive director of Business and Financial Services and have total salaries and benefits of \$101,083.

Exhibit 5-16
Salaries and Benefits of EISD Business
and Financial Services Employees

Employee	Salaries	Benefits	Total
Executive director of Business and Financial Services	\$59,177	\$8,877	\$68,054
PEIMS coordinator	\$45,405	\$4,642	\$35,588
Payroll/accounting specialist	\$30,946	\$4,352	\$33,368
Accounts specialist (accounts payable)	\$29,016	\$2,869	\$21,999
Business office receptionist	\$19,130	\$6,811	\$52,216
Subtotal - Business and Financial Services	\$183,674	\$27,551	\$211,225
Registrars (five employees)	\$87,859	\$13,179	\$101,038
Total	\$271,533	\$40,730	\$312,263

Source: EISD Business and Financial Services records from executive director of Business and Financial Services.

FINDING

EISD uses cooperative arrangements for services that would be very costly for a small district to provide. The district has entered into cooperative

arrangements for special education services, alternative education activities and property tax collections (**Exhibit 5-17**).

Exhibit 5-17
EISD Cooperative Arrangements, Providers and Annual Costs

Provider	Description	Annual Cost
Bastrop Special Education Cooperative	Special education for EISD students	\$220,291
Bastrop County Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program	Educational service delivery for students with disciplinary problems	\$12,503
Bastrop County Central Appraisal District	Property tax billing and collections	\$24,333
Total		\$257,127

Source: EISD

Cooperative arrangements help smaller districts save money by providing costly but needed services to students and the district.

COMMENDATION

EISD has saved money by providing costly services for students and the district through cooperative arrangements with other local governments.

FINDING

In 1991, the Texas Legislature created County Education Districts for two years as a way to equalize funding to Texas public schools. EISD is a participating member of the Bastrop County Education District (BCED). For two years, CEDs assessed and levied property taxes for the benefit of all schools within counties. The courts eventually deemed CEDs unconstitutional. The court rulings ultimately abolished CEDs and established "successors-in-interest" for these entities to collect any remaining property taxes that were delinquent and owed to participating school districts in accordance with established formulas.

For the Bastrop County Education District, the successor-in-interest is Bastrop ISD. Under guidelines established by the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide*, final settlements between participating schools can be made, reducing future time and effort in administering these entities' activities. The Bastrop

County Education District successor-in-interest administered by Bastrop ISD has not been among participating districts to achieve these administrative cost savings.

All information about the settlement of these issues among participating districts is available from TEA and organizations, such as the Texas Association of School Boards and the Texas Association of School Administrators. In addition, accounting and reporting guidelines for these settlements are included in the TEA's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide*.

Recommendation 23:

Settle the successor-in-interest for the Bastrop County Education District among participating districts to reduce administrative time and effort in accounting for this activity.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director of Business and Financial Services negotiates a settlement for the successor-in-interest for the Bastrop County Education District with participating districts.	September 2000
2.	The superintendent submits the recommended settlement to trustees for final approval.	November 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 5

B. FINANCIAL REPORTING AND BUDGETING

Texas school districts must comply with financial reporting guidelines in the TEA's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide*. The guide includes the accounting and financial reporting requirements of recognized, generally accepted accounting principles, federally mandated auditing and financial reporting requirements and specific TEA accounting and financial reporting requirements. A district's annual audited financial statements must include all necessary financial information and related disclosures as prescribed by the *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide*.

The link between planning and budget preparation makes school district budgets unique. Budgets in the public arena are often considered the ultimate policy document because they are the financial plan a school district uses to achieve its goals and objectives reflecting:

- Public choices about what goods and services the district will and will not produce;
- School districts' priorities among the wide range of activities in which they are involved;
- Relative weight given to the influence of various participants and interest groups in the budget development process; and
- Methods a school district uses to acquire and use its resources.

The budget itself, then, becomes a political document representing school district administrators' accountability to their citizens.

The state, TEA and local districts formulate legal requirements for school district budgets. State and federal grants also may impose additional legal requirements; however, this report does not address them.

Responsibility for preparation of district budget guidelines and the budget calendar lies primarily with district administrators and the superintendent. Because these guidelines and the calendar create a framework for the entire budget development process, their careful design is critical to an efficient and effective process.

The budget calendar lists critical dates for the preparation, submission and review of campus budgets for the school district, and is prepared at the district level during the budget planning process. A variety of simple techniques can be used to build the district calendar. The simplest is to modify the previous year's calendar. Timing problems from the previous

year's process should be reviewed and appropriate changes made in the current calendar. The budget calendar should be reviewed to ensure it is appropriate for the current year's budget. **Exhibit 5-18** shows the district's 1999-2000 budget calendar.

Exhibit 5-18
EISD Budget Calendar

Date	Action
January 7	Budget worksheets distributed to all administrators.
January 31	Preliminary budgets due to central office.
February 3-16	Budget hearings to be conducted with administrators.
April 17	First draft of budget to be distributed to Board of Trustees.
July 24	Revised budget to be distributed to Board of Trustees.
August 9	Publish notice of public meeting to adopt budget.
August 21	Regular board meeting to adopt budget.
August 30	Publish notice of public meeting to discuss budget and proposed tax rate.
September 11	Public meeting to discuss budget and proposed tax rate.
September 18	Meeting to adopt tax rate.

Source: EISD Budget Calendar 1999-2000 from executive director of Business and Financial Services.

If the budget development process has been altered substantially from the previous year's process, the development of an entirely new budget calendar may be necessary. The following three steps may be used to prepare a new budget calendar:

- Determine the level of detail needed. A district may have several budget calendars with different levels of detail. Administrators may present a general calendar to the school board while campus personnel may use a detailed calendar at the campus level. If several calendars are used, they are summarized in a district master calendar to ensure that all activities and dates are consistent and compatible;
- Identify all activities that must be included in the calendar, and arrange them in chronological order; and

- Assign completion dates to each activity on the calendar. Completion dates are assigned working backward through the activities from August 20, the legally mandated date for presentation of the preliminary school district budget to the school board. Dates are also assigned to ensure sufficient time is allowed for completion of each activity on the calendar. Some school districts may assign only completion dates for each activity and allow budget actors/groups to determine when an activity begins. Other school districts assign suggested or mandatory start dates for activities to ensure their timely completion.

FINDING

EISD contracts with Region 13 for financial software support, including related regulatory updates. The district pays \$24,980 annually for this service. The major activities covered under this contract include:

- Implementation assistance with the new RSCCC financial software;
- Assistance with PEIMS processes and submissions; and
- Assistance with the use of the RSCCC payroll module.

COMMENDATION

EISD has begun to automate its financial records through an outsourcing arrangement to ensure accuracy and efficiency in its financial operations.

FINDING

The district provides budget information to the public each month, and budget reports are included in the monthly board meeting packets. The information in the board packets included variances from the amounts budgeted. Business and Financial Services personnel routinely answer detailed questions concerning budget questions at the monthly board meeting.

The district's RSCCC financial system provides budget information, and the executive director of Business and Financial Services uses the information to prepare reports using an electronic spreadsheet. EISD maintains the financial accounting structure of the RSCCC system in accordance with the TEA's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide*. The system includes the necessary coding to identify revenue sources and expenditures by functional area, expenditure type, program area and campus or facility. All of these detailed line items for revenues and expenditures include budgeted data and financial information. The

district generates detailed reports containing budgeted and actual data requested during TSPR's review.

EISD's monthly board report includes the district's ongoing budgeted and actual financial results. The report includes the budgeted amount, the actual financial result and the variances from the budget at a selected level of detail (**Exhibit 5-19**). Written and oral explanations of large budget variances supplement the monthly board report.

Exhibit 5-19
Example Standard Monthly Budget Comparison Report

Description	Budget Amount	Actual Amount	Variance
Fund	\$	\$	\$
Revenue	\$	\$	\$
Categories	\$	\$	\$
Total Revenues	\$	\$	\$
Expenditures	\$	\$	\$
Function	\$	\$	\$
Expenditure type	\$	\$	\$
Program area	\$	\$	\$
Campus or facility	\$	\$	\$
Total Expenditures	\$	\$	\$

Source: TSPR.

COMMENDATION

EISD prepares informative budget analysis reports every month for the board and the public.

FINDING

In June 1999, the federal Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) issued the most comprehensive governmental accounting rule ever developed. GASB Statement of Financial Accounting Standards No. 34 will significantly change the way Texas school districts and other state and local governments report their finances to the public. The TEA requires implementation of the new standard in the 2001-2002 year.

Under the new rule, anyone with an interest in school finance—citizens, the media, bond raters, creditors, legislators and others—will have more and easier-to-understand information about the school in question. For the first time, school financial reports will have information about the full cost of providing services to students and the public. An additional feature of financial reports presented under the new standard is management's narrative analysis of the school's financial performance. The new financial reporting system will give citizens a clearer picture of what a school district is doing with the taxes it collects. This includes whether current revenues are paying for current services, or if the services are the responsibility of the next generation of taxpayers. Other significant features of the new standard include calculating and recording depreciation for school facilities and equipment and disclosing the extent of net costs for all school programs that tax revenues and basic state revenues actually fund.

Currently, school financial reports focus on the funds of government, which are intended to provide some information about various activities or sources of revenue. The number of these funds can run anywhere from two to 200 or more, making it difficult at times to pull the information together and make sense out of it. Financial reports prepared under the new system will improve information provided for major funds and provide financial information from a schoolwide perspective, which is an entirely new concept.

The new reporting system will affect a broad spectrum of the public. Reports prepared under the new standard will help to determine whether the school district's financial health is improving or deteriorating. The reports will provide vital information to a company planning to relocate to a particular county or region of the state. Reports prepared under the new standard will help trustees better understand the long- and short-term implications of policy decisions. Investors will better understand the financial health of school districts participating in the financial markets. The new standard will help taxpayers better assess the fiscal soundness of district management's actions.

According to EISD's executive director of Business and Financial Services, the Business Office has started an implementation strategy for GASB 34. As part of the implementation plan, the director has raised the district's fixed asset capitalization policy by \$5,000. The increase in fixed asset capitalization levels will make required depreciation calculations less burdensome on Business Office staff.

Recommendation 24:

Continue developing the implementation strategy for GASB Statement No. 34 to meet annual external financial reporting guidelines and TEA's regulatory reporting requirements.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director of Business and Financial Services develops plans with Region 13 representatives to implement the new financial reporting standard.	February 2001
2.	The executive director of Business and Financial Services develops information for presentation to the board concerning the new standard and explains significant implementation issues.	Spring and Summer of 2001
3.	The executive director of Business and Financial Services implements necessary procedures to satisfy new reporting and data maintenance requirements of the new standard.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of this recommendation cannot be fully determined. It is possible that the district's current contract with Region 13 for automated financial system assistance combined with practice guidelines from the TEA during the implementation period and other assistance from industry associations such as the Texas Association of School Business Officials will provide the district with enough assistance to handle all but the annual financial reporting elements of the implementation of the new standard.

Chapter 5

C. PAYROLL

The Business and Financial Services department is responsible for the timely and accurate payment of district employees, benefit deductions and premium payments, IRS-related matters, court-ordered deductions and deductions for participation in the Teacher Retirement System and Medicare/Social Security.

Business and Financial Services, which includes one payroll clerk and the executive director of Business and Financial Services, provides paychecks to approximately 410 salaried and hourly EISD employees twice a month.

FINDING

EISD incurs direct costs of \$57,588 (\$50,076 in salary plus \$7,511 in benefits) for two Business Office clerk positions that are involved in payroll processing. These costs do not include the time necessary on the part of the executive director of Business and Financial Services spent in processing semi-monthly payrolls or other costs allocated among other Business and Financial Services Office employees and automated payroll system support activities.

School districts and other government entities have found that outsourcing payroll is an attractive alternative to maintaining the staff and automated systems necessary to perform these duties. Many governments lack the ability to attract and retain the appropriate level of personnel and must continually train new employees. When these duties are outsourced, the partner assumes these responsibilities, and additional turnover does not burden upper-level staff and clerical personnel.

Recommendation 25:

Contract for payroll processing.

Other advantages to outsourcing payroll include:

- The ability to use existing personnel in other areas, reducing overall costs;
- Elimination of routine MIS support for payroll system purposes, further reducing long-term costs;
- Elimination of resources applied to federal and state tax filings, including W-2 preparation;

- Elimination of payroll program updates to comply with changes in federal and state tax laws; and
- Elimination of payroll cycle problems associated with direct deposit data transmission and changes in employee pay rates.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director of Business and Financial Services prepares a request for proposals (RFP) for payroll processing services from available vendors.	September 2000
2.	The executive director of Business and Financial Services reviews proposals received and makes a recommendation to the superintendent.	October 2000
3.	The superintendent presents a recommendation for a payroll-processing vendor to the board for formal approval.	November 2000
4.	The payroll processing vendor and EISD personnel begin the transition to a vendor's processing the EISD payroll for the 2001 calendar year.	December 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

According to an independent firm providing payroll services, outsourcing payroll processing would cost about \$12,000 annually and allow a EISD to eliminate the Business Office clerk position that assists in payroll processing. Business and Financial Services can incorporate the other duties of the eliminated position into the activities of payroll/accounting specialist position. This change would result in annual cost savings of \$9,999 (\$19,130 salary plus \$2,869 in benefits less \$12,000 for contracted payroll processing services). Since the outsourcing will start with the 2001 calendar year, one half of the savings or \$5,000 will occur in the first year. EISD can redirect additional undetermined and unallocated costs for other Business and Financial Services employees involved in the payroll processing function to other activities.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Contract for payroll processing.	\$5,000	\$9,999	\$9,999	\$9,999	\$9,999

Chapter 5

D. CASH AND INVESTMENTS

The district's business manager makes investment decisions based on cash balances available. The Business Office receptionist receives cash balances from the depository bank and enters them in a cash flow spreadsheet. The depository bank is responsible for faxing cash balances to the district daily. However, these faxes are not received on a consistent basis, requiring estimates to be used for daily cash forecasting. Once cash needs are estimated, the business manager initiates investment purchases and sales with Lone Star Pool via the Internet. Once verification is received, the documentation is forwarded to the accounting specialist who records the transaction in the general ledger system.

The district is classified as a type 2 payee for state funding purposes. A type 2 payee classification means that the district receives most of its funds in the first few months of the fiscal year. Thus, the district has excess funds in the first part of the fiscal year and can invest these funds on a short-term basis.

As of March 31, 2000 the district's combined cash balances in all accounts totaled (\$49,521). **Exhibit 5-20** summarizes cash and investment balances by type.

Exhibit 5-20
EISD Schedule of Cash and Investments by Type
March 31, 2000

Deposit /Investment	Balance	Percent of Total Cash and Investments	Interest Rate
Bank accounts	(\$49,521)	(0.5%)	5.10%
Lone Star Liquidity Plus Fund	\$10,900,942	100.5%	5.64%
Total/Average	\$10,851,421	100.00%	5.37%

Source: Business Services Offices records, director of Finance.

EISD's cash and investment balances in their general, debt service and construction funds combined totaled \$10,539,551, or 97.1 percent of the total cash and investment balances on March 31, 2000 (**Exhibit 5-21**).

Exhibit 5-21
EISD Schedule of Cash and Investments by Account
March 31, 2000

Description	Cash Balance	Investment Balance	Total	Percentage of Total Cash and Investments
Operating	(\$19,551)	\$3,433,314	\$3,413,763	31.5%
Debt Service	(\$347,633)	\$615,848	\$268,215	2.5%
Accounts Payable Clearing	\$37,657	\$0	\$37,657	0.3%
Payroll Clearing	\$78,567	\$0	\$78,567	0.7%
Construction Fund	\$5,793	\$6,851,780	\$6,857,573	63.2%
Group Health Plan	\$44,026	\$0	\$44,026	0.4%
Flexible Benefits Plan	\$8,141	\$0	\$8,141	0.1%
Tax Sheltered Annuity	\$31,514	\$0	\$31,514	0.3%
Student Activity	\$111,965	\$0	\$111,965	1.0%
Total	(\$49,521)	\$10,900,942	\$10,851,421	100.0%

Source: EISD Business Office records.

FINDING

EISD's cash and investment policies and depository agreements do not allow overnight investment of idle funds in higher-yielding investments, EISD places all idle funds in the depository bank or in a public funds investment pool.

EISD uses Elgin Bank of Texas as its depository. Texas school districts bid and issue depository contracts for a two-year period; however, recent legislation allows a district to renew its depository contract for one additional two-year term if the district considers the service satisfactory. The current depository contract ends in August 31, 2001. Elgin Bank of Texas maintains all bank accounts for the district, including operations, accounts payable and payroll disbursements and various other accounts. The district pays no service charges for banking services with the exception of check printing charges and daily account overdraft charges. All accounts are interest-bearing, earning a fixed rate of 5.1 percent. As

required by state law, the depository agreement also provides a pledge of acceptable securities to protect district funds. The district's total annual average checking account balance was \$1.1 million for the period April 1999 through March 2000 (**Exhibit 5-22**).

Exhibit 5-22
Total Monthly Cash Balances
April 1999 through March 2000

Month	Total Cash Balance
April 1999	\$1,040,923
May 1999	\$1,068,601
June 1999	\$1,129,533
July 1999	\$1,430,743
August 1999	\$1,824,673
September 1999	\$1,957,449
October 1999	\$2,260,466
November 1999	\$1,485,846
December 1999	\$591,415
January 2000	\$438,661
February 2000	\$443,516
March 2000	(\$49,521)
Average	\$1,135,192

Source: EISD Business manager.

Texas school districts frequently make arrangements as part of their depository contracts for placing idle depository bank account balances in overnight sweep investment vehicles. The use of higher-yielding overnight investment vehicles for unused depository bank balances reduces the effort needed by both district and bank personnel in maintaining and monitoring collateral for securing bank balances on deposit.

School districts that use overnight investments generally get better investment rates.

Recommendation 26:

Modify the depository agreement and cash and investment policies to provide for a sweep of idle cash balances into higher yielding investments on an overnight basis.

Cash forecasting is necessary in making arrangements for an overnight sweep of cash balances. The district should increase time spent on monthly and daily cash forecasting activities to project balances available for overnight investment in securities. These forecasts should consider the timing of federal and state aid payments, local property tax levies and collections, accounts payable disbursements and interest earnings.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager contacts the depository bank and negotiates for overnight investment of funds in a higher-yielding investment vehicle beginning in September 2001.	July 2001
2.	The business manager prepares amendments to the existing depository banking agreement with the assistance of the depository bank.	August 2001
3.	The superintendent presents the depository banking contract amendments to the board for approval.	August 2001
4.	The business manager updates investment procedures to accommodate the overnight investment arrangements with the depository bank.	August 2001
5.	The superintendent approves updated investment procedures to accommodate the overnight investment arrangements with the depository bank	September 2001
6.	The depository bank begins investment of idle bank deposits in higher-yielding overnight investment vehicles.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

If the total annual average checking account balance of \$1,135,192 less the \$10,000 minimum balance that remains in the accounts, were invested overnight at a rate of 5.96 percent, instead of the current rate of 5.1 percent, the district could realize an additional \$9,676 annually (**Exhibit 5-23**).

Exhibit 5-23
Annual Funds Generated from Increased Investment Earnings
On Overnight Investment of Daily Bank Cash Balanced

Description	Amount
Average balance available for investment	\$1,125,192
Estimated overnight interest rate	5.96%
Annual estimated interest earnings	\$67,061
Current account rate	5.10%
Current interest earnings estimate	\$57,385
Average savings	\$9,676

Source: EISD business manager and TSPR calculation.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Modify the current depository agreement and cash and investment policies to provide for a sweep of idle cash balances into higher-yielding investments on an overnight basis.	\$0	\$9,676	\$9,676	\$9,676	\$9,676

FINDING

BISD's depository contract does not provide controlled disbursement accounts for clearing accounts payable and payroll checks. The district maintains balances in the accounts payable and payroll clearing account at any given time, so these accounts are either partially or fully funded as checks are written, rather than as checks clear. As of March 31, 2000, combined the balances in the accounts payable and payroll clearing accounts totaled \$116,224.

Controlled disbursement accounts are a cash management tool used by many school districts to increase investment earnings. In a controlled disbursements environment, the district receives notification each morning of the exact dollar amount needed to clear checks for that day. Knowing the amount of money needed to fund the accounts that day allows the district to maintain only that amount in its depository bank. Idle funds can remain invested for a longer period of time, increasing investment earnings.

Recommendation 27:

Make arrangements with the depository bank to convert existing accounts payable and payroll clearing accounts to controlled

disbursement accounts to take advantage of increased clearing times for checks and the ability to fund only checks cleared each day.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager contacts the depository bank and makes arrangement for conversion of existing accounts payable and payroll clearing accounts to controlled disbursement accounts.	September 2000
2.	The business manager prepares amendments to the existing depository banking agreement with the assistance of the depository bank.	October 2000
3.	The superintendent presents the depository banking contract amendments to the board for approval.	November 2000
4.	The business manager updates investment procedures and cash flow forecasts to accommodate the use of controlled disbursement accounts.	November 2000
5.	The superintendent approves updated investment procedures.	November 2000
6.	The depository bank converts the existing accounts payable and payroll disbursement accounts to controlled disbursement accounts.	December 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

Assuming these funds could be invested for an additional 120 days annually at the highest rate the district currently receives (Lone Star Liquidity Plus Fund; 5.64 percent), the district could earn an additional \$628 annually (**Exhibit 5-24**).

**Exhibit 5-24
Annual Funds Generated from Increased Investment Earnings
On Overnight Investment of Daily Bank Cash Balanced**

Description	Amount
Balance available for investment	\$116,224
TexPool Average Rate, March 2000	5.64%
Annual estimated interest earnings, 120 days	\$6,555
Current account rate	5.10%
Current interest earnings estimate, 120 days	\$5,927

Average savings	\$628
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Source: EISD business manager and TSPR.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Make arrangements with the depository bank to convert existing accounts payable and payroll clearing accounts to controlled disbursement accounts to take advantage of clearing times for checks, allowing funds to remain invested for a longer period of time.	\$366	\$628	\$628	\$628	\$628

FINDING

The district's cash management activities and investment policy are designed to ensure the safety of idle funds, the availability of operating, capital and debt service funds when needed and a competitive return on investments. Emphasis is placed on safety of principal and liquidity, and must address investment diversification, yield, maturity and the quality and capability of investment management.

The district's investment policy allows seven investment types: 1) Obligations of the U.S. or Texas or its agencies and instrumentalities and political subdivisions including collateralized mortgage obligations issued by a federal agency or instrumentality of the United States as permitted by Government Code 2256.009; 2) Certificates of deposit as permitted by Acts of the 74th Legislative Session, Chapter 32; 3) Fully collateralized repurchase agreements permitted by Government Code 2256-011; 4) Banker's acceptances as permitted by Government Code 2256-012; 5) Commercial paper as permitted by Government Code 2256.013; 6) Two types of mutual funds as permitted by Government Code 2256-014; money market mutual funds and no-load mutual funds; and 7) Public fund investment pools as permitted by Government Code 2256.016-2256.019.

EISD's investment portfolio as of March 31, 2000 consists of \$10.9 million maintained in the Lone Star Liquidity Plus Fund, a public funds investment pool. However, the district's investment policy requires the investment portfolio be diversified through acquisition of a selection of securities.

In addition to other public funds investment pools, the district's investment policy allows investment in several higher yielding securities, such as U.S. Treasury and agency securities, fully collateralized repurchase agreements

and commercial paper. Investment in a diversified selection of these securities allows school districts to increase earnings.

Recommendation 28:

Revise daily investment activities to allow diversification of the portfolio to take advantage of higher yielding securities.

Cash forecasting requires accurate and up-to-date information, and is necessary in making arrangements for the investment of idle cash balances. The district must obtain cash balances on a daily basis, and should use these balances, along with anticipated cash outflows, to determine daily, monthly and annual cash flow needs. These forecasts should consider the timing of federal and state aid payments, local property tax levies and collections, interest earnings and disbursements for payroll and accounts payable.

District personnel involved in investing should be properly trained in cash management techniques, the purchase and sale of investments, tracking of an investment portfolio and methods of diversification that allow security and increased yield.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager attends training on cash management and investing techniques.	October 2000
2.	Using historical and anticipated cash flow information, the business manager develops cash forecasting models on a daily, monthly and annual basis.	November 2000
3.	The business manager develops investment procedures to allow the purchase of securities other than public fund investment pools.	December 2000
4.	The superintendent approves the updated investment procedures.	January 2001
5.	The business manager contacts securities dealers specializing in government funds.	January 2001
6.	The business manager compiles a list of qualified securities dealers to be used by the district and provides each dealer with the district's investment policies.	January 2001
7.	The business manager begins taking bids on investment purchases from the selected securities dealers and makes purchases based on the highest returns received.	February 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

Exhibit 5-25 compares sample rates for various securities for March 2000.

Exhibit 5-25
Sample Investment Rates for March 2000

Type of Security	March 2000 Rate	April 2000 Rate
TexPool	5.91%	6.07%
Lone Star Liquidity Plus	5.64%	5.81%
LOGIC	5.84%	5.93%
90-day Agency, Estimated Rate	6.03%	6.18%
90-day Commercial Paper, Estimated Rate	6.25%	6.41%

If 25 percent of these funds were invested in U.S. Agency securities and 25 percent in commercial paper, the portfolio would be diversified and the district could realize an additional \$27,251 annually (**Exhibit 5-26**). Typically, investment fund pool rates will lag behind open market rates. For example, when market rates are increasing, pool rates will also begin to increase, but at a slower rate. By investing in open market securities, the district will be able to take advantage of higher rates.

Exhibit 5-26
**Annual Funds Generated from Increased Investment Earnings
On Investments in U.S. Agency Securities and Commercial Paper**

Description	Amount
Balance available for investment	\$2,725,236
90-day Agency Rate, March 2000	6.03%
Annual estimated interest earnings	\$164,331
90-day Commercial Paper Rate, March 2000	6.25%
Annual estimated interest earnings	\$170,327
Total estimated earnings	\$334,658
Lone Star Liquidity Plus Rate, March 2000	5.64%
Current interest earnings estimate	\$307,407
Average savings	\$27,251

Source: TSPR.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Revise daily investment activities to allow diversification of the portfolio to take advantage of higher yielding securities.	\$13,625	\$27,251	\$27,251	\$27,251	\$27,251

Chapter 5

E. FIXED ASSETS

School districts purchase fixed assets with money available within a given fund (i.e. general operating fund or capital projects fund.) Fixed assets are tangible items (i.e. land, buildings) that typically have significant value. Therefore, control of and accountability over these items is critical.

FINDING

EISD's current fixed asset policy requires capitalization of all items with a unit cost of \$5,000 or more. The business manager records items in a fixed assets database at the time of purchase, and is responsible for any changes to these records based on inventory of items on hand. An outside contractor, RCI Technologies, Inc., inventories fixed assets for the district every two years using a bar coding system. The cost for this service is detailed in **Exhibit 5-27**.

Exhibit 5-27
Cost of Fixed Asset Inventory

Year	Cost of Services
1994-95	\$10,785
1997-98	\$7,132
1999-00	\$5,320

Source: EISD business manager.

According to the TEA's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide*, the emphasis in governmental accounting for fixed assets is on control and accountability. Accordingly, a school district must accumulate a variety of data relating to fixed assets to maintain control and accountability over them, including quantity, location, condition and life expectancy.

Fixed asset records are necessary to designate accountability for the custody and maintenance of individual items and to assist in approximating future requirements. School districts generally control capital transactions used for the acquisition of fixed assets by using a well-defined authorization procedure. Separate accountability for fixed assets is a specific legal requirement of many federal programs.

School districts should maintain detailed subsidiary records to maximize the control of fixed assets. These records should include the following information as a minimum:

- The item purchased;
- Date of purchase;
- Purchase price;
- Life expectancy;
- Location number;
- Inventory number; and
- Fund from which purchased.

The subsidiary record, regardless of its physical form, should at least provide a complete description of the item to permit positive identification, cost and purchase data, and its location.

Adequate accounting procedures and records for fixed assets are essential to the protection of school property. In addition to protective custody, an appropriate system:

- Designates responsibility for custody and proper use;
- Provides data for management of fixed assets; and
- Provides data for financial control, developing financial reports and adequate insurance coverage.

Of paramount importance is the security of the system. Any material change in the customary recording of distribution or disposal of fixed assets should be decided by the district's administration. Management must impose discipline throughout the organization so managers maintain an appropriate level of internal control to ensure adequate protection of fixed assets.

School district policies should address the use of school district fixed assets in a location other than that assigned. The policy should also address the off-site use of school district assets by employees.

Schools should inventory certain fixed assets, such as furniture and equipment, on a periodic basis. Districts should take annual fixed asset inventories at the end of the school term before staff members leave. Schools should settle discrepancies between the fixed asset inventory list and what is on hand in a timely fashion. Districts should list missing items and write off the assets in accordance with established policy.

By contracting this service, EISD has reduced the amount of administrative time and effort spent by district personnel for the maintenance of fixed assets records. Additionally, the district is not

required to purchase or maintain the bar coding equipment required for performing the inventory.

COMMENDATION

The district uses an outside contractor to perform a bi-annual inventory of all items with values in excess of \$500.

Chapter 5

F. PURCHASING AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

The goal of a school district Purchasing Department is to purchase the best products, materials and services at the lowest practical prices within relevant statutes and policies.

An effective purchasing system requires several essential components. One of the most important is a good organization staffed with well-trained people. Roles and related responsibilities must be clearly defined and adapted to meet the unique operating environment of the district. Although purchasing organization structures may vary, most provide similar functions. An administrative role in purchasing typically:

- Approves purchase orders and service contracts, including competitive procurement specifications and tabulations;
- Assists in the development and modification of purchasing policies and procedures and is responsible for the implementation of such policies and procedures;
- Resolves problems encountered within the purchasing function;
- Establishes and monitors good working relations with vendors;
- Provides for communication with vendors through pre-competitive procurement conferences, competitive procurement openings and other methods, and approves vendor communication with schools and departments;
- Ensures that district staff is aware of relevant purchasing statutes, regulations and board policies through formal or informal training programs; and
- Stays current on purchasing statutes, regulations and practices by attending various purchasing-related courses, seminars or workshops, and by reading current purchasing periodicals and books.

The purchasing administrator or an assistant typically prepares competitive procurement specifications, evaluates the bids, maintains a vendor list, supervises the processing of purchase orders and evaluates the performance of vendors. Buyers and clerical staff typically write, review and modify specifications for competitive procurements, assist in the evaluation of competitive procurements, identify sources to obtain competitive prices and terms, assist in maintaining an updated vendor list from which purchases can be made and obtain and verify vendor price quotes.

As recommended by TEA, purchasing needs to be centralized within the district for maximum efficiency. Centralized and decentralized purchasing are defined by the Council of State Governments publication, *State and Local Governmental Purchasing*, as follows:

- Centralized purchasing is "a system of purchasing in which authority, responsibility and control of activities are concentrated in one administrative unit."
- Decentralized purchasing is "a system of purchasing in which there is a varying degree of delegation of authority, responsibility and control of purchasing activities to the several using agencies."

Centralized purchasing is essential to efficiency for the following reasons:

- It provides for the coordination and consolidation of smaller purchases into larger volume purchases for the entire district;
- Vendors and the business community have a single central contact within the district;
- The Purchasing Department and its personnel have experience and are trained in purchasing, sourcing, pricing and vendor relations that save the district money and allows a more efficient process; and
- The Purchasing Department and its personnel are trained in state and federal laws and local board policies applicable to purchasing, providing better compliance.

The executive director of Business and Financial Services is responsible for purchasing in EISD. The executive director has 20 years of education experience, including 10 years in the Audit Division of the Texas Education Agency, five years in Manor ISD and five years in EISD. The executive director reports directly to the superintendent.

Competitive procurement methods, as outlined by the Texas Education Code, must be used for all school district purchases valued at \$25,000 or more in the aggregate for each 12-month period, except for contracts for the purchase of vehicle fuel and produce. For purchases valued between \$10,000 and \$25,000 in the aggregate over a 12-month period, the school district is required to obtain written or telephone price quotes from at least three suppliers. State laws prohibit the use of competitive bidding for certain types of professional services, including engineering, architectural, accounting and land surveying.

In 1995, the Texas Legislature expanded school district purchasing options by adding three new methods of competitive procurement: design-build contracts, competitive sealed proposal and request for proposals for personal property and construction contracts. In 1997, the legislature

included two additional methods: job-order contracts and contracts using construction managers. With these additions, school districts can select among eight methods for competitively purchasing goods valued at \$25,000 or more in the aggregate over a 12-month period (**Exhibit 5-28**).

Exhibit 5-28
Competitive Procurement Methods

Purchasing Methods	Method 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 sealed proposals	Requires the same terms and conditions as competitive bidding, but allows changes in the nature of a proposal and prices after proposal opening.
Request for proposals	Generates competitive sealed proposals and involves several key elements, including newspaper advertisement, notice to proposers, standard terms and conditions, special terms and conditions, a scope-of-work statement and acknowledgment form/response sheet, a felony conviction notice and a contract clause.
Catalog purchase	Provide an alternative to other procurement methods for the 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 a method of project delivery in which the school district contracts with a single entity to both design and construct a project.
Job order contracts	Provides for the use of a particular type of contract for jobs (manual labor work) for minor repairs and alterations.
Construction management contracts	Outlines the use of a contract to construct, rehabilitate, alter or repair facilities using a professional construction manager.

Source: Texas Education Agency, Financial Accountability System Resource Guide.

FINDING

EISD does not have procedures in place that ensure goods and services purchases comply with state purchasing laws. In order to meet the state requirements for competitive purchasing, EISD issues some formal bids but relies more upon approved purchasing cooperatives and interlocal agreements with state and local governments. EISD solicited two formal bids in 1999-2000; one for resurfacing a running track and the other for music equipment. Purchasing cooperatives and interlocal agreements used by EISD include:

- The Region 13 Purchasing Cooperative;
- The General Services Commission;
- The Qualified Information Services Vendor (QISV);
- The Local Government Statewide Purchasing Cooperative; and
- The Houston/Galveston Area Council (HGAC)

During the 1999-2000 school year, nine vendors had purchasing volumes exceeding \$25,000 in aggregate that would require some form of bidding. Exhibit 8-4 lists each of those vendors, the dollar volume of business with the district and the bid verification. All of these purchases were found to be in compliance with state and local bid laws.

Exhibit 5-29
EISD Purchase Orders Sampled for Bid Compliance
Dollar Volume Greater Than \$25,000
1999-2000

Vendor Name	Dollar Volume	Bid Verification
Apple Computer	\$45,336	QISV Contract
Compaq Computer	\$29,019	QISV Contract
Data Projections	\$55,563	QISV Contract
Dell Marketing	\$63,768	QISV Contract
Hill Country Dairies	\$28,402	Region 13 Purchasing Cooperative
Labatt Food Services	\$114,896	Region 13 Purchasing Cooperative
QA Systems	\$51,642	QISV Contract

Smith Supply Company	\$26,457	Region 13 Purchasing Cooperative
Sysco Food Services	\$133,708	Region 13 Purchasing Cooperative
Total	\$548,791	

Source: EISD financial reports.

Also during the 1999-2000 school year, 15 vendors had purchasing volumes between \$10,000 and \$25,000. **Exhibit 5-30** lists each of those vendors, their dollar volumes and the quote/bid verification.

Exhibit 5-30
EISD Purchase Orders Sampled for Quote/Bid Compliance
Dollar Volume Between \$10,000 and \$25,000
1999-2000

Vendor Name	Dollar Volume	Quote /Bid Verification
Coca-Cola of North Texas	\$15,057	Food Services got quotes on their items.
Barcelona Sporting Goods	\$10,100	Region 13 Purchasing Cooperative
Buttercrust Bakery	\$12,478	Region 13 Purchasing Cooperative
Cherrydale Farms	\$23,377	No bid or formal quotes
Elgin A/C & Plumbing	\$12,243	EISD bid
Elgin Ace Hardware	\$15,237	No bid or formal quotes
GTE Wireless	\$10,800	GSC bid
Gulf Coast Paper	\$16,772	Region 13 Purchasing Cooperative
Longhorn International Equip.	\$20,821	No bid or formal quotes
Post Oak Communications	\$11,301	EISD quotes
Powell's Printery	\$14,499	EISD bid
Unifirst Corp.	\$10,291	No bids or formal quotes (uniform/mop rental)
Wenger Corp.	\$19,126	EISD bid: awarded to Brook Mays
Woodwind Brasswood	\$17,197	EISD bid
YPS Inc.	\$11,017	EISD bid
Total	\$220,316	

Source: EISD financial reports.

Of the 15 vendors tested, five were not in compliance state bid laws and board policies because the total annual purchasing volume exceeded \$10,000, which requires formal quotes. Most of these items were multiple, lower-dollar purchases, spread out over a year, but the executive director for Business and Financial Services is responsible for monitoring purchasing volumes for quote compliance.

There were also compliance issues where similar items were purchased from multiple vendors and the total expenditures exceeded \$10,000 in the aggregate, and in some cases, exceeded \$25,000. For example, EISD purchased athletic supplies from at least six vendors, only one of which exceeded \$10,000. However, because athletic supplies are classified as similar, they must be quoted or bid as a group if the total expenditures for the group exceeds state bid or quote limits. Group expenditures for EISD athletic supplies, vehicle parts and office supplies are shown in **Exhibit 5-31**.

Exhibit 5-31
EISD Purchase Orders Sampled for Quote/Bid Compliance
Expenditures Exceeding \$10,000 and \$25,000, per Category
1999-2000

Purchasing Category	Vendor Name	Dollar Volume
Athletic Supplies	Barcelona Sporting Goods	\$10,100
	DC Sports	\$2,122
	Georgetown Sporting Goods	\$3,694
	Jerry Lenz Sports	\$5,560
	Pro-Line Team Sports	\$2,896
	Texas Athletic Supply	\$1,381
	Subtotal	\$25,753
Vehicle Parts	A-Line Auto Parts	\$6,429
	Austin Brake & Clutch	\$2,160
	Longhorn International Equip.	\$20,821
	O'Reilly Auto Parts	\$7,007
	Subtotal	\$36,417
Office Supplies	Office Depot	\$8,891

	Office Max	\$2,346
	Quill Corp.	\$2,422
	US Office Products	\$6,966
	Subtotal	\$20,625

Source: EISD financial reports.

Recommendation 29:

Establish procedures to ensure compliance with all state and local purchasing laws and policies.

Identifying purchases requiring competitive solicitation is a collaborative effort. The executive director for Business and Financial Services and the user departments must work together to identify such purchases, particularly during the budget process. Budgets for the year are substantially complete by July, and departments have a firm grasp of projected expenditures by that time. If any budget expenditure equals \$10,000 or more in aggregate for like items or categories, the executive director for Business and Financial Services must be notified so the appropriate acquisition method can be chosen.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director for Business and Financial Services meets with department heads to review their budgets for the 2000-01 school year to determine if bids or quotes will be needed for any goods or services.	September 2000
2.	The executive director for Business and Financial Services submits a list of all goods or services requiring bids to the superintendent for approval.	September 2000
3.	The executive director for Business and Financial Services prepares bids for those goods and services.	October 2000
4.	The executive director for Business and Financial Services submits bid recommendations to the superintendent and board for approval.	December 2000
5.	The executive director for Business and Financial Services submits monthly reports to the superintendent indicating categories of goods or services that are approaching purchasing volumes that may necessitate competitive bids or quotes.	October 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

EISD uses manual purchase orders instead of automated purchase orders. The district's financial software, Regional Service Center Computer Cooperative (RSCCC), has an automated purchase order module, but EISD is not using it.

The use of automated purchase orders would allow EISD to simplify data entry, provide automatic checking of fund availability and generate management reports showing purchasing volumes by vendor or by purchasing category. Automated purchase orders would also allow for electronic approval by department heads and financial administrators, resulting in improved turn-around times for mailing purchase orders.

Recommendation 30:

Automate the purchase requisition and order process.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director for Business and Financial Services establishes a purchasing committee to review the features of the RSCCC automated purchasing module and define barriers and solutions to the conversion from manual to automated purchase orders.	October 2000
2.	The executive director for Business and Financial Services presents a committee report and timeline of implementation to the superintendent for approval.	December 2000
3.	The executive director for Business and Financial Services arranges for training the district users on the automated purchase order module.	January 2001
4.	The district converts from manual to automated purchase orders.	February 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

EISD does not have a purchasing procedures manual. A good purchasing manual establishes rules for making school district purchases. The manual provides guidance to school district employees at the school and department levels, and can be used to acquaint vendors and suppliers with the school district's policies and procedures. Internally, the manual helps train school district personnel in purchasing policy and procedures. Finally, it promotes consistency in purchasing applications throughout the school district. Such a manual can stand-alone, or be included as a part of a financial and accounting manual.

Typically, a school district's purchasing procedures manual would include purchasing goals and objectives; statutes, regulations and board policies applicable to purchasing; purchasing authority; requisition and purchase order processing; competitive procurement requirements and procedures; vendor selection and relations; receiving; distribution; disposal of obsolete and surplus property; and requests for payment vouchers.

Recommendation 31:

Create and distribute a districtwide purchasing procedures manual.

Sample forms are also helpful to district users, including the district's bid/proposal form; purchase order form; purchase requisition (if separate from the purchase order); receiving report; vendor performance evaluation form; and request for payment voucher. A Table of Contents or an index will make it easier for users to get answers to their questions. Smithville ISD has developed a comprehensive purchasing procedures manual that would serve as a good model for EISD.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director for Business and Financial Services contacts other districts to obtain copies of their purchasing procedures manuals to use as a guide for creating the EISD purchasing procedures manual.	November 2000
2.	The executive director for Business and Financial Services submits the finished purchasing procedures manual to the superintendent.	January 2001
3.	The superintendent approves the manual.	February 2001
4.	The executive director for Business and Financial Services distributes purchasing procedure manuals to users.	February 2001
5.	The executive director for Business and Financial Services provides training.	February 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Like all other districts in Bastrop County, EISD uses a number of alternatives to local bids for goods and services. The most popular alternative is using cooperative bids from other governmental agencies. However, cooperative bids do not provide all the goods and services needed in the school districts, and the district may have no other option but to bid locally.

However, using board-approved interlocal agreements, school districts could legally share each other's bids. For example, if Bastrop ISD bid exterminating services, and if an interlocal agreement existed between the districts, EISD could use that bid as well, provided the vendor was willing to extend the pricing to that location.

Recommendation 32:

Establish an interlocal agreement with other school districts in Bastrop County in order to make purchases using each other's bids.

Wording would need to be included in each district's bid specifications to notify the bid vendors of the interlocal agreements and the possibility of other districts participating.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent meets other superintendents in Bastrop County to see if they would be interested in participating in an interlocal agreement, which would allow the districts to purchase off each other's bids.	October 2000
2.	The superintendent asks the school attorney to draw up an interlocal agreement.	November 2000
3.	The board of all participating school districts approves the agreement.	December 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

By not having to develop a formal bid, BISSD would save advertising, postage and printing costs.

Chapter 6

OPERATIONS

This chapter examines the operations of the Elgin Independent School District (EISD) in three parts:

- A. Child Nutrition
- B. Computers and Technology
- C. Transportation

Efficient, effective school operations and quality pupil services support a school district's educational mission. For children to learn, a district must create an environment conducive to learning that takes into account the well being of a student in various aspects; the nourishment of a student, the safe transportation of that student to school. and the types of programs that are available to prepare the student with the technology of the real world.

Chapter 6

A. CHILD NUTRITION

School food service operations should provide an appealing and nutritionally sound breakfast and lunch as economically as possible. Several factors used to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of a school food services operation include: a high ratio of meals served per labor hour (MPLH), food costs, amount of waste, participation in breakfast and lunch programs, nutritional value, the variety of meals served, the wait time per student served and financial self-sufficiency.

BACKGROUND

According to *Managing Child Nutrition Programs, Leadership for Excellence*, by Martin and Conklin, child nutrition programs are big business for school districts and communities and present many challenges and management opportunities. In 1998, the federal budget for child nutrition programs exceeded \$5 billion with nearly 95,000 schools participated in the lunch program and 31,000 participated in the breakfast program. The child nutrition program is the largest business in some communities. Some of the changes occurring in child nutrition programs are: new production, processing and distribution of food, strategies to keep students engaged in the education process, availability of technology, demographics of the workforce and its effect on local economies, increasing competition, and the changing needs of the customer.

Child nutrition directors can plan for these impacts by managing efficient programs; organizing and staffing for expanded school days; after school snack programs, summer feeding programs and universal breakfast programs; incorporating the school food and nutrition program into the comprehensive health program; and making the child nutrition programs an integral part of the community's social services system.

The Texas School Food Service Association (TSFSA) has identified 10 standards of excellence for evaluating school food services 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;
- Ensure that procurement practices meet established standards;

- 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.

EISD is subject to coordinated reviews by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) under the School Lunch and Breakfast Agreement, a legal contract between TEA and EISD. The last coordinated review was in 1998. At the end of each school year, each district must complete a renewal of agreement on the Child Nutrition Programs Information Management System (CNPIMS). The Texas Department of Health also conducts sanitation inspections several times each year.

EISD serves 1,958 students in one primary school, one elementary school, one intermediate school, one middle school, and one high school kitchens. In the fall of 2000, a new high school opens. Students are served meals in all the schools, and federally-approved snacks are sold in all kitchens. The Child Nutrition Department uses the automated Micro Check Point-of-Sale system to track and report student participation data.

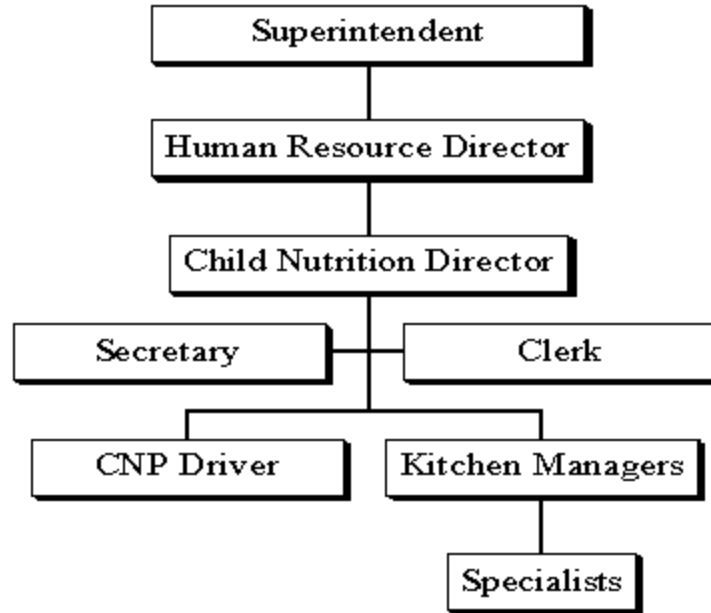
Of the students eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches, 74 percent participated in either breakfast or lunch programs or both. EISD's overall participation, based on Average Daily Participation (ADP), was 26 percent for breakfast and 60 percent for lunch.

EISD contracts with Education Service Center, Region 13 for dietician services at an annual cost of \$1,000 for base services, such as evaluating menus, and providing guidance for training, current nutrition education and policy-making assistance to ensure the nutrition integrity of the program. If EISD needs additional consultation from Region 13 they are charged an additional \$200 per day.

ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING

EISD's Child Nutrition Department has 35 employees, including one director and five kitchen managers. The director is certified by the Texas School Food Service Administration. EISD contracts for the services of a registered dietitian through Region 13 Educational Service Center (Region 13). The organizational structure is presented in **Exhibit 6-1**.

**Exhibit 6-1
Child Nutrition Organizational Chart**



Source: EISD director of Child Nutrition.

FINDING

EISD's Child Nutrition employees have written job duties, but performance criteria or self-evaluation tools are not used in the employee evaluation process. During interviews and focus groups, employees said that defined job performance criteria, used in conducting personnel evaluations, did not exist. As a result, employees said they were unclear of their expectations, resulting in some employees performing at different levels both within and across the district's kitchens. The use of performance-based job expectations helps employees to know what their job responsibilities are and how their managers will evaluate them based on those criteria outlined in their job expectations. Employees can then be engaged in the process of setting their expectations, and should be encouraged to give and receive feedback about their job performance.

Recommendation 33:

Develop performance expectations for Child Nutrition employees.

Performance expectations must be identified for each job level, communicated to each employee at each level and monitored for consistency.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Human Resource director, business manager and the Child Nutrition director review the current job duties and formulate job responsibilities and evaluation criteria.	November 2000
2.	The Child Nutrition director approves and submits drafted job expectations to Human Resources director.	November 2000
3.	The Human Resource director approves the job expectations.	December 2000
4.	Child Nutrition management and staff are trained on the use of the newly developed job expectations and all Child Nutrition employees are evaluated using the new job expectations.	December 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

OPERATIONS

FINDING

Nutrition education is incorporated the into Elgin Middle School curriculum. Students enrolled in the Success Through Acceptable Responsibility (STAR) course receive basic nutrition education as it relates to the human life cycle, and learn about the Food Guide Pyramid and the functions of various nutrients in the diet.

According to *Managing Child Nutrition Programs, Leadership for Excellence*, by Martin and Conklin, nutrition education is defined as any set of learning experiences designed to facilitate the voluntary adoption of eating and other nutrition-related behaviors conducive to health and well-being. "Schools are ideal settings in which such learning experiences can take place. Morbid obesity in school age children has become a major concern for health care professionals as well as school food service personnel."

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, healthy eating patterns in childhood and adolescence promote health, growth, and intellectual development; prevent immediate health problems; and may prevent long-term health problems such as coronary heart disease, cancer and stroke. The American Dietetic Association, Society for Nutrition Education and the American School Food Service Association have issued a position statement on school-based nutrition programs that outlines programs and services that should be offered.

COMMENDATION

Nutrition education is incorporated in the Elgin Middle School curriculum, which promotes sound nutritional practices.

FINDING

EISD students, at all grade levels, and teachers receive a variety of menu selections, fresh fruits and healthy choices on a daily basis from the district's kitchens. TSPR observed meal services in all kitchens and attended focus groups with students, employees and faculty. Students in the primary and elementary schools were observed eating fresh salads and fruits. Elgin High School kitchen provides variety of quality food items served in a comfortable surrounding for its students. In addition, regular surveys are conducted to assess student preferences, and kitchen staff regularly interact with students.

The Child Nutrition Department publishes colorful and informative menus for students. Information about the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs, student accounts, prepaying and a school calendar are included in the colorful menu.

TSFSA has identified one of its *Standards for Excellence* to provide appetizing, nutritious meals through effective, efficient systems and management. Public school directors are under pressure to maintain a healthy bottom line, offer low cost meals and ensure compliance of nutrition standards. The menus often drive child nutrition programs.

EISD menus meet the nutritional needs of students, serve as a marketing tool for the department, attract customers to the kitchens and considers students needs and requests in menu planning.

COMMENDATION

EISD provides appetizing, popular and nutritious meals to students and faculty.

FINDING

Limited facilities in the EISD middle and primary schools are negatively affecting meal participation. When the new high school opens, the existing middle school will move into the old high school. Long lines in the primary school are affecting teacher meal participation as well.

Increasing student meal participation is important to a school district for two reasons: it increases the district's federal reimbursements for every student who participates in meal programs, and it ensures that more

students receive adequate nutrition as directed by the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs.

Exhibits 6-2 and 6-3 compare EISD and peer district participation rates for 1995-96 through 1999-2000. EISD maintained a constant level of participation during that period and had the highest participation rate among peer districts. Snack bar participation, as a percentage of overall participation, was the third highest of the peer districts. (Taylor ISD does not have a snack bar.)

**Exhibit 6-2
EISD and Peer District Percent
of Average Lunch Daily Participation
1995-96 - 1999-2000**

District	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Elgin	73%	70%	73%	71%	74%
Del Valle	64%	65%	67%	61%	69%
Manor	48%	54%	64%	65%	68%
Bastrop	47%	45%	47%	49%	54%
Leander	54%	51%	44%	44%	52%
Taylor	49%	46%	47%	45%	50%

Source: Texas Education Agency Child Nutrition Program District Profile.

**Exhibit 6-3
Elgin and Peer District Percent
of Average Daily Participation in Snack Bar**

District	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Manor	21%	23%	32%	31%	33%
Del Valle	24%	25%	27%	26%	30%
Elgin	22%	21%	22%	22%	23%
Leander	16%	17%	19%	15%	17%
Bastrop	18%	19%	18%	17%	16%

Source: Texas Education Agency Child Nutrition Program District Profile.

Recommendation 34:

Eliminate operational barriers and implement new programs to increase meal participation.

Some ways to increase meal participation include:

- Establishing a separate serving lines for teachers;
- Piloting a Universal Breakfast Program at the primary school;
- Placing kiosks or serving carts at different locations in the middle school to cut down on long serving lines;
- Evaluating present menus and recipes to improve quality of food;
- Enhancing training for Child Nutrition employees.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Child Nutrition director and the kitchen managers meet to evaluate present participation rates, explore new programs and best practices and develop a plan to increase participation.	November 2000
2.	The Child Nutrition director prepares a plan to pilot a Universal Breakfast Program and presents to the Human Resources director.	December 2000
3.	Cafeteria employees are trained to prepare and serve food for the new programs.	January - May 2001
4.	The new programs are implemented.	August 2001
5.	The Child Nutrition director monitors the participation rates of the new programs.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

EISD has increased revenues by 3 percent from 1998-99 to 1999-2000 (**Exhibit 6-2**) and this trend can be continued by implementing a Universal Breakfast Program pilot and after school snack programs. Based on a 3-percent increase in revenues from 1998-99 revenues of \$1,022,687 (**Exhibit 6-7**) or \$30,681 minus a 43 percent food cost, the district should realize a net increase in revenues of \$17,488 in 2001-02 when the programs are fully implemented.

Recommendation	2000-	2001-	2002-	2003-	2004-
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	01	02	03	04	05
Eliminate operational barriers and implement new programs to increase meal participation.	\$0	\$17,488	\$17,488	\$17,488	\$17,488

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

EISD's Child Nutrition Department receives revenues from the sale of meals, catering, the federally funded breakfast and lunch programs and other special programs, such as the after school snack program and the summer feeding program (**Exhibit 6-4**). EISD submits detailed reports to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to document reimbursements from the federal meal programs. From 1997-98 to 1998-99, EISD's food services' budget increased by 3.4 percent. The largest category of expenditures in 1998-99 were in payroll and the cost of food.

Exhibit 6-4 EISD Child Nutrition Department Actual Expenditures 1997-98 - 1998-99

Category	1997-98 Actual	Percent of Total Expenditures	1998-99 Actual	Percent of Total Expenditures
Payroll	\$324,633	34.3%	\$337,243	34.4%
Benefits	\$75,163	7.9%	\$77,976	8.0%
Professional/Contracted Services	\$21,502	2.3%	\$28,807	2.9%
Food	\$407,528	43%	\$419,477	42.8%
Commodities	\$43,120	4.6%	\$55,396	5.7%
Other	\$73,632	7.8%	\$58,467	6.0%
Travel/ Subsistence	\$1,732	0.2%	\$1,900	0.2%
Depreciation	-	-	-	-
Other	\$121	0.01%	\$78	0.01%
Debt Service	\$0	0%	\$0	0%
Capital Outlay	\$0	0%	\$0	0%
Total	\$947,431	100%	\$979,344	100%

Source: EISD Child Nutrition Department; TEA PEIMS data.
 Note: Numbers may not total to 100 because of rounding.

Exhibit 6-5 represents the reimbursable rates for each eligible breakfast and lunch served. "Severe Need" breakfast funding is available to schools that served 40 percent or more of the lunches free or at reduced prices in the two preceding years, and where its breakfasts costs are higher than the regular breakfast reimbursement rates.

**Exhibit 6-5
 EISD 1999-2000 Federal Reimbursement Rates
 For Breakfast and Lunch**

	Breakfast	Lunch
Full	\$0.21	\$0.19
Reduced	\$0.79	\$1.58
Free	\$1.09	\$1.98
Severe Need	\$0.21	N/A

Source: Texas Education Agency.

Exhibits 9-6 and 9-7 show EISD and peer district food service operation comparisons of expenditures and revenues from main food service funds only, excluding Special Revenue and Enterprise Funds. Expenditures for EISD increased by 15 percent while revenues increased 21.6 percent between 1995-96 to 1998-99. EISD ranked fourth for increases in expenditures among peer districts and fourth for increases in revenues for the same time period.

**Exhibit 6-6
 EISD and Peer District Food Service Expenditure Comparison
 1995-96 - 1998-99**

District	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	Percent Change
Leander	\$2,557,840	\$2,698,466	\$2,967,471	\$3,637,701	42.2%
Manor	\$707,697	\$814,964	\$841,567	\$1,000,888	41.4%
Bastrop	\$1,541,227	\$1,700,857	\$1,741,763	\$1,895,727	23.0%
Elgin	\$851,396	\$879,655	\$947,431	\$979,344	15.0%

Taylor	\$692,559	\$784,820	\$750,487	\$795,526	14.9%
Del Valle	\$1,784,516	\$2,060,534	\$2,053,643	\$1,877,442	5.2%

Source: Texas Education Agency.

Exhibit 6-7
EISD and Peer District Food Service Revenue Comparison
1995-96 - 1999-2000

District	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	Percent Change
Leander	\$2,469,882	\$2,631,998	\$3,131,115	\$3,682,766	49.1%
Manor	\$681,119	\$785,876	\$857,258	\$1,003,843	47.4%
Bastrop	\$1,477,779	\$1,711,423	\$1,774,098	\$1,991,276	34.7%
Elgin	\$840,971	\$902,701	\$945,001	\$1,022,687	21.6%
Taylor	\$696,274	\$739,808	\$714,248	\$829,741	19.2%
Del Valle	\$1,732,211	\$1,732,211	\$1,980,689	\$1,795,829	3.7%

Source: Texas Education Agency.

EISD meal costs for 1999-2000 are shown in **Exhibit 6-8**.

Exhibit 6-8
Elgin ISD Child Nutrition Meal Costs

School	Meal	Service	Price
Primary and Elementary	Breakfast	Student Regular	\$0.75
		Student Reduced	\$0.30
		Adult	\$1.00
	Lunch	Student Regular	\$1.40
		Reduced Price	\$0.40
		Milk	\$0.30
		Adult	\$2.25
Middle	Breakfast	Student Regular	\$0.75

		Student Reduced	\$0.30
		Adult	\$1.00
	Lunch	Student Regular	\$1.65
		Reduced Price	\$0.40
		Adult	\$2.25
		A la carte	\$0.25-\$1.50
High School	Breakfast	Student Regular	\$0.75
		Reduced Price	\$0.30
		Adult	\$1.00
		A la carte	\$0.25-\$1.00
	Lunch	Student Regular	\$1.90
		Reduced Price	\$0.40
		Adult	\$2.25
		A la carte	\$0.25-\$1.75

Source: EISD Child Nutrition director.

FINDING

EISD uses a combination of convenience, processed foods and conventional systems to prepare and serve meals. A conventional system uses food prepared from raw ingredients on the premises with a moderate amount of processed food; a convenience system uses the maximum amount of processed food available.

The major unit of productivity used in child nutrition programs is meals, and a traditional method for measuring productivity is to compare meals served in a given period with the labor hours used to generate those meals in the same time period. This productivity indicator is referred to as meals per labor hour (MPLH). Industry experts quote anywhere from 16 to 20 meals per labor hour as a reasonable level of productivity given the large variation in food preparation systems and type of foods served.

EISD's Child Nutrition director uses an industry standard to determine and measure food service productivity. The calculations can become problematic when there are sources of revenue other than the traditional breakfast and lunch meals. Catered, contract and a la carte meals created

by the same workforce are served in a way that can be difficult to qualify them for federal reimbursements. Formulas for calculating meal equivalents for school food service operations are shown in **Exhibit 6-9**. These meal equivalents are added to the regular breakfast and lunch meal count for total meals. EISD calculates meal equivalents using \$2.00 as its basis.

Exhibit 6-9
Formula for Calculating Meal Equivalents

Meal	Equivalent
Breakfast Meal Equivalents	Number of Breakfast Meals divided by 2
A La Carte Meal Equivalents	A la Carte Sales divided by free lunch reimbursement plus the commodity value of the meal.
Catered/Contract Meal Equivalents	Catered Sales divided by free lunch reimbursement plus commodity value of the meal.

Source: Managing Child Nutrition Programs, Martin and Conklin, 1999.

Exhibit 6-10 is a breakdown of the MPLH comparisons for each school. TSPR's MPLH calculations are based on conventional system guidelines, which is a more conservative approach. EISD has a productivity rate of +0.48 or 7.5 hours per day over recommended standards.

EISD's productivity rate is skewed by the fact that the primary school has almost 14 hours per day in labor overage. This is due to the limited space in the kitchen and serving areas and the overcrowding in the school.

Exhibit 6-10
EISD Child Nutrition Department
Meal Equivalents Per Labor Hour Comparison
1999-2000

School	Average Daily Meal Equivalent Served	Actual Meals Per Labor Hour	Actual Hours Worked Per Meal Served	Recommended Meals Per Labor Hour*	Recommended Hours Worked Per Meal Served	Variance in Actual vs. Recommended Hours Worked	Number of 7.5 Hour FTE's by Variance**
Primary School	924	15.09	61.23	19.5	47.38	13.85	1
Elementary	517	17.38	29.75	16.5	31.33	(1.58)	(1)

School							
Middle School	709	19.75	35.89	18.5	38.32	(2.42)	(1)
High School	529	14.25	37.12	15.0	35.26	1.85	(1)
Snack Bar	333	18.50	18	15.0	22.2	(3.70)	(1)
Total	3,012	16.82 (wtd)	179.07(wtd)	17.48 (wtd)	172.31(wtd)	8.00	(3)

Source: Computed from Elgin Food Services Department, The Cost Control Manual for Food Services Directors recommends the guidelines for onsite production.

**Indicated midpoint between conventional and convenience systems as Elgin using a combination of preparation systems*

***TSPR rounded up the number when the district performed better than the standard and rounded down the number when the district performed less than the standard.*

COMMENDATION

EISD's use of a meals-per-labor hour productivity standard has resulted in an efficient and cost-effective food services operation.

FINDING

While the EISD Child Nutrition director is developing financial management information to be used in managing the program at the district level, most of this information is not disseminated to kitchen managers.

Exhibit 6-11 provides the components TSPR used in evaluating EISD's food services financial management reporting, and explains the components' value and the extent to which the district is using the process.

Exhibit 6-11 EISD Financial and Management Reporting Evaluation

Report/Description	Uses	Optimal Frequency	Used by the District	Distributed to Cafeterias
<p>Budget: Illustrates a plan for financial management according to each account.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows for informed decisions and financial forecasts for the next year through the use of historical, economic and demographic data, projected enrollment, and menu changes and changes in operational procedures. • Allows for a forecast of financial performance for the next year. • Allows for comparisons between actual and forecasted performance. 	Annual with monthly monitoring.	Yes	No
<p>Costing Food & Service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows for informed decision-making with regard to purchases and the continuation of products and services. 	Daily	Yes	No

Revenue Received from Lunch and Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows for the identification of major sources of revenue such as free, reduced-price, paid, a la carte or other. 	Daily	Yes	Yes
Balance Sheet: Illustrates the financial position of the account at a point in time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows for a comparison of current balances with balances at the end of the month of the prior year. 	Monthly	Yes	No
Profit & Loss Statement :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows for identification and analysis of increases or decreases in participation or expenses. Allows for identification of schools making a profit or experiencing a loss. Allows administrators to determine where key issues/problems exist. 	Weekly or Monthly	No	No
Statement of Changes: Show changes in working capital from	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows for the monitoring of net increases in working 	Annually	Yes	No

year to year.	capital requirements.			
Key Operating Percentages: Trends expenditures and revenues over time	Allows management and staff to monitor expenditures over time including. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food cost % • Labor cost % • Other cost % • Break-even point • Inventory turnover • Participation rates • Average daily labor costs • Average hourly labor costs 	Monthly	Yes	No

Source: Interviews with the EISD director of Child Nutrition and review of financial reporting information.

Child nutrition programs must operate as a profitable business; its operations should be self-supporting, revenue-generating and cost-contained. For effective financial management, timely information regarding finances must be available and accurate for the director and managers to use. When the reports are distributed to the kitchen managers they need to be trained to use the information and analyze the data

TSFSA outlines in its *Standards for Excellence Manual*, recommended procedures for reporting financial information.

Recommendation 35:

Develop an accurate, detailed and timely department budgeting and financial reporting system, and provide regular reports to kitchen managers.

Any financial reporting system that Child Nutrition develops should be compatible and supported by the district's financial management system. Kitchen managers should be given detailed budget and financial reports for their respective kitchens.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Child Nutrition director and the business manager develop a standardized budget and financial reporting formats.	December 2000
2.	The Child Nutrition director uses the recommended procedures for reporting financial information as outlined in the TSFSA's <i>Standards for Excellence Manual</i> .	January 2001
3.	The business manager generates timely and accurate reports to the Child Nutrition director.	February 2001
4.	The Child Nutrition director trains the kitchen managers to use the financial information and holds them accountable for variances in productivity and profitability.	February 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FACILITIES

FINDING

The middle school kitchen and cafeteria are not air-conditioned and are out of compliance with the 1999 Federal Food Code. The facility is thirty-two years old. The worn-out floors and ceilings are made of non-approved materials. Non-approved fans are used in the kitchen to circulate air, allowing dust to be blown on food items. The serving areas in the kitchen and cafeteria area are inadequate and the doors are open to allow air circulation. The cafeteria also serves as the common area. There are problems with flies, rodents and stray animals coming into the kitchen.

Consequently, the fans blow dirt and dust on food and service areas. The lack of adequate serving space also limits the number of menu items the kitchen can serve. The primary school kitchen is crowded and unorganized due to increased number of meals being served. Many of the foods the review team tested were not served at the correct temperatures. This was supported by student and teacher comments in focus groups who said the food served was cold. Temperature logs are not posted in any of the schools. The elementary school cafeteria also serves as a common area.

The kitchen is air conditioned but it does not work properly, so fans are used to keep temperatures in the kitchen at a comfortable level.

Recommendation 36:

Comply with the state and federal laws regarding proper sanitation and health standards in EISD kitchens.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Child Nutrition director and kitchen managers develop a plan to keep foods in proper temperature ranges for all kitchens during meal service.	September 2000
2.	The employees are trained by the kitchen managers on the new procedures for holding and serving foods at correct temperatures.	September 2000
3.	The Facilities department submits a plan to repair faulty kitchen equipment.	Ongoing
4.	The Facilities department and business manager develop a cost benefit analysis to install air conditioning and repair/renovate kitchen facilities in the elementary, middle and primary schools' kitchens to bring them into compliance.	November 2000 - February 2001
5.	The executive director of Administrative Services, Facilities director and business manager present the cost benefit analysis to the superintendent and board.	March 2001
6.	The kitchen managers monitor the sanitation of each kitchen and train employees to adhere to the cleaning schedules.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 6

B. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

To achieve its technology-related goals, a school district must have an organizational structure that creates an environment for using and supporting new technologies.

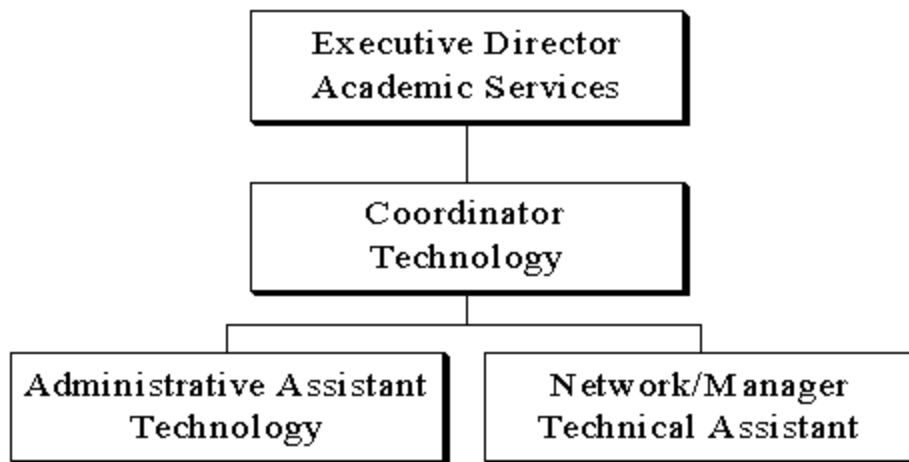
A well-managed administrative technology and information services department is guided by a clearly defined plan based on appropriate goals and organization, clear assignments of responsibility for each application, well-defined development procedures for new applications and a customer-service orientation that continually seeks to meet and anticipate user needs.

BACKGROUND

An instructional technology support department must be familiar with school operations and the technologies used for instructional purposes; technology-oriented instructional material; networks used for instructional purposes; and technology-related training, particularly training that seeks to integrate new technologies into the curriculum. Establishing a positive working relationship with the Curriculum and Instruction Department will ensure all technology initiatives support the learning process.

Exhibit 6-12 describes the organization structure of the EISD Technology organization.

Exhibit 6-12
EISD Technology Organization Chart
1999-2000



Source: EISD superintendent.

The technology coordinator's primary responsibility is to facilitate the effective use of computers and other technology in instructional programs and business operations districtwide. Other major responsibilities and duties of the position include:

- Staff development
- Curriculum development
- Technical support
- Budget and inventory
- Policy, reports and law
- Personnel management

The current organization structure has the network manager reporting to the technology coordinator. The EISD board decided that during the 2000-2001 school year, the network manager and an additional support person will be moved into the Maintenance Department and will report to the director of Administrative Services. The technology coordinator has expressed concern about this reorganization because of the need for communication between instruction and technology.

The coordinator believes the district can achieve the state's technology infrastructure goals if it can secure at least \$366,000 per year for the next five years. **Exhibit 6-13** lists the technology expenditures over the past three school years.

Exhibit 6-13
EISD Technology Expenditures
1997-1998 to 1999-2000

Function	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000
Administrative	\$7,064	\$13,563	\$9,418
Instructional	566,611	455,218	388,246
Total	\$573,675	\$468,781	\$397,644

Source: Interview with Technology coordinator.

Exhibit 6-14 describes the EISD technology staffing levels and its peer districts.

Exhibit 6-14
EISD & Peers, Technology Staffing Comparisons
1999-2000

District	Administrative	Infrastructure & Support	Instructional
Elgin Total Staff: 3	1 coordinator of technology	1 network services manager 1 administrative assistant	
Del Valle Total Staff: 8	1 technology director 1 secretary	1 network manager 1 technology coordinator 4 technicians	
Leander Total Staff: 26	1 director 1 administrative coordinator 1 secretary	1 network manager 1 land manager 1 MAC technician 2 PC technicians 1 information systems coordinator 2 information systems technicians 1 print operator 1 programmer	1 instructional coordinator 12 technology facilitators
Manor Total Staff: 4	1 technology director	1 network administrator 1 technology administrator 1 support staff	
Taylor Total Staff: 5	1 director of technology	4 technicians	

Source: Telephone interview with Technology administrators in peer districts.

TECHNOLOGY PLAN

Planning for the use of new technologies is important to education because of the factors listed below.

Equity. Despite the best intentions, the level of technological resources available to each school in a district can vary unacceptably. Unfortunately, poorly-planned introductions of new technology can serve to further widen the gap between the "haves" and "have nots." Careful planning at the district level can ensure that all schools receive adequate support.

Rapid Change. The pace of technological change continues to accelerate. If planning for the implementation of new technology does not cover an adequate span of time (three to five years), the district risks failing to take full advantage of this rapid change.

Funding. Funding can be the greatest barrier to the effective use of technology in the classroom. Unless planning addresses whether and how projects will be funded, limited funding can have a greater impact than it should.

Credibility. The public is anxious to see that its tax dollars are spent effectively. Thorough planning makes it possible to demonstrate that proposed strategies have been well thought out, acquisitions of technological resources have been carefully considered and that every aspect of the implementation is cost-effective.

To implement information technology effectively in administrative offices or schools, a district must have:

- An extensive computer network connecting modern computers;
- Comprehensive administrative and instructional software and up-to-date operating systems;
- Effective, ongoing training; adequate technical support;
- A professional staff capable of implementing and administering a technology-rich environment; and
- A means to provide the community access to school information through technology.

FINDING

The technology coordinator, in concert with the District Technology Task Force, has prepared a Strategic Plan for Technology Implementation for the 1999-2000 school year that is described in **Exhibit 6-15**. The plan includes a mission statement, needs assessment, gap analysis (existing conditions vs. desired outcomes), technology attrition rates by school/department, overview of goals and strategies, acceptable use policy and evaluation of program.

The existing technology plan provides some ideal and lofty goals. The timeline for meeting the outlined goals uses ranges of time periods rather than specific dates. A definitive implementation plan to meet these goals and objectives has not been developed.

Exhibit 6-15
EISD Technology Plan
1999-2000

Goals	Objectives/(Timeline)
<p>Students of EISD will learn the foundations of information processing and data input strategies; make informed decisions about technologies and their applications.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy 1: Students of EISD will learn proper use of the computer keyboard; 70 percent mastery; study technology-related terms, concepts, verified 3/times per year. (2000-2003) • Strategy 2: Students of EISD will have access to multimedia environments as a central part of the core curriculum. (2000 and ongoing) • Strategy 3: Students of EISD will use information processing. (2000-2003)
<p>District personnel will use current technology for instructional management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy 1: District personnel will use technology for curriculum planning. (2000 and ongoing)
<p>Students of EISD will utilize problem solving skills and information acquisition. Students will plan, synthesize and evaluate information, create solutions and evaluate results.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy 2: District personnel will utilize computer-assisted instruction (CAI) through multimedia based instructional presentations. (2000 and ongoing) • Strategy 4: Software will be integrated into curriculum in the following areas: A. Mathematics/Algebra, B. Science/Biology, C. Language Arts/English and D. Social Studies/History. (2000-2003) • Strategy 6: Special needs students will have access to the latest technology in the form of adaptive/assisting devices, as appropriate. (2000-2003)
<p>EISD faculty and students will communicate information in different formats and to diverse audiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy 1: Students and faculty will access the worldwide Web to support curriculum. (2000 and ongoing) • Strategy 2: Students and faculty will access distance learning through telecommunications infrastructure. (2000 and ongoing) • Strategy 3: Students and faculty will access the worldwide Web (a minimum of four computer stations will be installed in each instructor's

	classroom over a five- year period).
EISD personnel will select technology appropriate for the task and utilize that technology to evaluate student performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy 1: Portable hardware will be made available to personnel. (2000-2003) • Strategy 2: Personnel will be trained in the use of technology. (2000-2003)

Source: Interview with Technology coordinator.

Recommendation 37:

Modify the existing technology plan to specify tasks and dates that will accomplish the district's goals and spending priorities.

Once the plan is finalized, the technology coordinator should identify the detailed steps required to accomplish the tasks and should enter them into project tracking software. This will allow the district to track the plan's implementation.

The technology coordinator should produce quarterly reports on the progress of the plan's implementation. These quarterly reports should be presented at board meetings so that the board, district employees and community members can be informed. The coordinator also should ensure the technology plan reflects and supports the districtwide goals and objectives in the district's strategic plan.

Coordinating the goals, tasks and detailed steps may make it easier for people in the district and in the community to see that the district's goals are being accomplished.

With a revised technology plan that clearly outlines goals, the technology coordinator can develop the appropriate measurements necessary to understand EISD's progress toward achieving its goals.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The District Technology Task Force works with the staff and representatives from schools and administration to identify goals and tasks for the technology plan.	October 2000
2.	The District Technology Task Force works with the staff and representatives from schools and administration to identify cost, sources of funds, responsibilities and deadlines.	November 2000

3.	The technology coordinator updates the technology plan.	January 2001
4.	The technology coordinator tracks detailed tasks in project tracking software.	March 2001
5.	The technology coordinator presents the first quarterly progress report to the superintendent and the board.	March 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Elgin ISD has policy and procedures for the backup of computer files and data, but there is no written comprehensive disaster recovery plan. File backups on each server are performed every Friday. Elgin ISD has RAID software for emergency backup on the server hard drives. If a server fails, the RAID function goes into effect. Differential backups are performed Monday through Thursday. All servers are equipped with uninterruptible power supply units. Backups are kept in the EISD vault. EISD personnel and other key papers are maintained in paper files.

EISD's current policy and procedures for backing up computer files and data does not include provides for;

- A disaster recovery team
- A contact list name to notify staff after a disaster
- A list of critical business functions
- The required staffing needed immediately after a disaster has occurred
- The necessary office equipment.

A computer disaster could result in lost productivity and an inability to perform important district functions. Unfortunately, protecting electronic information is not as straightforward as simply assigning a technical staff person to verify that the "system" is protected. It requires that top-level administrators invest time and expertise into the development of a well-conceived, comprehensive and customized security policy. This policy must then be applied appropriately throughout the entire organization.

While the primary focus for disaster recovery is typically directed to computers and associated files, the non-computer areas need to be included in the recovery plan. Personnel and other key paper files need to be considered in the same way as computer files. There is a need for backup in order to restore key information in the event of a disaster. The

key questions that each administrator must ask is what is the value of the material and how do we recover personnel and student files if these are lost.

Recommendation 38:

Develop a comprehensive disaster recovery plan and test it.

Exhibit 6-16 lists some of the key elements of an effective disaster recovery plan.

**Exhibit 6-16
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.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 undesirable event to limit damage, loss and compromised data integrity. • 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)

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The technology coordinator establishes a Disaster Recovery	October
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	Team, composed of department representatives from Finance, Payroll, Purchasing, Student accounting and Technology.	2000
2.	The Disaster Recovery Team develops the Disaster Recovery Plan.	January 2001
3.	The technology coordinator presents the plan to the superintendent and board for approval.	February 2001
4.	The technology coordinator communicates the plan to the appropriate personnel.	March 2001
5.	The technology coordinator runs a scheduled test of the plan.	April 2001
6.	The technology coordinator reports the results to the superintendent and board.	May 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

EISD is introducing technology at all grade levels. At the kindergarten through third grade levels, the students are learning home row keys and the definitions of various parts of the computer. At the third grade level, the students learn computer mouse manipulation and the function of keys. The teachers use Ed-Mark software programs (Bailey's Bookhouse, Reader Rabbit, Math Blaster) to help students learn technology skills in addition to supporting the core subjects. CD-based encyclopedias are used for research and curriculum enhancement. All K-3 classes are introduced to e-mail and the Internet.

EISD students at the grade four through grade five levels, a major focus is keyboarding. All students have a touch-typing goal of about 20 words per minute. A grade five level student is allowed an EISD e-mail account with parental approval. Accelerated Reader software is used with all students and has helped bilingual students improve their reading skills. The Internet and HyperStudio are used to support classroom learning through interdisciplinary projects. Basic word processing is used within the Let's Get the Word program. CD-based encyclopedias are used for research and curriculum enhancement.

EISD students at the grade six through grade eight levels continue to work on keyboarding skills while integrating those skills into projects in PowerPoint and HyperStudio. During the 1998-99 school year, students

competed in the ThinkQuest competition and created several on-line Internet-based projects.

FINDING

The EISD Teacher Technologist Program, which is planned for the 2000-2001 school year, is a program designed to maximize the benefits of educational technology and to provide a direct link between each school and the Technology department. The purpose of the program is to promote the effective and efficient integration of technology throughout the curriculum. Principals at each school will recommend a candidate for the position to serve a one semester. The teachers selected will receive extensive training not only on how to use technology, but also on how to use technology to teach. The teacher technologists will be expected to work with the teachers at their campus in integrating technology into the classroom.

COMMENDATION

The EISD Teacher Technologist Program is a good example of using a trained teacher to work with teachers and students to integrate technology into their content activities.

FINDING

To support computer hardware and solve software problems, EISD maintains two help desk phone numbers. If the phones are not staffed, there are answering machines on both lines. Employees also can e-mail a request to the help desk.

The trouble calls are categorized as: hardware PC, hardware Mac, software, WinSchool, PEIMS, PC software, network down, printer, Athena, printer error, Mac software, upgrade computer, instructional, other and Internet. The help desk receives about 6 to 8 calls per day. The calls are answered by the technology coordinator if the problems are related to instruction, software, or the Internet. The technology assistant answers problems related to logging in and the operating system. The Network administrator handles all other problems.

COMMENDATION

The EISD help desk is a good example of an efficient and well-run operation in the Technology Department.

FINDING

EISD has purchased TEKStar software (a database and multimedia tool) for developing Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) based curriculum. The software is an online program that contains hundreds of lesson plans for 55 courses in the K-12 curriculum. It contains a template for developing lesson plans based on teaching research. EISD expects the program to be important in supporting substitute teachers with lesson plans.

The district's administrators were trained in using the TEKStar software in July 2000. During the last week in July, training on the software was provided on a voluntary basis to interested teachers.

With this software, EISD can develop a comprehensive curriculum communications network among instructional support staff, school administrators and classroom teachers. The TEKStar developed lesson plans are correlated to TAAS and End-of-Course examinations. New TEKStar lesson updates are provided on a periodic basis via the Internet. Other software program features include submission of lessons by teachers via the Internet, lesson scheduling and teacher planner and calendar features. Most importantly, the TEKStar software establishes a framework and a disciplined method for EISD to integrate technology into the classroom by including appropriate technology subjects and methods into the lesson plan.

COMMENDATION

EISD has taken positive step in advancing the integration of technology into the classroom by providing teachers with teachers with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKStar) online templates to support the lesson plan development.

FINDING

Technology-related best practices are not shared among other county school districts.

For example, EISD's use and experience with TEKStar software for managing lesson plans could benefit other districts. Bastrop ISD technology personnel are planning to have "frequently asked questions" maintained on its Web site to enable teachers and staff to troubleshoot computer/hardware problems. The idea is to solve the problem as close to the source and minimize the number of expensive computer technician calls. Smithville ISD's technology competency requirements that have been developed and are being implemented for educators in the district may have value to other county districts. The Smithville ISD superintendent has a technology background with an understanding of

network installation and maintenance that could be useful to other districts.

The requirement for funds to meet the state goals for technology infrastructure has forced the managers responsible for technology in each of the Bastrop County school district to become excessively involved with finding funds. The time spent searching for funds by each district's Technology manager ranges from an estimated 20 percent to 80 percent of total available time. This need to find funds has become primary in their day-to-day activities and has taken away the time they should be spending with their primary mission of helping teachers integrate technology into the classroom.

Acquiring funds to support technology infrastructure requirements is of critical importance to the district. Outside assistance could be used to offload some of the time consuming activities that are currently being done by Technology management personnel. For example, Texas A&M University's "Center for Community Support" (<http://ppriWeb.tamu.edu/ccs>) provides a free service to monitor grant opportunities and all aspects of grant-writing support.

The practices outlined above and other techniques that have proven successful should be shared among all Bastrop ISDs.

Recommendation 39:

Develop a technology forum among all Bastrop County districts.

Sharing best practices among Bastrop County districts can be accomplished with periodic meetings among appropriate technology personnel. The goal of these meetings should be identifying current processes that improve efficiency or lower costs. This information could be shared among all districts by linking Web sites.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The Business manager establishes a technology information-sharing forum with other Bastrop County school districts.	October 2000
2.	The technology information-sharing forum identifies individual best practices in the district.	October 2000
3.	The technology information-sharing forum assigns appropriate personnel to update Web content on their district sites.	November 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 6

C. TRANSPORTATION (PART 1)

The primary goal of every school district's transportation service is to transport all students to and from schools and approved extracurricular functions in a timely, safe and efficient manner.

BACKGROUND

The Texas Education Code 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 also provides transportation for the general student population or if disabled students require transportation to receive special education services.

The TEC also 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. The funding rules are set by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Local funds must pay for transportation costs not covered by the state. For the regular transportation program, TEA reimburses qualifying transportation expenses according to a prescribed formula based upon linear density, which is the ratio of the average number of regular program students transported daily to the number of miles driven daily.

State transportation funding for regular program transportation is limited to students living two or more miles from the school they attend, unless the students face hazardous walking conditions on the way to school. The state also does not pay for summer school transportation or for co-curricular routes between schools during the day.

The state does not fund extracurricular transportation, such as trips to after-school and weekend events. Individual schools are expected to reimburse the transportation department for these services.

All special education transportation, except for certain field trips, is eligible for state reimbursement. The Texas Legislature capped reimbursement for special program transportation at \$1.08 per mile. The actual cost to EISD for transporting special program students in 1998-99 was \$1.17 per mile. The special program, unlike the regular program, is not able to achieve efficiency by clustering students at bus stops.

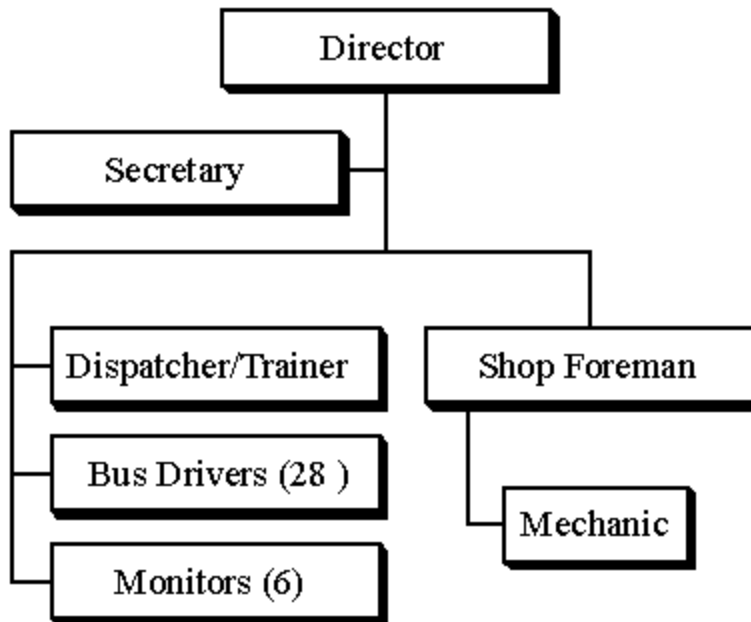
Career and technology education transportation costs are reimbursed based on the previous year's actual cost per mile for that type of transportation.

According to the 1998-99 School Transportation Route Services Report, EISD's Transportation Department operates 27 routes per day, covering 168 square miles, carrying an average of 1,107 students to school and home on regular runs, 51 students on special education runs and 16 students on mid-day shuttle runs for career and technology programs. The total ridership of 1,174 represents about 44 percent of the district's 2,638 students. The department also transports students on late runs and special activity runs for athletic, educational and extra-curricular programs. School buses typically operate on regular routes from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m., and from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

During 1998-99, three EISD drivers were involved in accidents. There have been no accidents during the 1999-2000 school year.

The director of transportation reports directly to the superintendent and has worked for the district for eight years serving as director for two years. The EISD Transportation Department staffing chart is shown in **Exhibit 6-17**.

Exhibit 6-17
EISD Transportation Department Organization
1999-2000



Source: EISD Transportation director.

A comparison of staffing levels between EISD and its peer districts is shown in **Exhibit 6-18**.

Exhibit 6-18
EISD and Peer Districts, Staffing Comparisons
1999-2000

District	Professional	Clerical/Technical	Auxiliary
Elgin	1 director	1 secretary 1 dispatcher	1 shop foreman 1 mechanic 28 drivers 6 monitors
Bastrop	1 director 1 asst. director	1 secretary/driver 1 dispatcher 1 route scheduler 1 field trip/camera tech 2 trainers	1 shop foreman 5 mechanics 1 parts manager 2 shop helpers 1 seat repair/driver 60 bus drivers positions (8 positions unfilled) 6 monitors positions (2 positions unfilled)
Del Valle	1 director 1 coordinator	1 secretary 1 route scheduler 1 field trip person 4 clerks	1 shop foreman 4 mechanics 2 mechanic helpers 80 bus drivers
Leander	1 director 1 assistant director	1 operating supervisor 1 transportation secretary 1 training coordinator 1 route coordinator 1 assistant route coordinator 1 dispatcher	1 shop supervisor 5 mechanics 1 parts clerk 1 transportation clerk 4 trainers 110 bus drivers 12 team leaders/drivers
Manor	1 director	1 assistant director 1 secretary 1 dispatcher	2 mechanics 18 bus drivers 4 part-time drivers 6 sub drivers
Taylor	1 director	1 clerk/secretary	1 mechanic 22 bus drivers 3 aides

Source: Telephone interviews with the transportation department in each peer district, 1999-2000.

Exhibit 6-19 shows how EISD's bus driver salaries compare with peer districts.

Exhibit 6-19
EISD and Peer District Comparison of Bus Driver Hourly Rates
1999-2000

School District	Minimum	Mid-Point	Maximum
Manor	\$11.10	\$11.10	\$11.10
Del Valle	\$10.75	\$12.88	\$15.00
Taylor	\$10.00	\$11.50	\$13.00
Leander	\$9.40	\$10.85	\$12.30
Elgin	\$9.00	\$11.06	\$13.11
Bastrop	\$9.00	\$11.50	\$14.00
Peer Average	\$10.05	\$11.57	\$13.08

Source: Telephone interviews with the transportation department in each school district, 1999-2000.

Exhibit 6-20 compares EISD's health benefits for bus drivers with other peer districts.

Exhibit 6-20
EISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Health Benefits
1999-2000

School District	Hours per Week Required to Earn Health Benefits	Premium Paid By District	Percent of Total Premium Cost
Manor	20	\$188	100%
Elgin	20	\$175	100%
Del Valle	20	\$160	100%

Taylor	20	\$160	83%
Bastrop	20	\$154	79%
Leander	20	\$112	74%

Source: Telephone interviews with the personnel department of each peer district, 1999-2000.

To receive state funding, Texas school districts must submit two reports to TEA by July of each year: the *School Transportation Operations Report* and the *School Transportation Route Services Report*. The *School Transportation Operation Report* is designed to establish a cost-per-mile rate used for reimbursements in the fiscal year following the report's publication. **Exhibit 6-21** shows that in 1998-99, EISD's transportation costs were the lowest they had been in five years. However, that is partly because the district did not purchase any buses that year. Total mileage has grown almost 7 percent.

Exhibit 6-21
EISD Summary of School Transportation Operations Reports
1994-95 - 1998-99

	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	Percent Change
Operations Costs						
Salaries & Benefits	\$346,744	\$362,272	\$427,252	\$418,630	\$403,963	16.5%
Purchased & Contracted Services	\$16,662	\$12,649	\$14,025	\$47,051	\$18,385	10.3%
Supplies & Materials	\$46,044	\$60,583	\$54,274	\$52,989	\$48,570	5.5%
Other Operating Expenses	\$13,070	\$15,548	\$14,534	\$15,407	\$13,399	2.5%
Debt Service	\$9,889	\$14,069	\$6,483	\$6,117	\$0	
Capital Outlay	\$88,332	\$77,357	\$85,011	\$97,575	\$0	
Total Operations Costs	\$520,741	\$542,478	\$601,579	\$637,769	\$484,317	-7.0%

Mileage Summary						
Route Mileage	250,987	238,996	262,787	266,167	260,446	3.8%
Extra/Co-curricular Mileage	52,563	51,100	53,890	57,708	60,394	14.9%
Non-School Organizations Mileage	0	368	0	0	0	0.0%
Other Mileage	615	885	3,210	1,643	4,349	607.2%
Total Annual Mileage	304,165	291,349	319,887	325,518	325,189	6.9%
Cost per Mile - Regular	\$1.753	\$1.857	\$1.795	\$2.035	\$1.634	-6.8%
Cost per Mile - Special	\$1.585	\$1.879	\$2.284	\$1.696	\$1.170	-26.2%

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Reports, 1994-95 - 1998-99.

Exhibit 6-22 shows how EISD's operation costs for transportation compare to peer districts.

Exhibit 6-22
EISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Operations Costs
1998-99

School District	Salaries & Benefits	Purchased & Contracted Services	Supplies & Materials	Other Operating Expenses	Debt Service	Capital Outlay	Total Operating Costs
Leander	\$2,178,975	\$83,037	\$308,626	\$187,873	\$0	\$409,734	\$3,168,245
Del Valle	\$1,331,529	\$85,891	\$101,057	\$1,274	\$91,845	\$299,950	\$1,911,546
Bastrop	\$1,053,437	\$89,836	\$296,904	\$46,430	\$23,707	\$167,116	\$1,667,450
Manor	\$744,043	\$28,951	\$90,690	\$32,345	\$0	\$119,681	\$1,015,710
Taylor	\$0	\$583,034	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$583,034
Elgin	\$403,963	\$18,385	\$48,570	\$13,399	\$0	\$0	\$484,317

Source: TEA, *School Transportation Operations Reports, 1998-99.*

Exhibit 6-23 shows each cost category is shown as a percent of the total operations costs for each district. EISD had above-average costs for salaries and benefits and below-average costs for capital outlay items because no buses were purchased in 1998-99.

Exhibit 6-23
EISD and Peer Districts, Percentage Analysis of Operating Cost
Categories
1998-99

School District	Salaries & Benefits	Purchased & Contracted Services	Supplies & Materials	Other Operating Expenses	Debt Service	Capital Outlay
Elgin	83.4%	3.8%	10.0%	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Bastrop	62.8%	5.3%	17.7%	2.8%	1.4%	10.0%
Del Valle	69.7%	4.5%	5.3%	0.1%	4.8%	15.7%
Leander	68.8%	2.6%	9.7%	5.9%	0.0%	12.9%
Manor	73.3%	2.9%	8.9%	3.2%	0.0%	11.8%
Taylor	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Peer Average	68.7%	3.8%	10.4%	3.0%	1.6%	12.6%

Source: TEA, *School Transportation Operations Reports, 1998-99.*

Note: Taylor is not calculated in the average because the district outsources busing.

Other information obtained from peer district *School Transportation Operations Reports* shows that EISD has the second lowest cost-per-mile for pupil transportation compared to its peer districts (**Exhibit 6-24**). Deadhead miles, as defined by TEA, are those incurred between the location where the student transportation vehicle is parked and the campus site where the route officially begins and ends.

Exhibit 6-24
EISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Mileage Data
1998-99

School District	Route Mileage (incl. Deadhead)	Extra/Co-Curricular Mileage	Non-School Organizations Mileage	Other Mileage	Total Annual Mileage	Cost per Mile
Taylor	159,934	50,531	0	3,053	213,518	\$2.807
Manor	433,637	41,837	328	1,300	477,102	\$2.434
Leander	1,264,877	132,465	0	139,207	1,536,549	\$2.100
Del Valle	1,023,490	49,446	0	9,212	1,082,148	\$1.745
Elgin	260,446	60,394	0	4,349	325,189	\$1.634
Bastrop	987,091	87,472	0	69,107	1,143,670	\$1.501

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Reports, 1998-99.

EISD has the third lowest cost -per rider when compared to its peer districts (**Exhibit 6-25**).

Exhibit 6-25
EISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Cost Per Rider
1998-99

School District	Total Annual Operating Costs	Annual Ridership	Cost Per Rider Per Day
Leander	\$3,168,245	737,460	\$4.30
Manor	\$1,015,710	253,440	\$4.01
Taylor	\$583,034	155,160	\$3.76
Elgin	\$484,317	131,940	\$3.67
Bastrop	\$1,677,450	563,220	\$2.98
Del Valle	\$1,911,546	733,320	\$2.61

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Reports and Route Services Reports, 1998-99.

The second state report, the *School Transportation Route Services Report*, includes information on ridership and mileage for regular, special and career and technology programs. It also includes a calculation of linear

density, which is the basis for transportation funding for the regular home-to-school program.

Linear density is the ratio of the average number of regular program students transported daily to the number of miles driven daily. TEA uses this ratio to assign each school district to one of seven groups, with each group receiving a different per-mile reimbursement rate. **Exhibit 6-26** shows the categories of reimbursement, the linear density for each category and the related reimbursement, as defined by TEA.

Exhibit 6-26
Categories of State Linear Density Reimbursement for Regular Bus Routes

Category	Linear Density Range	Reimbursement per Mile
1	0.000 - .399	\$0.68
2	0.400 - .649	\$0.79
3	0.650 - .899	\$0.88
4	0.900 - 1.149	\$0.97
5	1.150 - 1.649	\$1.11
6	1.650 - 2.399	\$1.25
7	2.400 - 9.999	\$1.43

Source: Texas Education Agency.

To establish route mileage and daily ridership figures, TEA requires districts to gather mileage and ridership data on the first Wednesday of each month. **Exhibit 6-27** shows the route data for EISD from 1994-95 to 1998-99.

Exhibit 6-27
EISD Summary of Route Services Reports
1994-95 through 1998-99

	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Regular Program					
Annual Standard Ridership	129,060	128,880	150,480	178,560	131,940
Annual Standard Mileage	148,997	135,960	153,932	162,420	159,488

Linear Density	0.866	0.927	0.978	1.099	0.827
Allotment per Mile	\$0.88	\$0.97	\$0.97	\$0.97	\$0.97
Annual Mileage (incl. hazardous)	330,822	174,420	197,640	228,300	176,042
Total Daily Ridership	2,087	1,246	1,422	1,513	1,107
Hazardous Annual Mileage	167,605	19,260	14,548	19,800	16,554
Hazardous Daily Ridership	1,341	492	530	481	374
Special Program					
Total Daily Ridership	79	50	82	90	51
Total Annual Mileage	92,610	68,800	71,440	92,200	99,246
Career & Technology Program					
Total Daily Ridership	17	10	4	11	16
Total Annual Mileage	2,705	2,744	2,744	2,744	1,712
Allotments					
Regular Program	\$168,006	\$165,556	\$191,711	\$221,451	\$170,174
Special Program	\$100,019	\$74,304	\$77,155	\$99,576	\$107,186
Career & Technology Program	\$5,134	\$4,810	\$5,096	\$4,939	\$3,475
Private Program	\$993	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Allotments	\$274,152	\$244,670	\$273,962	\$325,966	\$280,835

Source: TEA, School Transportation Route Services Reports, 1994-95 - 1998-99.

Chapter 6

C. TRANSPORTATION (PART 2)

Compared to its peer districts, EISD has the second lowest linear density (**Exhibit 6-28**), yet the state allotment covers 58 percent of the transportation department's budget.

Exhibit 6-28
EISD and Peer Districts, Linear Density and State Allotment
1998-99

School District	Linear Density (Riders Per Mile)	Allotment per Mile	Total State Allotment	Percent of Operating Costs
Taylor	1.763	\$1.25	\$194,003	33%
Del Valle	1.018	\$0.88	\$911,219	48%
Manor	1.016	\$0.97	\$338,043	33%
Leander	0.976	\$0.88	\$1,229,238	39%
Elgin	0.827	\$0.97	\$280,835	58%
Bastrop	0.705	\$0.88	\$986,799	59%

Source: TEA School Transportation Route Services Status, 1998-99.

Linear density can be adversely affected when buses have to drive greater distances to pick up a small number of students, as illustrated in **Exhibit 6-29**. Routes with a large number of riders -per mile help the district receive more revenue from the state.

Exhibit 6-29
EISD Bus Service for Regular Eligible Pupils (Two or More Miles)
1998-99

Route Number	Total Daily Miles	Avg. Daily Ridership	Riders per Mile
15	27	95	3.52
17	28	72	2.57
19	27	59	2.19

27	35	59	1.69
7	40	66	1.65
22	30	32	1.07
14	29	27	0.93
2	66	54	0.82
18	53	43	0.81
26	43	35	0.81
3	73	45	0.62
25	94	52	0.55
4	71	34	0.48
1	50	23	0.46
23	74	34	0.46
21	77	35	0.45
5	47	19	0.40
24	71	28	0.39
28	92	32	0.34
16	65	21	0.32
6	93	23	0.25

Source: EISD Transportation Department records, 1998-99.

Linear density is also adversely affected when buses operate below capacity. However, because some areas of the district are sparsely populated, buses in those areas must travel greater distances between stops. For those routes, maximizing bus capacity would significantly extend the travel time for the students. Therefore, some buses will never be full. **Exhibit 6-30** shows the regular bus routes in EISD and the number of students transported each day, compared to the capacity of the bus. Buses showing a capacity over 100 percent run multiple routes per day.

Exhibit 6-30
EISD Bus Capacity versus Ridership
1999-2000

Route Number	Maximum Number of	Capacity of	Percent of
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	Students Transported Per Route	Assigned Bus	Capacity
15	109	71	154%
17A	103	71	145%
19	84	71	118%
7	79	71	111%
17B	69	71	97%
27	67	71	94%
2	58	71	82%
3	58	71	82%
25	56	71	79%
21	47	71	66%
18	46	71	65%
26	41	71	58%
23	39	71	55%
4	38	71	54%
22	38	71	54%
24	38	71	54%
15B	34	71	48%
28	34	71	48%
1	32	71	45%
14	32	71	45%
5	28	71	39%
16	27	71	38%
6	26	71	37%

Source: EISD Transportation Department records, 1999-2000.

TEA provides reimbursement for transportation costs for students who live further than two miles from the school they attend. However, districts can also receive up to 10 percent additional reimbursement for busing students who live less than two miles from their school when the route to

school poses a safety risk, or hazard to the students. Although the term hazardous is up to the district to define, TEA guidelines suggest areas having few or no sidewalks, busy roadways or railroad tracks would qualify as hazardous. **Exhibit 6-31** shows a comparison of hazardous routes between EISD and its peer districts.

Exhibit 6-31
EISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Hazardous Routes
1998-99

School District	Hazardous Annual Mileage	Hazardous Daily Ridership
Leander	54,162	784
Elgin	16,554	374
Del Valle	18,036	224
Manor	14,364	151
Bastrop	5,724	100
Taylor	0	0

Source: TEA School Transportation Route Services Status, 1998-99.

MANAGEMENT POLICIES

FINDING

EISD bus driver records are maintained in locked file cabinets in the transportation department office and contain the following items.

- A photocopy of the driver's CDL license (for ID purposes);
- Documentation of the driver's original 20 hour certification training;
- Documentation of the driver's road test;
- Documentation of the eight-hour refresher course, required every three years;
- Documentation of training related to Omnibus Drug Testing;
- Documentation of the driver's yearly motor vehicle license check;
- The driver's behind-the-wheel evaluation(s) (at least once a year);
- The results of the driver's annual physical;
- The driver's pre-employment drug test;
- The results of all random or other required drug testing; and

- The driver's attendance records.

COMMENDATION

The EISD Transportation Department maintains accurate, up-to-date and secure personnel records for all bus drivers

FLEET MAINTENANCE

EISD maintains all district vehicles in a bus facility built by Durham Transportation when the district contracted for transportation services from 1985 to 1988. The district sold all of their buses to Durham and then had to purchase an entire fleet when EISD canceled the contract in 1988. All EISD buses are listed in **Exhibit 6-32**.

**Exhibit 6-32
EISD Bus Fleet
1999-2000**

Qty.	Year	Passengers	Make	Body	Fuel Type	Regular or Special Ed.	Unit Cost
1	1998	71	Int'l	Thomas	Diesel	Regular	\$47,225
1	1998	47	Int'l	Bluebird	Diesel	Special Ed.	\$48,924
1	1997	47	Int'l	Thomas	Diesel	Special Ed.	\$41,622
1	1996	71	Int'l	Thomas	Diesel	Regular	\$43,396
4	1995	71	Int'l	Thomas	Diesel	Regular	\$41,898
1	1994	35	Int'l	Bluebird	Diesel	Special Ed.	\$38,000
3	1993	71	Int'l	Bluebird	Diesel	Regular	\$37,000
3	1992	71	Int'l	Bluebird	Diesel	Regular	\$40,546
1	1992	35	Int'l	Bluebird	Diesel	Special Ed.	\$35,255
1	1991	71	Int'l	Bluebird	Diesel	Regular	\$36,657
1	1989	71	Int'l	Bluebird	Diesel	Regular	\$33,811
1	1989	35	Int'l	Bluebird	Diesel	Special Ed.	\$30,611
1	1989	35	Int'l	Bluebird	Diesel	Special Ed.	\$29,541
7	1988	71	Int'l	Bluebird	Diesel	Regular	\$32,521
1	1988	71	Int'l	Bluebird	Diesel	Regular	\$30,200
1	1985	71	Int'l	Bluebird	Diesel	Regular	\$30,200

1	1985	71	Int'l	Bluebird	Diesel	Regular	\$27,377
1	1985	71	Int'l	Bluebird	Gasoline	Regular	\$27,377
1	1985	71	Int'l	Bluebird	Gasoline	Regular	\$26,748
1	1984	71	Int'l	Bluebird	Gasoline	Regular	\$22,672
1	1984	16	GMC	Ward	Gasoline	Regular	\$15,800

Source: EISD Transportation Department records, 1999-2000.

Exhibit 6-33 shows how the age of EISD buses compares to peer district buses.

Exhibit 6-33
EISD and Peer District, Comparison of Age of Buses
1998-99

District	Age			Total Number of Buses	Percent Greater Than 10 Years
	1-5 Years	5-10 Years	10 Years or Greater		
Del Valle	35	2	31	68	46%
Manor	14	7	17	38	45%
Bastrop	27	22	39	88	44%
Elgin	9	11	14	34	41%
Leander	62	35	28	125	22%
Taylor	6	9	3	18	17%

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Reports, 1998-99.

FINDING

EISD has six buses that are at least 15 years old. Four are gasoline-powered buses, which are more expensive to operate than diesel-powered buses. According to the TSPR review for Spring ISD, gasoline-powered buses get 3.8 miles per gallon of fuel compared to 9.0 miles per gallon for diesel-powered buses.

Assuming each bus travels an average of 15,000 miles per year, a gasoline bus would use 3,947 gallons of fuel compared to 1,667 gallons of diesel. If gasoline and diesel fuel cost the district 75 cents per gallon, the total cost

for fuel, per bus, would be \$2,960 for gasoline and \$1,250 for diesel fuel. Consequently, EISD would save \$1,710 per bus, per year, by replacing the gasoline buses with diesel buses.

Gasoline-powered buses are also more expensive to maintain than diesel-powered buses. According to the Spring ISD review, maintenance costs are about \$1,400 more per year for a gasoline bus than a diesel bus.

In addition, EISD will have eight diesel buses at least 15 years old in 2003. A well-planned replacement cycle can help spread out the purchase of buses to avoid a significant purchase in a single year. TEA recommends a 10-year cycle for bus replacement for the following reasons:

- Newer buses have better safety records. This is in part a function of wear and tear on older buses that can reduce their structural integrity; furthermore, newer buses have more safety features;
- School bus purchasing specifications assume a 10-year useful life for school bus structural integrity;
- Resale prices for buses typically drop sharply after the eleventh year of service; and
- The useful life of a school bus also can be defined as 200,000 miles, which often equates to about 10 years of service.

However, with proper maintenance and lower mileage, the life of a school bus can easily be extended to at least 15 years.

Recommendation 40:

Adopt a 15-year bus replacement policy.

Based on the current fleet of 34 buses, a 15-year replacement cycle mean purchasing two buses per year and a third bus every third or fourth year. Over the last five years, the district has purchased an average of one bus per year. Therefore, this recommendation assumes the district will incur the cost of one additional bus each year, with a second additional bus in the third year.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The transportation director recommends a 15-year bus replacement policy to the superintendent that anticipates future needs for EISD bus replacements while balancing the budget impact on any one year.	October 2000
2.	The superintendent submits the recommended bus replacement policy to the board for approval.	November 2000

3.	The transportation director submits a budget request for the first bus replacements.	February 2001
4.	The board approves the budget.	July 2001
5.	The transportation director works with the executive director for Business and Financial Services to issue purchase orders for the first bus replacements.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost to purchase one 71-passenger diesel bus is \$50,000. There will be savings associated with reduced full and maintenance costs that are not estimated here.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Adopt a 15-year bus replacement policy.	\$0	(\$50,000)	(\$100,000)	(\$50,000)	(\$50,000)

FINDING

No computerized fleet maintenance system exists to notify the shop personnel of scheduled preventive maintenance. Some maintenance is not performed unless the bus is brought in for other problems. Consequently, buses may go beyond bus manufacturer's recommended maintenance cycles. Fueling records are also kept manually, which could result in inaccurate accounting or loss of fuel inventory.

Fleet maintenance systems can track and schedule preventative maintenance; maintain records of work orders; track parts inventories, vendor history, warranties, fuel usage and inventory, cost per mile; maintain personnel records; and generate management reports. A fleet maintenance system would allow EISD to measure and monitor different performance measures to determine if changes need to be made in department operations.

Recommendation 41:

Purchase and implement an automated fleet maintenance system.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The director of Transportation meets with the executive director of Business and Financial Services to develop the requirements	October 2000
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	of a fleet management system and determine an estimate of the cost of the system, including installation and training.	
2.	The director of Transportation submits a budget amendment request to the superintendent for Board approval.	November 2000
3.	The director of Transportation issues a purchase requisition for the fleet management system, including installation and training.	December 2000
4.	The director of Transportation or one of his staff attends a training session on how to use the software.	February 2001
5.	The Transportation Department begins using the fleet maintenance software.	March 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost of the fleet management software is \$2,500 plus \$400 per year for maintenance and support. Assuming a consultant needs to be hired for two days at \$500 a day, training would cost a total of \$1,000. The Transportation Department already owns a computer that can be used to run the software.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Purchase and implement an automated fleet maintenance system.	(\$3,500)	(\$400)	(\$400)	(\$400)	(\$400)

Appendix A

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

As part of this review, a community meeting and focus group were conducted during the early stages of the review process. This appendix contains comments from a public forum held in Elgin on April 4, 2000, and a series of focus groups with campus administrators, the Elgin DEIC, the Elgin Volunteer Fire Department, the Elgin Kiwanis Club, and the local Chamber of Commerce held separately on days between April 5 and April 12, 2000 at various locations in Elgin and other written comments received by the Comptroller's office.

These comments, presented verbatim in most instances, help illustrate community perceptions of the Elgin Independent School District (EISD), but do not necessarily reflect the findings or opinions of the review team or the Comptroller. The following is a summary of comments received by focus area.

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

- I feel that the school board is not working as a separate entity from our superintendent. Instead of performing as his boss, they sit back and follow behind. He says one thing and does something else, which sometimes backfires and creates a lot of controversy. Many children have been let down by his attitude along with the teachers and administration. If this man had any feelings for this community, he would try to work with it, not against it. We have lost a lot of good teachers this year, and I'm sure more will be leaving. He said he was going to have a high turnover - we're getting it. I know that he doesn't plan to stay - not once this district has fallen apart. No leadership - no school board members who miss meeting after meeting - then sit and say nothing when they are there. This district claims to have committees for many things, sometimes even these are ignored. It's all in name - we have it in place - we ignore the function - we do what we want anyway. We being the superintendent.
- We've implemented new programs in the community that use district property. This program was implemented by the superintendent, but there is only 1 teacher in this community qualified to teach it, and won't. So now the facilities created by the district with state money are going to provide one school with laptops for students not keeping up with their schoolwork. I as a student feel this is a waste of resources overall because the money could have been better spent elsewhere.

- When the superintendent arrived last February 1999, he told the district site base members that they were a legal courtesy. He would make the decisions, we were to inform our schools. That ended what collaboration we had.
- Suggestions to school board and district office are ignored routinely - and openly. Any suggestion is seemingly viewed as criticism. There have been enough inappropriate reassignments that many of us are frightened to speak up, fearing reassignment - retaliation.
- New superintendent - 1 year - makes rule/policies without approval.
- New dress code.
- I am concerned with teacher morale and its effect on students.
- Is school board functioning in a professional and effective and efficient manner? Are individuals qualified?
- Is school board complying with open meetings/records act?
- Site based committees - how are these chosen? Do they adequately represent the parents and community?
- Progressive, forward looking administration.
- Better communication between central administration and campuses.
- Superintendent has made many improvements since he has been on board; however, he is somewhat heavy handed at times.
- Money is tight, but taking into consideration that we are a Quad - 4 in wealth, we are probably about as well as can be expected.
- Communication within District.
- Race relations - money and power in city - spill over to schools.
- Lack of opportunity for minority students/adults.
- The present harsh dictates (new dress code for teachers) from the top school administration has caused the loss of many great teachers.
- Many upper grade students are feeling degraded by the military type tactics used at present to enforce new dress code.
- Positive diversity (multicultural).
- An overpowering superintendent.
- Commitment of administration to move towards more innovative and up-to-date technology.
- Change single member voting.
- Must reside in district to run.
- Elect board President At-Large.
- Need school board members that care, higher wages for low paid employees, counselors that push scholarships.
- The schools seem to have good leaders (superintendent, principal, etc.).
- We have a christian school, superintendent is strict and believes in a dress code.

- More control by the local school board.
- More control of the financial circumstances.
- Improved management.
- Administration actively involved in community.
- School Board - should have to live in area they represent! Also, the advisory site based committees work well together and the superintendent respects our decisions but the School Board does not take our recommendations seriously.
- Parent went to TEA about lack of follow up by superintendent - told to go to board. Board ignored, told student to file grievance.
- Grievance is only for employees.
- Site-based decisions are not recognized by administration.
- Dress code: very unfair, shirts have to be tucked in.
- People come to school board but nothing happens.
- Some discussion about making East Side-West Side campuses by superintendent, not racially balanced.
- Capri pants can't be worn (superintendent) worries about gangs.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

- Curriculum at middle schools seems to change without parental notifications based on small vocal group of parents.
- Information related to gifted and talented program not very available.
- We need vertical teaming and consistent approaches within curricular areas.
- Bilingual lab here is completely ineffective. When I've gone for help, I get excuses. Students do not improve when the lab is closed so often.
- Curriculum needs updating and coordination of different levels of teaching needs addressing.
- Upper level courses are superb but need more materials. TAAS - if you can't pass it you should worry. The people out of GT are class snobs and prone to superiority.
- TAAS exit-level should not be 8th grade level material. If it were meant that way, we'd all end school @ 8th grade.
- Doing away with the block was a hard adjustment. Too many classes with homework after years of only 4 classes a day. No transition was implemented - one of my children had two lockers for all the books needed.
- TAAS is taught. What district doesn't do that?
- If students can't/won't do the work they should fail - a high school diploma needs to mean something again. Way too many gimmee programs in place.
- Middle Schools needs to keep and continue to add a rigorous curriculum that offers high level courses. This is so helpful for

college band and career band students. Let's expose and teach our kids the upper-upper encl. The talk is to do away with these courses at middle school - what a shame.

- Focus on instruction and student achievement.
- Effective site-based committee and teacher involvement in advising principal.
- Student needs committees function well at addressing students' needs.
- Vertically articulated curriculum needed districtwide.
- Principal's time needs to be devoted to instructional issues on campuses.
- Lots of quality and caring teachers who hold the level of instruction high.
- The most important need for our district is for an aligned curriculum, K - 12.
- Lots of electives at secondary level - (High School).
- Outstanding vocational programs.
- Dual-credit courses in conjunction with ACC, etc.
- Excellent career guidance at high school.
- Clean, positive learning environment.
- Excellent Band program.
- Block schedules allowing for in-depth lesson planning.
- Excellent academic programs, child-centered, positive environment, high quality bilingual programs, excellent guidance and counseling, superb teaching staff - highly dedicated and well trained, G/T Program of high quality, individual student needs met through Tide One, special education, etc., technology program is first rate.
- Some students are still not meeting academic expectations and passing TAAS, over-crowded schools, lack of curriculum/instruction/direction from central office (should be fixed with hiring of new executive director in this area).
- Strong reading program in elementary schools. Strong athletics program in middle/high school. Outstanding band program beginning in middle school. Most children involved in Accelerated Reading Program in elementary and middle schools. Excellent homework schedules for elementary and primary schools. Career program is fantastic - giving children a chance to see what the future offers.
- ACC @ high school.
- Primary - wonderful reading programs, great support and teaching staff. Elem./middle school - great teaching staff. High school - the schedule the high school will use year 2000-2001 is great - allows students a lot of choices and helps the excelled student.
- Elgin's school curriculum is progressive and child centered.

- Keep curriculum well rounded - art classes for the lower grades as an additional special electives.
- Intergenerational class at the high school is wonderful!
Kindergarten kids working together with high school kids at the local nursing home!
- Wonderful primary school teachers - caring for the whole child - emotional needs, academic needs, social needs all being met.
- Caring administration at the Primary! Gives teachers the freedom to give young children special memories, all the while, their educational needs are being met.
- Lots of extra programs to help children, etc., tutorials, power reading, power math, etc., technology.
- Many programs to involve students in all types of activities and interests.
- More Fine Arts programs.
- Improved TAAS test scores.
- Improve Special programs (special ed. - bilingual).
- Small school system.
- Good TAAS scores.
- Teachers that teach in the schools also live in the community. Also support staff.
- Developing Austin Community College (ACC) classes at the high school. Also allowing students to leave on college co-op program to attend ACC.
- One campus does not know what next campus is teaching.
- No student involvement (except on paper) for secondary high school students except athletics.
- No emphasis on SAT/ACT prep for high school students.
- Need to offer more electives at high school and middle school level.
- Need more activities/clubs, etc. at high school level to keep kids interested and involved.
- Block scheduling.
- Technology courses.
- Band and art programs.
- Keep TAAS camp at high school.
- Some really committed teachers.
- Great gifted and talented program.
- Do good on TAAS tests.
- Need more money for more alternative programs.
- Good band program - exceptional competition results for sight reading and performance.
- TAAS scores have gone up, and they have an excellent Preparatory Program to help kids succeed.
- Good (excellent) Agricultural Department.
- We have loving teachers and great kids.

- No choir.
- Don't offer French.
- There are limited elective choices.
- Far less money spent on non-athletic endeavors than athletics.
- We need to offer more programs and opportunities for the strongest students so they can excel.
- We have an active Grant writer who is getting grants for educational improvements.
- Lower teacher to student ratio.
- Better math program in lower grades.
- They have an excellent band program.
- Furnish more than one book for each class to help the student to do special projects.
- My family has lived in Elgin since 1984. My kids have never attended on Elgin ISD school - the schools here seem so overly-focused on the TAAS test that they have flunked on the BASICS - if they would teach reading, math, writing (and teach it correctly), then the kids would be well-equipped to pass the TAAS test with flying colors. Elgin ISD is so proud of using the POD-system in the primary school, yet that utilizes the bright kids as teachers' aides and doesn't challenge them.
- Recently I saw a display of the writing of the Gifted and Talented kids - their "best" work that was displayed with pride has misspellings, grammatical errors, etc. It was a sad commentary on Elgin ISD's best.
- I strongly support school vouchers - after I pay over \$2,000 in school taxes, then I put out more money for my kids to go to a private school in Austin. I would never send them to Elgin ISD - it's not up to doing a decent job of the basics even.
- Primary Pod program.
- Primary Reading Guarantee.
- Accelerated Reading.
- Team teaching at elementary and middle schools.
- Advisory site based teams - campus and district.
- UIL.
- Gifted and Special Education Programs.
- Dress code - new this year and needs to work on consistency.
- District working with ACC for dual credit classes.
- District working with ACC for after hours classes offered to the community.
- We are also desperately in need of vertical teaming in the English Department. No one at the high school knows what the jr. hi is teaching. The middle school does not know what we are doing. Ninth graders are arriving with such varied backgrounds and approaches it is hard to move them in a cohesive unit expeditiously. Lots of time is spent catching people up. Even at the

high school department members use varying approaches. Students in the same grade do not get the same material - nor is there consistent approach. And there is no communication moving in that direction. The fear is that if we attempt vertical teaming the superintendent will intervene and force his views on us - like he did at the middle school when he completely revised the entire curricular approach against the wishes or desires or abilities of the staff. And there is no communication.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Very concerned with lack of community involvement - small group of concerned individuals can't accomplish everything. No PTA since cannot get enough parents and teachers involved.
- Some parents are involved most are not. And then they blame the school on how their child was raised. There is lots of community involvement especially through the DECA programs. The communications between Admin., teachers, students and parents is zero to nil.
- There is need for more community involvement, from all ethnic parents, I find in speaking with individuals in my community a large percentage of the parents feel intimidated by staff.
- Our business partners are very supportive of our career programs - we are fortunate.
- For the most part, we, Elgin, contain a supportive community for education.
- Community supported a bond election, passed, so that we could build a new high school to meet our growing community.
- Our students' perform well in all kinds of school activities which include academics, WIC events, music (band) and athletics.
- Parental involvement.
- Small town atmosphere.
- Courteous and well-mannered student body.
- Elgin is a friendly community.
- The people in Elgin are willing to help those in need.
- Elgin people value education and generally support the schools and teachers.
- Advocacy Program/Career Program/Pat Carter High School Program students helping students and nursing homes. Concern to the school and community.
- Community support for schools - i.e., passing bond to build new high school facility.
- POD system at Elgin Primary allows teachers to really get to know students and follow them through the early ed. Years.
- Community outreach.
- Citizens show great concern about all phases of our system.

- Avid sports support.
- Needs parent participation on school premises.

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

- Good teachers.
- Very poor.
- The teachers in Elgin ISD truly have the children's' best interest as their top priority.
- We can't keep our better teachers - parents are pulling kids out to take elsewhere or teach at home. Teachers are unhappy with the leadership from above - this trickles down to the kids for a very negative environment. The older teachers were really short-changed on the pay raises last year - some went elsewhere. I know it would save this district money to have newer teachers, but we have many teachers who have been loyal for many years (some 20+) and they are putting up with this to stay here.
- Superintendents get 3-year contracts - teachers have been reduced to 1-year contracts - go figure!!!!
- The Elgin ISD Professional staff need more positive ethnic staff.
- Personnel Department needs to be more personal instead of communicating through memos.
- Effective teaching staff.
- Adequate personnel need to be employed to provide time for principals to plan, implement plans, supervise instruction, interact positively with students and teachers.
- Staffing - need more teachers and administrators to bring down class sizes and help with appraisals.
- Teacher morale.
- Salary schedule - equity.
- Competent and certified personnel to serve the school and prepare the student body.
- Morale of teachers.
- Have very good teachers that care about their students.
- Keeping good teachers in our school district keeping up with building new school without over tax burden, not getting too large either.
- Strong faculty at every level.
- Turn over of principals at the elementary, middle, and high schools.
- High percent of teacher turn over.
- Low teacher morale.
- Aides' salaries not adequate. Also hard time getting substitute teachers.
- Low teacher morale.

- Smaller community setting/smaller school population allows for more personal contact with school staff for both parents and students.
- Small enrollment relates to better knowledge by teachers of the students and their families.
- Smaller staff relates to better familiarity between teachers which relates to sharing of ideas and techniques.
- High rate of teacher turnover.
- Elgin is not attracting the best teachers (though some are exceptional).
- Diversity - 1/3 black, 1/3 Hispanic, 1/3 Caucasian.
- Dedicated teachers.
- They are working on addressing issues with certain teachers, administrators, board members who have not been responsible and have had too much personal authority. More needs to be done.
- Teachers have some morale problems (their spirits are low). They aren't paid enough. They feel frustrated by lack of input into the policies. Tenured teachers (seasoned) are not given much credit. There is a tendency to hire new teachers who get paid less to save money.
- Cycle - low tax base, less money to operate on.
- We need money to improve our school. There is little wrong that money wouldn't remedy.
- Teachers are key. Money needs to be primarily targeted towards getting and keeping good teachers and giving them input.
- Teacher morale very low - angry.
- Too many out of town teachers.
- Too many extra helpers, cost could be cut.
- An overall excellent faculty.
- Kind caring teachers.
- More balanced pay program, management to teachers.
- Give teachers more authority to maintain atmosphere in classroom.

FACILITIES USE AND MAINTENANCE

- Are facilities for girls' sports complying with Title IX?
- We need more access to technology for our students. One lab of 25 computers serving 700+ students does not work.
- Ditto and at all levels, including within self contained classrooms.
- Since Title IX seems as late to be an issue, have the men's programs began to suffer? i.e., facilities. Answer: No, the female facilities are still inferior.
- What is considered a proper size, enrollment for the facilities we have in place versus what would be ideal for learning.
- Have you ever felt like a sardine? Our teachers have rotation schedules for who has a room. Portable rooms are not buildings.

The janitors are doing what they can. Too many power outages. Every teacher deserves a room.

- I'm currently enrolled in a class with only 5 students. This same classroom, a semi-computer lab, is meant to teach 16 comfortably, 20 at a maximum. The problem is that half of the computers are almost too out of date to be of real use. How are we supposed to learn complicated networking techniques on out of date apples? We aren't.
- The campuses are holding up (except the elementary) but some of the neglect comes from the attitudes exhibited. We will have a problem with overcrowding until the members of this community realize that it is going to cost more to live here - we have to have more classrooms. It was assumed that the grades would be rotated to the next campus (middle school to old high school, etc.) after the high school was finished. Now, that may not be so. Nobody is saying for sure - this will be something left up in the air - we can assume who will make the final decision. It may not be what the community likes.
- I've seen great improvement in the last few years - in custodial and maintenance. Keep up the good work. Keep student/teacher ratios at elementary and primary 1-22. Do not request exemptions.
- Space, classroom, and building, is a major concern.
- Facilities - poor conditions in many buildings and classrooms.
- Grounds - often shoddy and run down, which leads to low self-esteem among students.
- Often times, intercom systems from classrooms to office don't work, which could be a hazard.
- New high school about to open.
- Growing community.
- Many new homes being built/mobile homes' park being build - we expect 8 percent growth in school population. Bedroom community - few industries to give sufficient tax base. Homes being built, but for the moment few homes or rentals available. High school is moving to a new site, but completion dates continue to elude being near to finishing. middle school will move to high school, but we feel it is too small already. middle school has 30 students in many classes. Bus system - not enough drivers so few field trips.
- Challenge in next 2 to 3 years - Space! Our community is growing faster than our schools. We, as a community, are struggling with the cost! If our building space is limited, our teaching will also be limited and the children lose! It is important we keep our education on the cutting edge; so our children do not suffer.
- Growth has overcome space. Even with the new high school, the junior high and old high school buildings are in very poor condition, and they look tacky.

- The cooling/heating system at the primary is horrible! You either sweat or freeze and it is hard to teach young children under these conditions.
- Clean and attractive physical building structure and convenient location.
- Lack of good, solid physical building structure.
- Growing area and growing school. New high school, updates, other buildings.
- Getting the new high school built and seemingly arbitrary moving of all the other schools (not gaining much in the move).
- Expected high growth in the area without a higher tax base.
- Primary school is overcrowded (I'm not sure about the other campuses).
- New high school building.
- Growing in enrollment.
- Fast growth - being able to keep up with this - in terms of facilities and services.
- Possible new, large under-privileged population coming.
- This community has been a fairly closed "family." With many "outsiders" moving in, there are issues with integration of the two groups - in student populations, on the board, in the community.
- Need more school buildings.
- A possible Mobile Home Trailer Park of 400-500 rental sites, with little tax base - increase in school enrollment would tremendously impact 1000-1500 children.
- Opens facilities for community-wide services.
- Progressive, school pride, caring teachers, rural atmosphere, parent involvement.
- Needs closer cooperation/involvement in community (city/county/civic clubs), better disciplinary tools provided by TEA, etc.
- District is experiencing rapid growth and community needs to be planning more facilities.
- School facilities being improved.
- New High School is too small.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- Are internal audits performed? Are results reported? Are contracts related to new high school effective and conform to sound business practices? Are these monitored for compliance and performance?
- Is the money being kept track of? Some people act like they are on an unlimited budget while others say they have no money to do things. I have never seen anything in writing to show where it is going. Going to the district office and asking is a joke. Who would believe it?

- Salary base (low end) and administrator salaries.
- The business management of the schools needs improvement.
- A concerned superintendent with the financial matters of the school, with the taxpayer in mind.

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- The changes in health insurance coverage caused confusion for many. We are still experiencing glitches like being removed from coverage without notice. I had signed up for disability insurance in May - and paid premiums through December - when I was suddenly notified I had been dropped from coverage and any problems developing between May - December would not be grandfathered. I have received no refund for the 8 monthly payments nor have I received communication.
- Prescription refills have been denied with no warning - this is for routine medicines - faculty has been told when they go to refill prescriptions that they are no longer covered - upon investigation, no one is ever responsible.
- There should be more choices for health insurance for the district.
- The state needs to come together and offer insurance plans for all the ISD's. This would lower cost and create more personal options. It's ridiculous each district has to take care of this.

PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSE SERVICES

- Because of the change in schedules, many classes that had enough books ended up with having only a class set, and some of these books are so beaten to death, I'm afraid to take it home for fear it would utterly disintegrate in my bag.

CHILD NUTRITION SERVICES

- We need options with less fat, more nutrition.
- I'm a kid and I say food should taste good, look good, and are good nutritionally, no gourmet, fat and grease!
- I'm a student and I believe in eating healthy, along with working out regularly. My comment is that none of the food contains much flavor, and most of it has little to no nutritional value. How are we expected to grow to be healthy adults without healthy foods?
- Would it be more cost effective to privatize the food service at Elgin ISD?
- Why do we have to eat the same thing over and over? In 5 years, nothing new has been added.
- Last period - food runs out.
- Same menus for seven years.

- Nothing healthy.
- Vegetables are oily and salty.
- Too much fried food.
- Breakfast is greasy.
- Baked potato only once a week.
- Meals aren't well rounded.
- More study given to health meals for students.

TRANSPORTATION

- Are buses adequately monitored for safety? How are harassment issues on buses addressed?
- The buses need a good inspection, especially the older ones.
- I agree on both of these issues because many of these buses would not stand up to a 90 minute drive cross-country. Another issue is the fact that small groups are still required to ride big buses, normally older ones that will break down on the trips occasionally. It would be easier if the district paid the insurance for students to travel in the vans and suburbans.
- This department is fine.
- Good transportation system.

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

- We don't have computer access for every child. We are desperately in need of a second computer lab so that students/classes can use technology on a more regular basis. When asked to consider instituting a second lab - with enough computers to accommodate a class of 28-30, we were told to wait for lap tops, yet were not given time or possibility of lap tops.
- Not all teachers have access to working computers on a consistent basis. If classes are in the lab, those without classrooms have no access.
- Changes are made on the server to teacher and student accounts with no prior notice, making internet and computer use confusing and chaotic as well as inconsistent. When we - I personally asked for input about my recently restricted e-mail access three times - and received no reply. Communication between the Elgin ISD Technology Department and teachers is virtually non-existent!
- District e-mail needs to be utilized.
- Needs depth.
- Our programs are great. Very good network we work off of. The internet access rules and punishments are not consistent.
- My children are at the end of what this district offers and want more. Access is limited - space is small - yet we will now own two fieldhouses for the boys that use up more space than can be offered

to the teachers for the classes. I think more kids would benefit from computers than athletics.

- Teachers are left to learn on their own - if we want to upgrade our skills, it must be done on our time - (do it in the summer is always the answer!) 50% of our student body knows more than teachers about computers!
- Our teachers are superb K-12. All students need to enter high school at the CIS I level - middle school needs to teach a rigorous keyboard/word process program - align the curriculum.
- We are always called a "poor" district, but we seem to be on the cutting edge of many programs. For example: technology.
- Good technology from Primary school to High school.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

- I've never been even remotely afraid that I might get hurt at school.
- Discipline is inconsistent among students here.
- Classrooms have no locks inside. If there was a breach in security and a shooter on campus, teachers locking selves and students in safely would not be an option, as it should be.
- How are threats against students and teachers dealt with in this district?
- Discipline is erratic, we don't have any security.
- Doors in the gym are chained shut during the day. At night, gates are locked, blocking access to halls and exits at night when functions are going on on campus.
- Safe schools and students well behaved.
- No drug or gang problems.
- Behavioral (conduct) problems.
- General atmosphere of all schools is calm and focused on learning.
- More gang and drug activity moving into schools.
- More interaction between campus grades to discuss transition issues when students move from one campus to another.
- A discipline system at the secondary levels that is not working any more. No positives worked into the system or allowances for change.
- Sheriff should be a regular visitor on school grounds.
- A dress code.
- Discipline of the student for better learning circumstances.

Appendix B

TEACHER SURVEY AND COMMENTS

- A. Demographic Data/Survey Questions
- B. Verbatim Comments

Demographic Data

TOTAL RESPONSES AS OF July 12, 2000	79
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Circle Answer

1.	Gender (Optional)	Male	Female	No Response
		24%	72%	4%

2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	No Response
		87%	1%	4%	0%	1%	6%

3.	How long have you been employed by Elgin ISD?	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	No Response
		46%	27%	10%	10%	8%	0%

4.	What grade(s) do you teach this year (circle all that apply)?				
	Pre-Kindergarten	Kindergarten	First	Second	Third
	1%	5%	5%	5%	4%
	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth
	3%	3%	5%	5%	6%
	Ninth	Tenth	Eleventh	Twelfth	
	14%	15%	14%	15%	

A. District Organization and Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	0%	29%	43%	24%	4%	0%
2. School board members listen to the opinions and desires of	0%	30%	34%	25%	10%	0%

	others.						
3.	School board members work well with the superintendent.	4%	24%	46%	22%	4%	1%
4.	The school board has a good image in the community.	1%	16%	22%	49%	11%	0%
5.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	3%	13%	9%	41%	35%	0%
6.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	3%	20%	22%	28%	28%	0%
7.	Central administration is efficient.	3%	33%	14%	33%	16%	1%
8.	Central administration supports the educational process.	8%	30%	18%	29%	14%	1%
9.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	1%	29%	56%	10%	4%	0%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
10.	Education is the main priority in our	10%	37%	4%	39%	10%	0%

	school district.						
11.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	11%	41%	8%	25%	15%	0%
12.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	6%	25%	20%	32%	15%	1%
13.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	5%	33%	23%	24%	13%	3%
14.	The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	5%	24%	27%	28%	15%	1%
15.	The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	5%	18%	30%	30%	15%	1%
16.	The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	4%	11%	33%	33%	18%	1%
17.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	14%	35%	19%	24%	5%	3%

	b) Writing	5%	42%	16%	32%	4%	1%
	c) Mathematics	6%	51%	14%	25%	3%	1%
	d) Science	5%	41%	34%	18%	3%	0%
	e) English or Language Arts	6%	57%	15%	20%	1%	0%
	f) Computer Instruction	16%	61%	10%	11%	1%	0%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	5%	48%	28%	19%	0%	0%
	h) Fine Arts	5%	37%	22%	30%	6%	0%
	i) Physical Education	10%	59%	13%	10%	8%	0%
	j) Business Education	5%	32%	49%	9%	3%	3%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	10%	37%	30%	18%	5%	0%
	l) Foreign Language	3%	42%	42%	11%	3%	0%
18.	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a) Library Service	8%	39%	28%	16%	6%	3%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	8%	46%	22%	16%	9%	0%
	c) Special Education	6%	49%	9%	28%	8%	0%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	8%	32%	53%	3%	4%	1%

	e) Dyslexia program	1%	8%	53%	24%	14%	0%
	f) Student mentoring program	1%	18%	39%	30%	11%	0%
	g) Advanced placement program	4%	39%	47%	9%	1%	0%
	h) Literacy program	5%	25%	42%	22%	5%	1%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	6%	30%	24%	25%	14%	0%
	j) Summer school programs	8%	39%	22%	28%	4%	0%
	k) Alternative education programs	8%	38%	19%	23%	13%	0%
	l) "English as a second language" program	6%	44%	23%	16%	6%	4%
	m) Career counseling program	6%	39%	30%	14%	8%	3%
	n) College counseling program	5%	32%	29%	24%	9%	1%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	6%	18%	27%	34%	15%	0%
	p) Drop out prevention program	4%	16%	37%	27%	15%	1%
19.	Parents are immediately notified if a	4%	41%	23%	22%	11%	0%

	child is absent from school.						
20.	Teacher turnover is low.	1%	11%	5%	35%	47%	0%
21.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	8%	25%	16%	38%	13%	0%
22.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	1%	30%	25%	35%	5%	3%
23.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	0%	6%	10%	48%	34%	1%
24.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	3%	30%	41%	19%	8%	0%
25.	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	13%	63%	10%	14%	0%	0%
26.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	5%	37%	19%	25%	13%	1%
27.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	4%	34%	6%	42%	10%	4%
28.	Classrooms are seldom left	22%	52%	10%	10%	5%	1%

	unattended.						
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C. Personnel

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
29.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	3%	30%	10%	38%	18%	1%
30.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	3%	20%	27%	38%	13%	0%
31.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	1%	24%	25%	42%	8%	0%
32.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	0%	27%	32%	28%	14%	0%
33.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	0%	15%	46%	29%	10%	0%
34.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	4%	27%	11%	43%	15%	0%
35.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	14%	77%	4%	4%	1%	0%
36.	The district	1%	6%	24%	48%	20%	0%

	rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.						
37.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	1%	23%	39%	28%	9%	0%
38.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	0%	22%	53%	18%	8%	0%
39.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	9%	59%	13%	15%	4%	0%

D. Community Involvement

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
40. The district regularly communicates with parents.	6%	54%	13%	23%	4%	0%
41. The local television and radio stations regularly report school	6%	14%	35%	32%	11%	1%

	news and menus.						
42.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	5%	11%	6%	48%	29%	0%
43.	District facilities are open for community use.	13%	65%	15%	4%	4%	0%

E. Facilities Use and Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
44.	The district plans facilities far enough in the future to support enrollment growth.	0%	8%	10%	53%	29%	0%
45.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	1%	22%	22%	34%	22%	0%
46.	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	0%	8%	52%	20%	20%	0%
47.	The quality of new	0%	6%	24%	19%	51%	0%

	construction is excellent.						
48.	Schools are clean.	4%	54%	3%	24%	15%	0%
49.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	5%	43%	9%	27%	16%	0%
50.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	4%	47%	6%	27%	16%	0%
51.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	15%	53%	15%	11%	4%	1%

F. Financial Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
52.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	5%	10%	34%	29%	22%	0%
53.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	3%	25%	44%	20%	8%	0%
54.	Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	1%	28%	25%	32%	14%	0%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
55.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	1%	43%	19%	22%	15%	0%
56.	Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	1%	35%	44%	15%	4%	0%
57.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	1%	23%	19%	35%	22%	0%
58.	Vendors are selected competitively.	1%	32%	53%	13%	1%	0%
59.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	1%	24%	22%	39%	14%	0%
60.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	6%	53%	15%	15%	10%	0%
61.	Textbooks are in good shape.	6%	57%	16%	13%	8%	0%
62.	The school library meets the student needs for	11%	49%	11%	15%	13%	0%

	books and other resources.						
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H. Food Services

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
63.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	4%	38%	13%	30%	15%	0%
64.	Food is served warm.	8%	68%	8%	14%	3%	0%
65.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	8%	66%	6%	14%	5%	1%
66.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	10%	58%	13%	15%	4%	0%
67.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	6%	59%	10%	15%	9%	0%
68.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	19%	59%	10%	9%	3%	0%
69.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	22%	65%	5%	6%	3%	0%

I. Safety and Security

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
70.	School disturbances	4%	54%	6%	24%	9%	3%

	are infrequent.						
71.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	4%	48%	20%	23%	5%	0%
72.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	1%	18%	18%	48%	15%	0%
73.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	3%	30%	10%	41%	16%	0%
74.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	3%	46%	41%	1%	10%	0%
75.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	1%	37%	52%	1%	9%	0%
76.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	6%	73%	16%	4%	0%	0%
77.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	6%	27%	5%	28%	34%	0%
78.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	3%	37%	16%	34%	10%	0%

J. Computers and Technology

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
79.	Students regularly use computers.	18%	63%	4%	9%	5%	1%
80.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	11%	43%	3%	32%	11%	0%
81.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	6%	52%	11%	29%	1%	0%
82.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	10%	73%	9%	6%	1%	0%
83.	The district meets student needs in classes in computer fundamentals.	13%	58%	11%	11%	6%	0%
84.	The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.	11%	43%	29%	9%	8%	0%
85.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	16%	54%	9%	11%	9%	0%

Teacher Survey Verbatim Comments

- Timeline to receive purchase orders is too long.
- Teachers are certified or teaching out of area expertise: high school science.
- We treat all student like they are going to college-need to be more realistic.
- Currently teachers seem to have little to no input at the campus level-we are told what to do.
- Recruit in Texas please, not out of state.
- Site based currently has no effective role-decisions are made at B.O. not campus.
- Heat and Air Conditioning repairs are extremely slow.
- Architect has visited only one time with teachers.
- Labs needs should be considered in career technology, science, art, drama for the new high school.
- Teachers who have been in the district did not receive a raise last year.
- Please look at the number of preps for high school.
- Teachers, number of special education students in classes, number of extracurricular duties teachers have.
- High school were asked by student to give diplomas as a way of acknowledging their appreciation of time and effort - students were told it was against board policy.
- Again no recognition for hard work.
- Most school disturbances this year were related to dress code.
- Have been turned down at check out line at vendor because the bill was not paid by Business Office in a timely manner.
- Activities funds for extracurricular should have easier access-this money is not the school district's it was raised for and by students.
- Teachers receive no comp day for in-service training they participate in on their own time.
- This year I did not gain anything from local in-service.
- High school counselors need to be professional and work together.
- Scheduling is one of their jobs and this can be done better than current process.
- Just because your contract days are up doesn't mean you just quit.
- Please take responsibility for the mistakes made, quit blaming the teachers, administration etc.
- The main goal of this district this year seems to be making sure our kids are dressed according to the norm selected by our superintendent.
- We have a reading lab, lots of English teachers, two reading teachers and seniors that are graduating with very low reading skills. We also place students who have not passed reading in the

reading program as 9th grader and they continue to do the same thing till they pass TAAS-sometimes in the 12th grade.

- We have no assistance for our school age parents to stay in school, lost two students this semester. Why can't those students receive some special class for their situation instead of dumping in a class or 25 Child Development students?
- I feel that too much political issues are important. The need of text books are not meet. Low morale is at the highest ever. A lot of teachers will not be coming back next year. Teachers fear being sued. Poor discipline at middle school. The student are upset at dress code, some are punished while children of the "click" are allowed to violated the code. Food served in cafeteria "Flys", quality of food served at different schools. The new school the money spent (already) for new furnishing and remodel. Old high school. Covering up of violations.
- During my less than 10 year teaching career, I have never experienced the stress, low morale and overall pressure, as I have this past school year 1999-2000. I believe this atmosphere was created purposefully by the current dictatorial superintendent. The first thing he did was shuffle office staff around within each school and from school to school. No one knew who they could trust. A "watch your back" attitude prevailed. The other prevalent focus was the "dress code", overriding educational and safety factors. At a recent (end of the year) bomb threat evacuation, the superintendent was running round the middle school campus with pen and paper, recording dress code violators. The local newspaper, however, touted him as a hero playing dual role of volunteer fireman and superintendent. The dress code focus seems likely to be a smokescreen for "who knows what."
- Normally, teacher contracts are presented in March, I understand no later than 45 days before the end of school, nothing was presented. In April, teachers received a memo from the main office stating that the superintendent had recommended to the board to not issue any multi-year contracts. And yet, teachers were still not presented contracts. On May 12, Friday, contracts were presented to some of the teachers, who were instructed to return the contract by May 15, Monday, eight school days before classes ended. I understand legally contracts do not have to be returned until 45 days prior to the first instructional day of the next school year. The legal deadline would then be mid-June, allowing each teacher a full month of consideration. The dress code and contract issues have been the most crucial to me, undermining morale and instilling insecurity and fear throughout my campus.
- As to school disturbance, announcements are too frequent and the strict dress code has caused many disruptions needlessly. (Enforcement of many arbitrary dress code stipulations has

resulted in minor, but frequent, bad feelings between the students and teachers.)

- Site based decision making has been effectively neutralized: even current members agree the committee is token. We do not follow the process we set up at inception. Prior to last year we had a high degree of teacher buy-in and trust, due largely to a working SBDM committee; but currently trust and morale are at an all time low. As to highly qualified personnel, our recruiters seem to gravitate to mediocre colleges and ignore excellent universities. (For instance, we have few teachers from UT and A&M, even though they are close and graduate many teachers.)
- I believe our district needs to work on reading and writing skills in younger grades. Our 4th graders lack work attack skills and a writing/composition and grammar background. I believe we rely too much on whole language.
- I also believe the middle school needs a number of changes. They have done away with accelerated classes for the top students and are not challenging students and helping them prepare for the future. All classes are the same for all students.
- I feel we're top-heavy with administrators and experts, and can see few results as compared to the salaries they receive. The superintendent pressured the curriculum director to step down, and from my observation of 17 years, she accomplished more than any other administrator had and she did it with friendliness and expertise. It also took two or three people to do what she did.
- Since we're state employees, we should have as good of insurance and benefits as those who are not teachers, like state workers.
- Although I said the food looks neat, I think it is not healthy for our children. They should be given fresh fruits and vegetables, not chocolate milk, donuts, sugar coated cereals, greasy potatoes, greasy meats, etc... too many carbohydrates. I also feel the school board is more worried about the sports program than real educational needs.
- What you didn't ask:
 - We are treated fairly amongst the staff
 - We receive positive encouragement
 - Our campus administrator for 10 years has done a good job
 - We are treated with respect and professionalism
 - I couldn't have a better place to work.
- From an administrative standpoint, this is the most inept district I have ever been in. They have messed up the salaries and stipends of 12 high school teachers that I know of (without speedy correction of their errors). There are two teachers/coaches that have to work an extra period with no compensation; the passing period is counted as part of the high school teachers 30 minutes lunch (18 minutes lunch plus 26 minutes passing periods). The

principals have attempted to put teachers (at high school) on a growth plan siting PDAS Domains, for which the teachers evaluations showed no deductions or negative comments. The high school discipline plan is not equally/fairly enforced. There is in effect no discipline at the high school - extremely high turnover rate on three campuses.

- Inequitable teacher loads (some teachers having up to four preps while other teachers in same department have one.) Teacher Referrals for Special Education testing not acted on. New teachers not given orientation over district/campus policies and procedures. Attendance inequities between teacher and office records; attendance slips not picked up numerous, at least 20 percent, times. Attendance/Accounting procedures irregular.
- We have excellent teachers in our district but for some reason our administrators seem to believe politics is more important than the education of our children and our community. Our school board is even more political. The city supports a non-profit Community Outreach program. Part of this program's goals is to better educate the children and adults within this low-economic community. This included literacy and GED programs; however, our school board will not support these programs in any way-not even the use of the school facilities.
- Our school district also concentrates on teaching to the TAAS way too much. We pre-test and analyze in October and then two more times before the TAAS test. Two weeks before the real TAAS we have to focus on nothing more than TAAS, TAAS, TAAS. After the test the students, parents and community feel we are only teaching school to baby-sit until the last day of school.
- I attended a TEKS workshop this last year in which we were told that the TAAS was meant to test the skills expected to be mastered at each grade level in the basic education system. If we taught and concentrated on teaching the higher order thinking level skills then we wouldn't have to worry about making sure the students understood how the test was set up and exactly what objectives are covered. All those objectives should naturally be covered and fall into place along side the curriculum of a good, strong educational program/system. Knowledge and comprehension is important, but being able to problem solve and think through situations is what will benefit our future world even more. I would love to see our focus change from that knowledge/competency level of education to a more substantial problem solving/higher-level thinking educational environment.
- I would also like to see more focus on the success of every student. It seems that the average student receives the focus. We are told to ignore special education students because they will never make it anyway. This is a wrong attitude. To see a student exit the special

ed. program is even more exciting than seeing the bilingual student quickly exit that program.

- Thanks for conducting this survey!
- Extreme overcrowding in my classes. Too many "special needs" students (22.6 percent). No communication or support for needs.
- The laws of Texas should allow administrators to process genuine problem students (criminals, psychopaths, etc.) out of the system earlier and easier. They sap our school of its energy to teach deserving students.
- As a non-political person, the business of running this high school ebbs and tides with the principal-currently ours is too green and hasn't enough experience with personnel issues. I think the school ran on its members talents not its leaders.
- The school district needs to require a rigorous and challenging curriculum for 7-12 grades. Our students need to be taught how to research, complete quality projects at the middle school level, so at high school they can continue on at a high academic level.
- I would like to see educators get together for lunch meetings and discuss curriculum alignment and rigorous strategies.
- I have been in Elgin three years. The school district is improving but growth is making it difficult to stay ahead of our needs. We also have very little parent involvement. The district offers ways to be involved but most parents just do not show up or take advantage of the districts programs.
- I think the food quality in the cafeteria is very poor. There is very little fresh food. All vegetables are frozen, canned or boxed (as in instant mashed potatoes). Jell-O is a frequent dessert with little or no nutritional value. There is too much fried food and all the bread served is white. Children need B vitamins which can only be found through whole grains-which I see none of in any of our food. The excuse that this is the food these children are used to is sad. How can they ever improve their eating habits if they are not exposed to decent food? They never eat their vegetables because canned and frozen vegetables are not tasty. The vegetables that are frozen are always mush and tasteless. They only have fresh baked rolls once a week. All the other schools I have worked with have had fresh rolls every day, and some schools have whole grain fresh baked bread. Why are we serving our children junk food (hamburgers, nachos, hot dogs, fried food) and then expecting quality performance out of them when they have no nutritional support? We also sell them junk food in the food line (primary). We sell them Little Debbie's, fake juice punch with 5 percent real juice and chips. This is appalling to me. Children under 9 years old are not going to eat their lunch if they have chips and/or Little Debbie's on their tray. I think we are giving these small children choices that they are not mature enough to make by selling them this junk. It is

also the same snacks that are served for after school tutoring programs which is no nutritional support at all for their bodies or minds. Thank you for listening.

- This is my first year to teach in Elgin and my first year in a public school. It has been a wonderful year. The teachers and staff at the elementary school are exceptional. We are there for the children. They are our main priority. I am still learning the ins and outs of the politics of the district. I am very happy to be here.
- Elgin has some outstanding performers despite the general overlooking of the National Merit Scholars in the minority students. The cafeteria refuses to serve fresh and balanced meals especially at breakfast. Donuts! Donuts! We are obligated to do technology instruction but do not have sufficient resources in the elementary. The district emphasizes TAAS testing over quality well rounded education Practice test! Practice test! Test! Frequent turnover in Administration makes directives hard to follow. Required to teach Art, Science, Social Studies etc., and no time prior to TAAS test in April. Communication all over district is poor. Loyalty and respect should be pursued in dealing with staff. Loyalty and Respect cost nothing but give safe and enjoyable working conditions for all.
- Elgin is a district that is mediocre. We could be GREAT-our leadership at the top appears uninterested in curriculum-it is rarely discussed. The dress code, the new high school and, of course, SPORTS seem to be the topics that receive the most discussion and attention. I feel we need curriculum alignment from Pre-K-12, more attention paid to at-risk students, a beefed-up Pre-K program and more vocational programs for the non-college bound.
- Teacher morale is very low. The following are a few reason that I feel affect this:
 - Low student expectations
 - Inconsistent and weak discipline
 - Lack of admin. support
 - Lack of organization
 - Lack or pride in school
 - Unprofessional central administration.
- I feel that too much time is spent trying to address minor problems at the expense of quality education. There is poor communication between central admin. and the campus teachers. Job opening, board agendas and board minutes are no longer posted at the individual campus. Too much emphasis is placed on athletic and agriculture issues and personnel instead of quality teachers being hired first. Special education programs are not given total support by campus administration.
- The emphasis seems to be primarily on what it takes to get students out of high school rather than on equipping them to have higher

goals. Overall atmosphere is mediocre to below; get required things done-quality doesn't matter. Teachers have been asked to lower expectations to accommodate the student; I would much prefer the approach to be "bring the student up to standard." In all honesty, however, I do believe the state perpetuates this by its evaluating a district on its statistics rather than investigating substance.

- The bilingual department of EISD is in badly need of materials for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grades. If we could find a company that makes books of worksheets (in Spanish) that teach reading and answering the TAAS like questions, we would be better off and more prepared for the 3rd grade TAAS test.
- It seems that Elgin is a school district that spends a lot of time politicking and not getting anywhere. Often teachers are left in the dark for too long and it affects morale. I know of no other district that allows substitutes to fill out performance reviews on classroom teachers and does not allow classroom teachers to review subs! The lack of curriculum guides is atrocious! There were none and even with the hiring of a Director of Curriculum and Instruction we probably won't get any time soon. It seems crazy!
- Some of these questions are hard to answer because they may only pertain to certain situations. I don't like to be critical of our school systems but it has become a stepping stone or personal gain for some of the people involved. I feel that they care more about themselves than the education or the welfare of our students or the district. It has not always been this way.
- Purchase Orders take too long to get approved (2 weeks). Maintenance matters take too long (like repairing a broken air conditioner). High School counselors don't meet the needs of our students. Some classrooms don't have computers.
- Overall I felt at the beginning of the year that this district was on track. Changes initiated by the new superintendent have undermined or destroyed many worthwhile programs as well as causing enormous teacher turnover. This district needs to learn the difference between accomplishment and activity. Thank you for your efforts.
- School board members do not visit school campuses to see what is needed or how things work. Too much emphasis is placed on athletics and a small agriculture program. The special education administration is very supportive. The person in charge of scholarships is very helpful. The people in charge of scheduling and counseling need to take the interest of the students first.
- The superintendent is completely out of touch with the needs and wants of this community. This community is not a rich district. When my children were growing up we did not have much money

to spend on clothes. My boys had worn white T-shirts to school. They were clean and perfectly acceptable. It is insulting to me to hear him say it is not. My children behaved and learned in this district. Their clothing was no deterrent. Bad behavior is a problem, clothing is not.

- I feel we spend too much time teaching a test, the TAAS test. It seems that we stress the kids too much and the parents. Our superintendent plays everything so close to the vest that it borders on dictatorship, and does not use personnel wisely to help in matters. The schools are dirty, and maintenance personnel seem to get angry when they are called on it.
- Continuous changes in policy and administration have had a negative impact upon performance. People are constantly adjusting. Positive changes are occurring, but it is a very slow process, and the children have suffered the consequences.
- Teachers teach what and how they want to. We need someone aligning curriculum and seeing that teachers follow it. I have never been given a curriculum guide and I was told if I wanted a copy of the TEKS, I could look it up on the Internet and get it myself. Usually our district staff development programs seem thrown together at the last minute. I never see anything useful coming out of site-based meetings. Last time I ordered, it took 5 1/2 weeks to get the paperwork processed, before the order went out.
- Many of the questions were very difficult to answer because circumstances vary so much. For example, Math instruction at the middle school is a disgrace, while at the high school it is excellent. Another example is the question about the Fine Arts program. Our band and art programs are excellent, but there is no orchestra or choir, and the drama program seems to have no resources. Of course, there is no suitable place for them to perform.
- Morale is terrible right now because of the political tactics and heavy handedness of the superintendent. I speak as a teacher and as a parent of a high school student. I am very concerned about the future of our schools.
- Special Education is understaffed, one aide in middle school serves three teachers. These classes are too large and grouping cannot take place without an aide. The classes are stuck in a back hall and seldom visited. Children are unrewarded and overlooked.
- Health and life skills have been removed from middle school electives. We should not just be educating for TAAS scores and jobs-but for the whole child-preparing him for life.
- I believe that our superintendent has made very significant strides in improving the quality of education. However, the campus administration is weak. The discipline plan is not followed consistently which makes the teachers unsure of discipline management. Lack of support in discipline issues makes teacher's

jobs exponentially more difficult. With time, I have faith that our superintendent will have this under control.

- Speaking as a high school teacher: Teacher morale is at an all time low. Approximately 40 to 50 percent of EHS teachers will not be back next year. Reason: (1) Student discipline is horrible a) Discipline is not effective, b) Discipline is not applied fairly, c) there are too many loop holes in the system (parent complaints etc.) to let disruptive students "off the hook." (2) The Superintendent is more concerned about dress codes than education. (3) Site Based decision making is a joke! Most site based decisions are overruled by the administration/superintendent (i.e. School calendar, dress code, etc). This would be an excellent school district to work in if: stricter, equal discipline is applied and educational expectations of the students increase.
- There may be a misappropriation of Special Education funds. The Learning Lab is rarely open to our students even though there seems to be adequate staffing.
- There are serious problems with vandalism, drugs, and alcohol and no adequate security. Teachers are spending valuable educational time monitoring halls.
- The dress code and discipline procedures are improperly managed. Half of the staff doesn't enforce the dress code which makes it difficult to maintain consistency.
- The new school has taken three plus years to complete which must be costing the taxpayers a lot of money. This delay has created serious overcrowding in classrooms. Teachers can't use their rooms during planning times. We don't have a workroom. We spend our conference time in the "lounge" which is overcrowded and noisy.
- I'm not sure why we are spending so much money on the new library, buying top of the line products, yet we have to take old furniture (desks, chairs, etc.) to put in the new school.
- Elgin ISD needs a shot of self-confidence. It could be on the brink of becoming a great district. There is mistrust and suspicion between staff, central administration and the school board.
- My personal opinion is that many students come to high school without enough preparation. We can set high standards but they are inconceivable to several students who have been coddled along the way. Thank you!
- Inconsistent scheduling at the middle school causes continuity problems in classroom attendance. Students are pulled out of electives to complete work for core classes. This makes the classes have a less important impact on the students.
- The business office takes too long to process a purchase order, three weeks to get pencils and supplies is not acceptable.
- Elgin offers a friendly atmosphere. Suggestions for improvement are: Hold teachers accountable for coming to work regularly and

teaching rather than showing excess videos, etc. Have a specific curriculum for each grade level, but minimize the TAAS test which now is taught exclusively through April. Custodians must keep things clean (we have a very laid-back administration) and wear uniforms. We need more oversight to assure that halls are safe, teachers are showing up for duty, lesson plans are real (not just required education-talk) We don't need more money-much is wasted on new expensive gimmicks promoted by salespeople posing as educators. Pay those aides who are competent and hard working more money, they deserve it. District hiring should be based on qualifications, not internal politics.

- Not enough long-term growth projections
- Overcrowded conditions
- Lunch starts at 10:15 ends at 1:00
- Lack of communication from administration fuels the rumor mill.
- Poor quality teachers-not helped or terminated
- Good teachers not rewarded or recognized
- I agree with dress code, but it has been a royal pain all year! Need to modify.
- We have a nice computer lab at the high school, but we need a teacher in there all day, to help kids and teachers with them.
- Not enough computers in classrooms for students to use daily.
- Our campus at high school needs leadership. There is no discipline. We have 10-15 kids who run this school. Teachers have no support. See #77! Our education on campus has suffered because of this. Staff #1 gripe-No Discipline.
- Superintendent is trying but gets knocked down by the community and school board.
- We need a hard-nosed disciplinarian in this district. There are not strong enough consequences for misconduct.
- I feel the district spends too much money on administrative things rather than educational use. They (Administration) have made purchasing a nightmare for teachers.
- Overall Elgin ISD attempts to provide a good education for its students. There is a lack of technology in the classroom and technology training for teachers. Our high school campus administrators do not follow the discipline plan, and discipline students inequitably, thereby creating and fostering a low moral among its staff. The district is making strides in improving the workplace and atmosphere.
- High School- There is an extremely high teacher-turnover ratio due primarily to below par leadership, poor discipline management at the administrative level, and an acceptance of general mediocrity.
- We need help. If situations do not change soon, for the better, I am afraid of what the outcome could be.
- Please see to it that our problems are addressed.

- Dress code is insane to enforce!! Teachers spend too much time doing that
- No place to work on preparatory time, no high school teacher is in their room during conference time.
- Almost no time is given to teachers to meet departmentally or campus wide for meetings-such time is wasted with meaningless in-service!!
- More emphasis is placed on "duties" than competent teaching-Both incompetent and teachers who do everything by the book are treated the same-so where is the reward for doing well!!!!
- Finally someone wants my opinion! This will be my last year at Elgin ISD. The main reason I am leaving is that our administration makes it impossible to teach our students. At the high school we have a principal that will not stand up for the teachers or students. He cannot make decisions on his own and is constantly contradicting himself. Our superintendent does not care about the needs of our students-he has not attended many of the important functions-his goal is to get into politics -he is using Elgin to get to Austin. If these two men were to leave things would get better! THANK you for trying to help the teachers make a difference.
- Our superintendent thinks his opinion is the only one that counts. He feels that the board will do whatever he asks without question and that is pretty much what happens. Our children's education is not what counts to him. He is only interested in his own accomplishments!
- Our biggest problem is the micro-management that blatantly admits it does not need or want teacher involvement. Hence decisions are made without staff and students seeing any big picture.
- Financially the PO system is so cumbersome it is difficult to plan any events and have available funds in a reasonable time.
- This negative scoring is a valid representation of how I see where EISD stands currently. It will take an act of God to change the administration to hear what we "workers" need, desire and suggest.

Appendix C

PRINCIPAL, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL AND SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY AND COMMENTS

Demographic Data

TOTAL RESPONSES AS OF July 12, 2000	15
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Circle Answer

1.	Gender (Optional)	Male	Female	No Response
		20%	80%	0%

2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
		80%	7%	7%	0%	7%

3.	How long have you been employed by Elgin ISD?	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	No Response
		0%	20%	13%	13%	7%	47%

4.	Are you a(n):	a. principal or asst. principal	b. professional support staff (i.e., nurse, librarian, counselor, etc.)	No Response
		0%	0%	0%

5.	What grades are taught in your school?				
	Pre-Kindergarten	Kindergarten	First	Second	Third
	27%	27%	27%	27%	27%
	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth
	13%	13%	20%	20%	20%
	Ninth	Tenth	Eleventh	Twelfth	
	33%	33%	33%	33%	

A. District Organization and Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	27%	33%	27%	7%	7%	0%

2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	20%	33%	20%	20%	7%	0%
3.	School board members understand their role as policymakers and stay out of the day-to-day management of the district.	7%	60%	13%	7%	13%	0%
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	7%	47%	13%	7%	27%	0%
5.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	20%	33%	13%	13%	20%	0%
6.	Central administration is efficient.	20%	33%	7%	20%	20%	0%
7.	Central administration supports the educational process.	13%	47%	13%	13%	13%	0%
8.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	13%	47%	27%	7%	7%	0%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Survey Questions	Strongly	Agree	No	Disagree	Strongly	No
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		Agree		Opinion		Disagree	Response
9.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	27%	33%	7%	20%	13%	0%
10.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	13%	47%	20%	13%	7%	0%
11.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	7%	47%	20%	13%	7%	7%
12.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	7%	53%	13%	20%	0%	7%
13.	The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	7%	53%	20%	7%	7%	7%
14.	The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	0%	27%	47%	20%	0%	7%
15.	The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	0%	33%	33%	20%	0%	13%
16.	The district has effective						

	educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	20%	60%	7%	7%	0%	7%
	b) Writing	7%	67%	7%	13%	0%	7%
	c) Mathematics	7%	60%	7%	20%	0%	7%
	d) Science	7%	60%	7%	13%	0%	13%
	e) English or Language Arts	7%	73%	7%	7%	0%	7%
	f) Computer Instruction	27%	47%	7%	13%	0%	7%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	7%	60%	7%	13%	0%	13%
	h) Fine Arts	20%	40%	7%	20%	0%	13%
	i) Physical Education	27%	60%	7%	0%	0%	7%
	j) Business Education	13%	40%	20%	7%	7%	13%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	7%	33%	13%	20%	0%	27%
	l) Foreign Language	7%	53%	7%	0%	0%	33%
17.	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a) Library Service	7%	47%	27%	13%	0%	7%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	27%	47%	13%	7%	7%	0%

c) Special Education	33%	53%	7%	0%	0%	7%
d) Head Start and Even Start programs	20%	33%	27%	7%	0%	13%
e) Dyslexia program	0%	0%	33%	47%	0%	20%
f) Student mentoring program	0%	20%	27%	27%	13%	13%
g) Advanced placement program	7%	20%	27%	27%	0%	20%
h) Literacy program	0%	7%	40%	13%	0%	40%
i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	0%	40%	20%	20%	13%	7%
j) Summer school programs	7%	47%	20%	20%	0%	7%
k) Alternative education programs	7%	40%	20%	13%	7%	13%
l) "English as a second language" program	7%	47%	13%	13%	7%	13%
m) Career counseling program	20%	53%	7%	20%	0%	0%
n) College counseling program	7%	20%	13%	27%	13%	20%
o) Counseling the parents of students	0%	27%	13%	27%	20%	13%
n) Dron out	0%	20%	13%	27%	20%	20%

	prevention program						
18.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	7%	27%	7%	33%	13%	13%
19.	Teacher turnover is low.	0%	40%	13%	27%	20%	0%
20.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	7%	53%	13%	13%	13%	0%
21.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	0%	13%	33%	40%	13%	0%
22.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	7%	33%	33%	13%	13%	0%
23.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	13%	40%	7%	27%	13%	0%
24.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	20%	47%	7%	7%	20%	0%
25.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	20%	47%	13%	7%	13%	0%

C. Personnel

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
26.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	7%	20%	7%	40%	27%	0%
27.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	7%	20%	27%	27%	13%	7%
28.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	13%	27%	33%	20%	7%	0%
29.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	13%	27%	33%	13%	13%	0%
30.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	13%	33%	7%	33%	13%	0%
31.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	7%	40%	13%	27%	13%	0%
32.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	13%	40%	27%	7%	13%	0%
33.	The district rewards competence	7%	20%	13%	33%	27%	0%

	and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.						
34.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	0%	47%	20%	20%	13%	0%
35.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	0%	47%	33%	13%	7%	0%
36.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	20%	53%	7%	13%	7%	0%

D. Community Involvement

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
37.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	20%	40%	13%	20%	7%	0%
38.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	0%	27%	7%	60%	7%	0%
39.	District	20%	67%	7%	7%	0%	0%

	facilities are open for community use.						
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E. Facilities Use and Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
40.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	13%	40%	7%	27%	7%	7%
41.	Schools are clean.	7%	33%	0%	47%	13%	0%
42.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	7%	33%	0%	53%	7%	0%
43.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	7%	33%	0%	53%	7%	0%
44.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	13%	53%	7%	20%	0%	7%

F. Financial Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
45.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of	7%	40%	13%	40%	0%	0%

	principals and teachers.						
46.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	0%	27%	40%	33%	0%	0%
47.	Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	7%	40%	27%	20%	7%	0%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
48.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	20%	40%	7%	27%	7%	0%
49.	Purchasing acquires high quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	7%	53%	7%	27%	0%	7%
50.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	20%	33%	0%	27%	20%	0%
51.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and	13%	27%	7%	53%	0%	0%

	equipment.						
52.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	20%	47%	20%	13%	0%	0%
53.	Textbooks are in good shape.	20%	33%	27%	20%	0%	0%
54.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	20%	40%	27%	13%	0%	0%

H. Food Services

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
55.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	7%	47%	7%	27%	13%	0%
56.	Food is served warm.	7%	60%	13%	20%	0%	0%
57.	Students have enough time to eat.	20%	47%	7%	20%	7%	0%
58.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	13%	67%	0%	13%	7%	0%
59.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	7%	53%	27%	13%	0%	0%
60.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	13%	73%	0%	7%	7%	0%

61.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	27%	47%	7%	20%	0%	0%
62.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	27%	60%	7%	7%	0%	0%

I. Transportation

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
63.	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	7%	60%	7%	20%	7%	0%
64.	The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	20%	67%	13%	0%	0%	0%
65.	Buses arrive and leave on time.	13%	67%	13%	7%	0%	0%
66.	Adding or modifying a route for a student is easy to accomplish.	20%	33%	40%	7%	0%	0%

J. Safety and Security

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
67.	Students feel safe and secure at school.	20%	73%	7%	0%	0%	0%
68.	School disturbances are infrequent.	20%	73%	7%	0%	0%	0%

69.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	20%	53%	7%	20%	0%	0%
70.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	20%	27%	7%	40%	7%	0%
71.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	20%	33%	0%	40%	0%	7%
72.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	20%	20%	27%	13%	0%	20%
73.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	20%	20%	33%	7%	0%	20%
74.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	33%	67%	0%	0%	0%	0%
75.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	13%	53%	7%	20%	7%	0%
76.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	7%	47%	13%	27%	7%	0%

K. Computers and Technology

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
77.	Students regularly use computers.	27%	67%	0%	7%	0%	0%
78.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	27%	53%	0%	20%	0%	0%
79.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	33%	53%	13%	0%	0%	0%
80.	The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	27%	60%	7%	7%	0%	0%
81.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	20%	53%	20%	7%	0%	0%
82.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	20%	47%	7%	27%	0%	0%
83.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	33%	47%	7%	7%	0%	7%

Principal Survey Verbatim Comments

- Need more choices for the female work-bound students
- Few students reach 9th grade with appropriate math skills for Algebra. Business Education needs more electives, one more teacher and room full of computers.

- Counselors don't have time to "counsel" due to other assignments that are not really counseling related.
- We do not have a computer in every classroom and where there is one in a classroom, it is used by the teacher only in the majority of cases. With the new requirement of a computer technology class for every student, we really need another classroom full of computers.
- This form was received on May 17, 2000. It was due on May 17th, example of our efficiency.
- Educational performance in this district has suffered. Central office in last year and a half has increased in number. No clear leadership.
- I hesitated to fill this survey out because it does not truly show the quality of education the children are receiving. At the primary and elementary level the teachers, administrators and support staff devote countless extra hours and energy and frequently their own money to the children. I am not as familiar with the middle and high school faculty, but I am certain the quality is as high.
- I feel privileged to be a part of such a caring school district. Our superintendent, principals, teachers and support staff are all great people. Our students are good kids!
- I love working for Elgin ISD. The support that I receive is great!! Only wish the superintendent was more available.
- I would like to see a good strong drug prevention program at high school and middle school. I would like for the high school counselor to be able to counsel, and hire a clerk to do scheduling.
- The administration does not respond to the needs and request of the support staff. Paraprofessional staff is under-paid in comparison to the responsibilities on their job description. Also, there is no communication between central office and campuses. Staff is notified of information through the local paper. At times, subject matters are not published and the staff is left for speculation. I hope this information will help improve Elgin ISD.
- Entirely too much nepotism in this school district. Board members appear to have their own agenda. Lack of respect for individual employees-employees are "used" to suit the district. Very insulting letter of "intent to rehire" sent to many employees. Extreme emphasis put on "special" students and not enough on average or gifted students.
- I think the state has placed too much emphasis on TAAS. Students need a well rounded education. Because of funding tied to performance scores on the TAAS test, school districts are afraid of losing funding. We are seeing a change of reducing health courses, drama, home economics, and other elective courses cut out of programs offered to students.

- EHS should be a recognized school-its no-due to lack of teacher/student relationship development in the classroom, no mentoring programs, and inadequate resources for at risk and minority students. In addition teachers at EHS have poor classroom management skills which translates into disruptive behavior and students getting into trouble for minor infractions.

Appendix D

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF

CAMPUS SURVEY AND COMMENTS

Demographic Data

TOTAL RESPONSES AS OF June 7, 2000	35
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Circle Answer

1.	Gender (Optional)	Male	Female	No Response
		14%	77%	9%

2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	No Response
		43%	6%	26%	0%	9%	17%

3.	How long have you been employed by Elgin ISD?	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	No Response
		0%	23%	11%	3%	9%	54%

4.	Are you a(n):	a. administrator	b. clerical staffer	c. support staffer (i.e., transportation, food services, etc.)	No Response
		20%	71%	0%	9%

5.	How long have you been employed in this capacity by Elgin ISD?	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	No Response
		0%	23%	11%	3%	9%	54%

A. District Organization & Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	6%	34%	40%	14%	3%	3%
2. School board members listen to the opinions	3%	29%	34%	26%	3%	6%

	and desires of others.						
3.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	9%	23%	43%	11%	9%	6%
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	9%	31%	37%	11%	9%	3%
5.	Central administration is efficient.	3%	31%	31%	26%	6%	3%
6.	Central administration supports the educational process.	3%	31%	49%	11%	3%	3%
7.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	3%	26%	46%	20%	3%	3%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
8.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	11%	46%	17%	11%	9%	6%
9.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that	6%	34%	40%	9%	3%	9%

	they believe are most effective.						
10.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	6%	26%	40%	14%	6%	9%
11.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	3%	29%	43%	11%	3%	11%
12.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	3%	43%	23%	17%	3%	11%
	b) Writing	3%	40%	23%	17%	3%	14%
	c) Mathematics	3%	40%	23%	17%	6%	11%
	d) Science	9%	37%	37%	11%	0%	6%
	e) English or Language Arts	9%	31%	40%	14%	0%	6%
	f) Computer Instruction	11%	34%	37%	11%	0%	6%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	6%	29%	40%	14%	0%	11%
	h) Fine Arts	0%	26%	57%	6%	3%	9%
	i) Physical Education	11%	34%	37%	9%	0%	9%
	j) Business Education	9%	26%	46%	9%	0%	11%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	11%	37%	37%	9%	0%	6%
	l) Foreign	3%	26%	51%	9%	0%	11%

	Language						
13.	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a) Library Service	9%	31%	49%	3%	0%	9%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	11%	23%	46%	3%	6%	11%
	c) Special Education	9%	31%	34%	14%	0%	11%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	3%	37%	40%	9%	0%	11%
	e) Dyslexia program	0%	9%	63%	9%	6%	14%
	f) Student mentoring program	3%	29%	49%	9%	3%	9%
	g) Advanced placement program	3%	31%	49%	3%	3%	11%
	h) Literacy program	3%	23%	51%	3%	3%	17%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	3%	31%	43%	9%	6%	9%
	j) Summer school programs	3%	43%	34%	6%	3%	11%
	k) Alternative education programs	6%	40%	43%	3%	0%	9%
	l) "English as a second	3%	31%	40%	9%	6%	11%

	language" program						
	m) Career counseling program	3%	31%	37%	11%	9%	9%
	n) College counseling program	3%	31%	37%	14%	6%	9%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	3%	29%	37%	11%	11%	9%
	p) Drop out prevention program	3%	29%	40%	14%	3%	11%
14.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	11%	40%	31%	14%	0%	3%
15.	Teacher turnover is low.	0%	26%	26%	23%	17%	9%
16.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	3%	11%	34%	31%	11%	9%
17.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	0%	20%	37%	26%	9%	9%
18.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	0%	6%	37%	34%	14%	9%
19.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	0%	17%	46%	26%	0%	11%
20.	All schools have equal	0%	46%	37%	9%	0%	9%

	access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.						
21.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	0%	26%	26%	31%	9%	9%
22.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	3%	49%	20%	11%	9%	9%
23.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	6%	29%	37%	14%	6%	9%

C. Personnel

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
24.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	0%	6%	20%	43%	23%	9%
25.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	3%	29%	34%	14%	9%	11%
26.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	0%	14%	29%	37%	9%	11%
27.	The district successfully projects future	0%	11%	37%	37%	6%	9%

	staffing needs.						
28.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	3%	9%	40%	29%	11%	9%
29.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	0%	17%	40%	23%	6%	14%
30.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	3%	23%	43%	9%	11%	11%
31.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	0%	6%	37%	29%	23%	6%
32.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	0%	29%	40%	17%	6%	9%
33.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	3%	29%	40%	17%	3%	9%
34.	The district's health	9%	57%	14%	11%	3%	6%

	insurance package meets my needs.						
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D. Community Involvement

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
35.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	3%	29%	43%	14%	6%	6%
36.	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	0%	11%	49%	26%	9%	6%
37.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	0%	6%	31%	51%	6%	6%
38.	District facilities are open for community use.	9%	40%	34%	11%	0%	6%

E. Facilities Use and Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
39.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility	3%	11%	40%	40%	0%	6%

	planning.						
40.	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	0%	6%	54%	29%	6%	6%
41.	Schools are clean.	6%	57%	6%	17%	3%	11%
42.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	6%	49%	14%	20%	6%	6%
43.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	3%	37%	9%	37%	9%	6%
44.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	3%	66%	14%	6%	6%	6%

F. Financial Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
45.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	0%	26%	63%	6%	0%	6%
46.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	0%	31%	51%	11%	0%	6%

47.	The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	3%	26%	46%	11%	9%	6%
48.	Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	3%	23%	66%	3%	0%	6%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
49.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	3%	49%	40%	3%	0%	6%
50.	Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	0%	49%	43%	0%	3%	6%
51.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	0%	20%	57%	17%	0%	6%
52.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	0%	29%	57%	9%	0%	6%
53.	Students are	3%	37%	37%	9%	9%	6%

	issued textbooks in a timely manner.						
54.	Textbooks are in good shape.	3%	31%	40%	17%	3%	6%
55.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources for students.	3%	49%	34%	6%	3%	6%

H. Safety and Security

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
56.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	3%	31%	23%	34%	3%	6%
57.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	3%	17%	20%	37%	17%	6%
58.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	3%	20%	20%	46%	6%	6%
59.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	3%	43%	34%	6%	3%	11%
60.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	3%	31%	37%	11%	3%	14%
61.	A good working arrangement	3%	63%	23%	6%	0%	6%

	exists between the local law enforcement and the district.						
62.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	0%	26%	23%	29%	14%	9%

I. Computers and Technology

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
63.	Students regularly use computers.	0%	74%	17%	0%	0%	9%
64.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	0%	63%	23%	6%	3%	6%
65.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	0%	43%	34%	14%	0%	9%
66.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	0%	54%	29%	11%	0%	6%
67.	The district meets students needs in computer fundamentals.	3%	43%	40%	9%	0%	6%
68.	The district meets students needs in advanced	3%	43%	37%	9%	3%	6%

	computer skills.						
69.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	0%	51%	40%	3%	0%	6%

District Administrative and Support Staff Survey - Campus Verbatim Comments

- Elgin ISD is working hard to meet the needs of a diverse and growing community.
- I think our Administration is the main problem, everyone in the Administration office is paid a lot more than everyone else. They are overpaid!
- As a parent of a senior, I was very disappointed that the counselors did not work more closely with students in an attempt to help them get scholarships to universities. I would like to see class requirements for seniors that entail applying for scholarships.
- Overall EISD provides a quality education for students and a good working environment for staff. I do feel, however, that administrator salaries are not equitable. I also feel that the staff at Central Administration does not always (often) think things through logically. Often unnecessary requests are made and communication is not always timely.
- This place is like all other places I've worked. Some employees are competent, others not so. Some are lazy, others energetic. All in all it is probably as good a school system as any other.
- I feel our district is improving every year. We are setting goals and watching them become reality. We have a few area's that need working on, they have been identified, and we are attempting to provide the needed updates.
- I know surveys and investigations are good overall standards on which to base objectives and overall judgment of competency as they interrupt our days and virtually waste our time-I hope you will allow us to turn back to our major role and goal-education our children.
- Teacher's are having to baby-sit to much of class time. Parents need to be more involved in there kids. Some teacher's don't need to be in a class room. More teacher's need to show respect to students to receive-respect. Students that misbehave on the bus- Don't need to be able to ride the bus.
- Some of the main objectives that I see in this district are, that so many of our teachers, administrators, and office personnel are only working in this district for just the pay check. The main reason

they are here is to help and work with the children to get a good education; that is what it should be. I'm not saying that everyone has a problem, but there are too many like that. Another thing I see, is we are getting to be top heavy in administration, too many administrators, and they are making too much salary. Our business office is way out of line. They are not friendly to the people that work in this district and a lot of the time they treat the public the same. In this new district situation most of people do not know when they are eligible to vote.

- Talk to some of the teachers who are leaving our district. I know the number of teachers leaving is the highest ever.
- Counseling office does a poor job of meeting students' needs. Parents and students at the High School level feel their needs and communication are not properly taken care of. In my opinion, positions should be filled with caring and efficient counselors, who put the needs of the students first.
- As a parent, I have great concerns regarding the counselors performance at the high school. There seems to be a lack of common courtesy in returning phone calls and speaking with parents. As a parent, I have concerns regarding the general management of the district: One point that stands out is the salaries of top positions. Salaries in general are low for everyone else and that fact definitely effects the performance of all concerned. There are some good points in this district; however, the bad are outweighing them.

Appendix E

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF

CENTRAL SURVEY AND COMMENTS

Demographic Data

TOTAL RESPONSES AS OF June 7, 2000	8
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Circle Answer

1.	Gender (Optional)	Male	Female	No Responses
		25%	63%	13%

2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	No Responses
		50%	0%	25%	0%	0%	25%

3.	How long have you been employed by Elgin ISD?	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	No Responses
		0%	38%	13%	0%	0%	50%

4.	Are you a(n):	a. administrator	b. clerical staffer	c. support staffer (i.e., transportation, food services, etc.)	No Responses
		25%	63%	13%	0%

5.	How long have you been employed in this capacity by Elgin ISD?	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	No Responses
		0%	13%	13%	0%	0%	75%

A. District Organization & Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	0%	50%	38%	0%	13%	0%
2. School board members listen to the opinions	0%	63%	13%	25%	0%	0%

	and desires of others.						
3.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	13%	75%	13%	0%	0%	0%
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	0%	63%	38%	0%	0%	0%
5.	Central administration is efficient.	0%	88%	13%	0%	0%	0%
6.	Central administration supports the educational process.	13%	75%	0%	0%	0%	13%
7.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	0%	75%	0%	25%	0%	0%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
8.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	63%	38%	0%	0%	0%	0%
9.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that	0%	50%	38%	13%	0%	0%

	they believe are most effective.						
10.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	0%	50%	38%	0%	0%	13%
11.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	13%	50%	25%	0%	0%	13%
12.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	0%	75%	13%	0%	0%	13%
	b) Writing	0%	75%	13%	0%	0%	13%
	c) Mathematics	0%	63%	13%	13%	0%	13%
	d) Science	13%	50%	25%	0%	0%	13%
	e) English or Language Arts	13%	50%	25%	0%	0%	13%
	f) Computer Instruction	13%	50%	25%	0%	0%	13%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	0%	50%	25%	0%	0%	25%
	h) Fine Arts	0%	50%	38%	0%	0%	13%
	i) Physical Education	0%	63%	25%	0%	0%	13%
	j) Business Education	13%	50%	25%	0%	0%	13%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	25%	50%	25%	0%	0%	0%
	l) Foreign	0%	38%	50%	0%	0%	13%

	Language						
13.	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a) Library Service	0%	50%	25%	13%	0%	13%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	13%	75%	13%	0%	0%	0%
	c) Special Education	13%	75%	13%	0%	0%	0%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	0%	63%	25%	0%	0%	13%
	e) Dyslexia program	0%	25%	38%	25%	0%	13%
	f) Student mentoring program	0%	38%	50%	13%	0%	0%
	g) Advanced placement program	0%	25%	50%	13%	0%	13%
	h) Literacy program	0%	25%	38%	25%	0%	13%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	25%	25%	38%	13%	0%	0%
	j) Summer school programs	0%	50%	25%	25%	0%	0%
	k) Alternative education programs	0%	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%
	l) "English as a second	0%	63%	38%	0%	0%	0%

	language" program						
	m) Career counseling program	25%	25%	25%	0%	0%	25%
	n) College counseling program	13%	13%	38%	13%	0%	25%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	13%	25%	38%	13%	0%	13%
	p) Drop out prevention program	13%	25%	38%	13%	0%	13%
14.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	13%	25%	38%	13%	0%	13%
15.	Teacher turnover is low.	0%	0%	50%	38%	13%	0%
16.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	0%	38%	38%	13%	0%	13%
17.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	0%	25%	50%	25%	0%	0%
18.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	0%	0%	50%	38%	0%	13%
19.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	0%	25%	38%	13%	0%	25%
20.	All schools have equal	0%	38%	50%	0%	13%	0%

	access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.						
21.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	0%	50%	25%	13%	0%	13%
22.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	0%	38%	50%	0%	0%	13%
23.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	0%	13%	50%	0%	13%	25%

C. Personnel

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
24.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	0%	38%	0%	63%	0%	0%
25.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	0%	38%	25%	13%	25%	0%
26.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	0%	38%	25%	13%	0%	25%
27.	The district successfully projects future	0%	63%	13%	13%	0%	13%

	staffing needs.						
28.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	0%	75%	0%	13%	0%	13%
29.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	13%	25%	13%	38%	13%	0%
30.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	0%	13%	38%	50%	0%	0%
31.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	0%	25%	25%	25%	13%	13%
32.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	0%	25%	25%	38%	0%	13%
33.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	0%	75%	13%	0%	0%	13%
34.	The district's health	0%	63%	13%	25%	0%	0%

	insurance package meets my needs.						
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D. Community Involvement

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
35.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	0%	88%	13%	0%	0%	0%
36.	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	13%	38%	25%	25%	0%	0%
37.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	0%	25%	25%	25%	0%	25%
38.	District facilities are open for community use.	25%	75%	0%	0%	0%	0%

E. Facilities Use and Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
39.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility	0%	75%	0%	0%	0%	25%

	planning.						
40.	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	0%	38%	38%	13%	0%	13%
41.	Schools are clean.	0%	75%	0%	0%	13%	13%
42.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	0%	75%	0%	13%	0%	13%
43.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	0%	75%	0%	0%	0%	25%
44.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	38%	50%	0%	0%	0%	13%

F. Financial Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
45.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	0%	63%	13%	13%	0%	13%
46.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	0%	38%	25%	13%	13%	13%

47.	The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	0%	50%	13%	0%	25%	13%
48.	Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	0%	63%	13%	0%	13%	13%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
49.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	0%	63%	13%	13%	0%	13%
50.	Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	0%	75%	13%	0%	0%	13%
51.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	0%	50%	13%	13%	13%	13%
52.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	0%	50%	13%	0%	25%	13%
53.	Students are	0%	38%	38%	0%	0%	25%

	issued textbooks in a timely manner.						
54.	Textbooks are in good shape.	0%	25%	63%	0%	0%	13%
55.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources for students.	0%	38%	50%	0%	0%	13%

H. Safety and Security

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
56.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	0%	13%	38%	50%	0%	0%
57.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	0%	0%	13%	88%	0%	0%
58.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	0%	13%	25%	63%	0%	0%
59.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	0%	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%
60.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	0%	25%	75%	0%	0%	0%
61.	A good working arrangement	0%	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%

	exists between the local law enforcement and the district.						
62.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	0%	38%	38%	25%	0%	0%

I. Computers and Technology

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
63.	Students regularly use computers.	0%	63%	0%	13%	0%	25%
64.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	0%	75%	0%	13%	0%	13%
65.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	0%	63%	25%	0%	0%	13%
66.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	13%	50%	13%	13%	0%	13%
67.	The district meets students needs in computer fundamentals.	0%	63%	13%	13%	0%	13%
68.	The district meets students needs in advanced	13%	50%	13%	13%	0%	13%

	computer skills.						
69.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	25%	75%	0%	0%	0%	0%

District Administrative and Support Staff Survey - Central Verbatim Comments

- I believe Elgin ISD has come a long way from what it used to be. It meets our students needs and wants in many ways!

Appendix F STUDENT SURVEY

Demographic Data

TOTAL RESPONSES AS OF June 12, 2000: 20

Circle Answer

1.	Gender (Optional)	Male	Female	No Response
		25%	75%	0%

2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	No Response
		50%	15%	30%	5%	0%	0%

3.	What is your classification?	Junior	Senior	No Response
		40%	60%	0%

B. 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.	10%	30%	5%	35%	20%	0%
2.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	0%	55%	30%	5%	10%	0%
3.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	5%	15%	45%	20%	10%	5%
	b) Writing	5%	45%	25%	15%	0%	10%
	c) Mathematics	20%	40%	15%	15%	5%	5%
	d) Science	10%	40%	15%	20%	0%	15%

	e) English or Language Arts	20%	55%	5%	5%	5%	10%
	f) Computer Instruction	35%	45%	10%	5%	0%	5%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	25%	55%	5%	5%	5%	5%
	h) Fine Arts	15%	50%	5%	20%	0%	10%
	i) Physical Education	5%	35%	45%	5%	0%	10%
	j) Business Education	5%	45%	25%	15%	0%	10%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	15%	50%	25%	0%	0%	10%
	l) Foreign Language	10%	45%	15%	15%	0%	15%
4.	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a) Library Service	5%	50%	15%	20%	5%	5%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	10%	55%	15%	10%	5%	5%
	c) Special Education	5%	25%	40%	20%	0%	10%
	d) Student mentoring program	5%	15%	25%	35%	10%	10%
	e) Advanced placement program	15%	70%	5%	5%	0%	5%
	f) Career counseling	20%	20%	15%	25%	10%	10%

	program						
	g) College counseling program	20%	20%	20%	25%	10%	5%
5.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	5%	20%	5%	30%	40%	0%
6.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	5%	45%	5%	30%	15%	0%
7.	The district provides a high quality education.	0%	10%	25%	30%	35%	0%
8.	The district has a high quality of teachers.	10%	15%	10%	45%	20%	0%

C. Facilities Use and Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
9.	Schools are clean.	0%	50%	10%	30%	10%	0%
10.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	0%	40%	20%	25%	15%	0%
11.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	0%	20%	25%	35%	15%	5%
12.	Emergency maintenance is handled timely.	10%	20%	35%	25%	5%	5%

D. Purchasing and Warehousing

Survey Questions	Strongly	Agree	No	Disagree	Strongly	No
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		Agree		Opinion		Disagree	Response
13.	There are enough textbooks in all my classes.	0%	30%	0%	55%	15%	0%
14.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	0%	40%	0%	45%	15%	0%
15.	Textbooks are in good shape.	0%	10%	0%	35%	55%	0%
16.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	5%	50%	20%	10%	15%	0%

E. Food Services

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
17. The school breakfast program is available to all children.	20%	55%	20%	5%	0%	0%
18. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	0%	20%	30%	30%	20%	0%
19. Food is served warm.	0%	55%	5%	35%	5%	0%
20. Students have enough time to eat.	0%	40%	5%	30%	25%	0%
21. Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	5%	50%	20%	20%	5%	0%
22. Students wait	10%	45%	15%	25%	5%	0%

	in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.						
23.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	5%	60%	5%	25%	5%	0%
24.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	35%	50%	5%	5%	5%	0%
25.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	15%	50%	20%	10%	5%	0%

F. Transportation

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
26.	I regularly ride the bus.	10%	5%	5%	25%	30%	25%
27.	The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	10%	0%	40%	0%	5%	45%
28.	The length of my bus ride is reasonable.	10%	0%	25%	5%	15%	45%
29.	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	15%	10%	25%	0%	5%	45%
30.	The bus stop near my house is safe.	15%	10%	20%	5%	5%	45%
31.	The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	20%	10%	20%	5%	0%	45%
32.	Buses arrive	5%	10%	25%	5%	10%	45%

	and leave on time.						
33.	Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	5%	10%	25%	5%	10%	45%
34.	Buses seldom break down.	0%	0%	40%	10%	5%	45%
35.	Buses are clean.	5%	5%	25%	10%	10%	45%
36.	Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	10%	15%	25%	5%	0%	45%

G. Safety and Security

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
37.	I feel safe and secure at school.	10%	60%	15%	10%	5%	0%
38.	School disturbances are infrequent.	20%	35%	5%	20%	20%	0%
39.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	25%	50%	10%	10%	5%	0%
40.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	10%	20%	10%	40%	20%	0%
41.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	10%	15%	15%	30%	30%	0%
42.	Security personnel have a good working	5%	45%	35%	5%	0%	10%

	relationship with principals and teachers.						
43.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	5%	20%	30%	20%	15%	10%
44.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	5%	55%	25%	5%	5%	5%
45.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	0%	15%	5%	30%	50%	0%
46.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	5%	15%	30%	40%	10%	0%

H. 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.	5%	20%	10%	45%	20%	0%
48.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	5%	40%	15%	30%	10%	0%
49.	Computers are	10%	55%	5%	25%	5%	0%

	new enough to be useful for student instruction.						
50.	The district offers enough classes in computer fundamentals.	15%	40%	5%	20%	20%	0%
51.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	10%	45%	10%	30%	5%	0%
52.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	25%	45%	5%	20%	5%	0%

Student Survey Verbatim Comments

- Education is not important to many students in the high school due to no parent involvement. There should be more community things for families.
- I think Elgin could do a much better job on teaching instead of worrying about who is in dress code and who is not. The district needs to concentrate on teaching the students instead of smaller problems.
- Our school is not a very good school. They focus more on our dress code rule than anything else. Sports are a big deal at Elgin High School and most of the players get away with whatever they want.
- I think our school needs better teachers and a better principal. Thank you.
- I don't think students of Elgin High School should have to have a dress code. Because you go to school to learn not to put on a show.
- I want to elaborate on my responses to Section A questions 7 and 8:
 - #7 The district provides a high quality education to those who work for it, and who get the right teachers and classes.
 - #8 The district has a few very high quality teachers. However, there are a couple of very low-quality teachers

(I'm thinking of Ms. Collins in particular) and lot of very average-quality teachers.

- Section F #45: Students are punished too harshly for being out of dress code because the dress code is ridiculous.
- We need better access to computers.
- Elgin has been a fun place to go to school. I have had great teachers (and some not so great ones). The district needs to promote school spirit more. Many of the problems (people) begin at the middle school where high standards are not required.
- The dress code shouldn't be that big of a deal. We can learn without our shirt being tucked in. Nobody cares whether or not a guy has an earring- People shouldn't be taken out of their classes and put in ISS or AEP just because they don't have a belt or sleeves or a collar.
- Overall, there are a large number of teachers that continually do a wonderful job in both teaching and mentoring. I think one goal of Elgin ISD should be to recruit more teachers that fit that particular description.
- The educational performance of our school is definitely lower than that of surrounding schools. Recently our superintendent was approved for a \$10,000 raise. My question to you is how can this happen when we have barely enough books for a class set in some classes and in others we have worked off of copied pages for weeks on end? Is it more important to keep this unworthy superintendent than it is to concentrate on the important matters? Our TAAS scores have lowered since this man has been given control. Our motto is "students first". This is not the case, if it was, honor students and other peers would not be pulled from class because of minor violations of our outlandish dress code. We are placed in disciplinary settings for not having a shirt tucked in or a belt on. For these reasons our educational performance can't be fully evaluated.
- I find the dress code policy to be concocted by close-minded officials. The policy which is made to limit class room disruption and help students excel is doing the opposite. By fretting over such petty things, students end up sitting in ISS and being yanked from class, disrupting the flow more then having them sit there would. I also find the level of education is way below average seeing as how I just transferred from the Austin ISD. The Advanced Program (in Elgin) courses are at a level of a normal class in Austin ISD.
- I love this school but, the school needs more classes that have to do with the students future. We don't have enough teachers and the teachers we do have are not prepared for the class. Some don't know what there are doing. Some teachers are forced to teach another class because of the fact that there are not enough teachers.

- I feel that at Elgin ISD should offer more programs such as ROTC, etc. They should offer more computer programs, to learn how to use one. New schools should be built when expected, no more delays.
- I believe Elgin High School does a good job in meeting the educational needs of most students. However, I feel uncomfortable throughout the day on account of the dress code. I have a conflictual attitude towards most, if not all, the administration, I believe it is not bettering our education. I'm not against the dress code, in fact I agree with having one to promote the physical appearance of our school. But, at this point, I think the one being enforced is too strict. Half the time I am concentrating on my clothing rather than my education. In Texas, it is necessary to wear loose clothing (untucked shirts & shorts) in order to stay cool. It is difficult following such a strict dress code and concentrate on such demanding AP classes. I would strongly recommend revising the dress code to fit our needs in a better manner. How does tucking in shirts and belts effect our education? I personally have only seen it effect the students in a negative way turning those students who choose to follow the rules into those who can't quite meet the dress code rules making it seem as though they are bad children.