LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

April 12, 2000

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

Ladies and Gentlemen:

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

This review is intended to help AISD hold the line on costs, streamline operations and improve services to ensure that more of every education dollar goes directly into the classroom where it belongs. To aid in this task, the Comptroller's office contracted with Deloitte & Touche.

We have made a number of recommendations to improve AISD's efficiency. We have also highlighted a number of "best practices" in district operations--model programs and services provided by AISD's administrators, teachers and staff. This report outlines 163 detailed recommendations that could save AISD more than $70 million over the next five years, while reinvesting nearly $13 million to improve educational services and other operations. Net savings are estimated to reach more than $57 million.

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

Sincerely,

Carole Keeton Rylander
Comptroller of Public Accounts

Austin Independent School District
April 2000

In July 1999, I announced my intention to have my Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) conduct a management and performance review of the Austin Independent School District (AISD). I was motivated by reports that AISD officials had manipulated student dropout data and the results of the state-mandated student achievement test, the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS); by AISD's lagging student performance; and by its escalating property tax rate.

AISD has the largest percentage of low-performing schools in the state, and the student passing rate on the TAAS test is 10 points below the state average and 11 points below regional averages. In addition, it is one of the wealthiest school districts in Texas, yet it spends just 48 cents of every education dollar on classroom instruction--and that's unacceptable.

TSPR is recommending 163 changes that will, if implemented, save AISD $70 million through 2005.
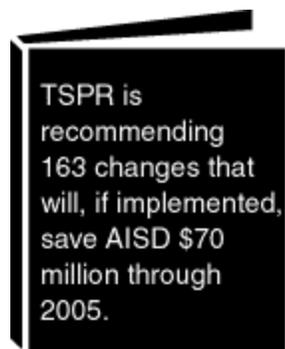
I did not wait for an engraved invitation before auditing this district. I graduated from AISD. My sons graduated from AISD and received an outstanding education. Now, I want my grandchildren and all of the children and grandchildren of the Capital City to have that same opportunity. Implementation of these recommendations will certainly help the district achieve that goal.

As a result of my staff's six-month review, I am prepared today to recommend a 15-percent cut in administration, the sale of the Carruth Administration Building on Sixth Street and subsequent relocation of administrative services to the vastly underused Reagan High School, the reconstitution of the lowest performing schools, and the transformation of Reagan High School into an AISD Regional Magnet Campus.

These are only a few of the 163 recommendations detailed in this review that could save $70 million over the next five years. The report also proposes nearly $13 million in reinvestments to improve the district's educational services and other operations. Net savings are estimated at more than $57 million.

The $57 million in net savings that we have identified in this report and counted as dollar savings are hard, certifiable savings. But there are a number of other recommendations in this report that we did not calculate into cost savings that we believe can help the district make up the difference from the money it will lose due to Chapter 41 and save additional millions each year.

- **Kiddos in Classrooms**--AISD has experienced an anemic average annual growth rate of 1.1 percent in student enrollment over the last five years while the city's population boomed. If AISD's student enrollment had kept pace with Austin's growth, the district would be in better financial shape. Surrounding districts have grown between 5 and 10 percent annually--Round Rock ISD grew nearly 5 percent, Del Valle by more than 6 percent, Pflugerville by more than 8 percent and Leander by 10 percent.

  AISD should develop a plan with the city and county and business community to bring students and families back to the district. A formal strategy should be established to attract new students and an aggressive dropout recovery program should be implemented. Because each new child in school equates to about $5,000 in revenues that the district would be able to keep, a 1 percent increase in enrollment over the current growth rates would generate an additional $3.85 million annually for the district.

- **Mothballing**--We recommend that the district use a balanced approach of school closings, shifts of grade levels to underused facilities, and attendance zone changes to ensure that facilities are used to capacity. Until additional students are recruited to the district,

underutilized schools should be temporarily closed. Each mothballed school could save the district $2 million to $3 million annually.

- **Comprehensive Technology Plan**--The district may be able to free up between $6 million and $8 million annually of the $83 million earmarked for technology upgrades over the next five years by creating a comprehensive plan that identifies all costs and aggressively seeks grant funding. Without a solid plan of action, the district should set aside that money annually so it is not lost.

Carole Keeton Rylander

Carole Keeton Rylander
Comptroller of Public Accounts

Key Findings and Recommendations

During its six-month review, TSPR examined AISD operations and interviewed employees, school board members, teachers, students, parents, and community and business leaders. TSPR also held public forums at 10 district high schools, hosted 12 focus groups with community members and district stakeholders, and conducted written and telephone surveys.

Major proposals

District Organization and Management

- *Reduce central administration staff by 15 percent.* AISD's central administration budget has grown by 22 percent since 1996-97 while student enrollment grew by only 4.6 percent. By initiating a reduction in force of 15 percent to bring down the number of administrative positions specifically assigned to work in the central office, the district can redirect resources into direct classroom instruction. A 15 percent reduction in force of central administration would result in a five-year saving of more than $18 million.
- *Sell AISD central office on Sixth Street and move administrators to Reagan High School.* The boardroom's location and design does not promote public participation or facilitate trustee communication, and parking is limited. By moving the district's entire central administration to Reagan High School, AISD could make more efficient use of an existing facility and bring administrators back to a school environment. As an added benefit, AISD can net nearly $12 million from the sale.
- *Evenly stagger board elections to promote greater continuity in board knowledge and experience.* Currently, six of nine AISD trustees are elected to four-year terms in one election cycle. Two years later, three trustees stand for election. A better system would provide for election of four trustees one election cycle and five the next.
- *Hire a small in-house legal staff to handle routine work.* Compared to other districts of similar size and complexity, AISD's legal expenses are excessive. The district outsourced all of its legal services and spent more than $4 million on legal fees from 1996-97 through 1998-99. A small, in-house legal staff could manage routine legal services and assist with litigation for estimated savings of $1.1 million over five years.

Educational Service Delivery

- *Implement a policy on reconstitution for chronically low-performing schools.* AISD has a higher-percentage of low-performing schools than any district in the state. A school that is rated low-performing based on Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) scores for two years in a row should be placed on probationary status. If the school fails to improve by the end of the third year, the superintendent should order a complete reconstitution of the entire school, a step that brings a new faculty and staff to the campus.
- *Transform Reagan High School into an AISD Regional Magnet Campus.* By relocating the Science Academy from LBJ High School and the Liberal Arts Academy from Johnston High School to Reagan High School and adding a high-tech component, AISD could create an all-magnet campus that would be open to transfer students from surrounding districts.
- *Retain, recruit and reassign highly qualified teachers to low-performing schools.* On average, teachers in low-performing schools have less experience than teachers at exemplary schools. High-quality teachers are needed to teach in low-performing schools. These teachers should receive an incentive to boost their students' performance. AISD should provide a bonus--up to $3,000--to teachers who work at schools that improve from low-performing to acceptable, recognized or exemplary status.

Facilities Use and Management

- *Fill underutilized schools.* Three of AISD's high schools are significantly underused and some middle and junior high schools are underused as well. By using a balanced combination of school closings, shifts of grade levels to underused schools, and attendance zone changes, the district can make better use of its facilities.
- *Use or sell surplus portable buildings.* AISD purchases over $1 million worth of portable buildings each year, and continues to acquire more. If AISD sells its excess portables it can save more than $16 million during the next five years.

Financial Management

- *Require fiscal impact statement showing the effect on cash reserves of each board action.* AISD maintains too little in cash reserves, and its board is not clearly informed of the

impact budget amendments have on these cash reserves. A fiscal impact statement should accompany budget amendments to help board members understand the fiscal impact of their spending.

- *Centralize budget forecasting and tracking to restore accountability.* Prior to the hiring of a new financial officer in January 2000, AISD financial operations were in disarray, with personnel scattered among various departments. The new financial officer should centralize forecasting and tracking of the district's $547 million budget.
- *Outsource district payroll functions.* AISD has a computerized payroll system, but its defects force the district to use yellow paper index cards to manually track payrolls. The district should hire an outside company to process payrolls, a change that would result in more efficient operations.

Computers and Technology

- *Plan for technology.* A 1999 property tax increase generated $16.7 million a year for overhauling and upgrading the district's outdated computer systems for business and student records. A viable plan must be adopted, and the school board must make sure the money is spent only for that purpose.
- *Reorganize technology services.* The reorganization would encompass elimination of some positions, the hiring of students to do some work and the hiring of an outside firm to provide some technical support services.

Safety and Security

- *Report crime on a campus-by-campus basis.* The district needs to meet state requirements for reporting crime on a campus-by-campus basis, and to write campus plans for crime prevention and intervention programs. Sharing this information with teachers, students and parents will enhance efforts to make the campuses safer.
- *Obtain a drug and weapons detection dog.* In past years, AISD has experienced a sharp increase in the number of students referred for disciplinary actions or arrested for offenses related to the sale or use of tobacco, alcohol or other drugs. Since 1997, disciplinary actions increased by 115 percent, and student arrests increased by 154 percent. A drug and weapons detection dog would promote greater

security and serve as a deterrent to alcohol, drugs and weapons possession and use.

Asset and Risk Management

- Upgrade identification and tracking of fixed assets. Twenty-eight district-owned VCRs and a violin were found in a local pawnshop in 1999, yet none of the items had been reported stolen by the district. A thorough fixed-asset system would ensure accountability and protect the district against theft, deterioration or other losses.

Purchasing and Warehouse Services

- Require principals to document and control textbook inventories. The district paid the state $576,000 from 1996-97 through 1998-99 for lost textbooks, and some students began the 1999-2000 school year without enough textbooks. Each principal must be held responsible for textbook inventories at their school to ensure that all students have textbooks and reduce the reimbursement payments to the state.

Transportation

- Evaluate the benefits of outsourcing transportation. AISD contracts for a portion of its transportation operations. AISD should determine whether privatizing its school bus operations would save money.
- Stagger all school hours. Not all campuses stagger bell schedules to allow AISD to use each bus to service an elementary, middle and high school. If all campuses were required to coordinate with the staggered schedule, the district would save an estimated $2.3 million by 2005.
- Improve tracking of where students live. Gathering accurate data on where students live would allow the district to better plan its bus routes, and could add $1.2 million in savings.

Personnel

- Document poor performing employees. Principals and administrators who don't perform well are often transferred, but their shortcomings aren't documented. AISD should document the reasons for involuntary reassignments so that supervisors can counsel or discipline problem employees

and administrators should be held accountable for annual employee evaluations.

- Overhaul personnel policies to conform to the Texas Education Code. The AISD board should overhaul outdated personnel policies to comply with changes in state laws and regulations and to reduce district risks and litigation.
- Limit the number of long-term employment contracts. The district should end the widespread use of long-term employment contracts for positions that are not required by law to be certified.

Food Services

- Evaluate the benefits of outsourcing food services. AISD food services have been losing money since 1997-98. An extensive series of recommendations are made by TSPR to ensure that students receive the highest quality meals at the lowest cost. The district also should evaluate hiring outside contractors to manage food service operations.

Exemplary Programs and Practices

Several AISD programs and practices are models for other school districts.

- AISD operates three magnet schools that provide advanced courses in the liberal arts, science, math and technology subjects. One of the three magnet schools, the LBJ High School Science Academy, graduated 55 of its 120 seniors with national scholarships or national scholarship exam honors in 1999.
- Account for Learning is a locally funded initiative designed to help improve reading and math skills at schools with high proportions of economically disadvantaged students.
- AISD offers the School to Career program that moves high school students from career exploration to career preparation. The program allows students to move from one career path to another as they define their interests and skills.
- The nationally recognized Community Education program has worked for 25 years with local organizations to provide tutors and after-school services for more than one million children and their families.
- Another student service initiative provides a high level of health care to students through partnerships with Travis County, the city of Austin and the Children's Hospital of Austin.
- AISD works with business and community organizations through its nationally recognized Austin Partners in Education program to provide in-kind contributions, financial support and more than 2,600 volunteers to 123 district schools and programs.
- AISD's automated substitute teacher-calling system has proved effective in assuring the availability of qualified substitute teachers. Teachers who will be absent call the system, enter a code, and the system automatically calls qualified substitutes until a replacement is found. The system fills approximately 480 positions daily - 92 percent of requests - with principals arranging coverage for the rest of the absentees.
- AISD hired its new superintendent on a contract that emphasizes specific goals to be met, a feature that will help trustees objectively measure performance.
- In managing its $424 million building and renovation program, the district uses building prototypes to ensure

quality and to control building costs. AISD also uses a novel insurance program, the Rolling Owner Control Insurance Program, that has saved an estimated $3.6 million for the district and expanded the use of small local contractors in its bond construction program.

- Paying off some of its 1996 bonds early saved AISD $4.8 million and demonstrated the district is effectively managing its debt.
- As a partner in the Greater Austin Area Telephone Network, a fiber optics network connecting government and public educational institutions, the district is ensured a state-of-the-art capability of delivering data anywhere within the district.
- AISD has innovative collaborative programs with county law enforcement providing hotline reporting of students engaging in criminal activity through Campus Crime Stoppers, and by providing early response to student absenteeism through the Absent Student Assistance Project. The district also has designated school resource officers who serve as focal points of district safety and security efforts.

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 35 Texas school districts serving 900,000 students, or 23 percent of the state's 3.9 million public school students. More than $406 million in five-year net savings have been identified in the previous 35 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 91 percent of all recommendations are being voluntarily implemented to date in the 26 districts that have had more than one year to implement TSPR recommendations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In July 1999, Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts Carole Keeton Rylander announced her intention to have her nationally recognized Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) team conduct a management and performance review of the Austin Independent School District (AISD). Comptroller Rylander is an AISD graduate, former AISD teacher, former AISD school board president, mother of AISD graduates, and her first granddaughter will enter AISD kindergarten this fall. The Comptroller was motivated by reports that AISD officials had manipulated student dropout data and the results of the state-mandated student achievement test, the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS); by AISD's lagging student performance; and by its escalating property tax rate.

After six months of work, this report suggests concrete ways to improve the district's operational efficiency, while identifying exemplary district programs. TSPR offers 163 detailed recommendations that could save AISD more than $70 million over the next five years, and proposes nearly $13 million in reinvestments to improve the district's educational services and other operations. Net savings are estimated at more than $57 million.

Improving the Texas School Performance Review

Soon after taking office in January 1999, Comptroller Carole Keeton Rylander consulted school district officials, parents, and teachers from across Texas and carefully examined past reviews and progress reports in an effort to make the Texas School Performance Review 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 the accountability of local school districts toward the communities they serve.

Recognizing that statewide only 51 cents of every education dollar is spent on instruction, Comptroller Rylander's approach is designed to give local school officials in Austin and in other Texas communities the ability to move more of every education dollar directly into the classroom. Comptroller Rylander also has ordered best practices and exemplary programs to be shared quickly and systematically among 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 that 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 that public schools deserve all the attention and assistance they can get.

For more information, contact TSPR by calling toll-free at 1-800-531-5441, extension 5-3676, or see the Comptroller's website at www.window.state.tx.us.

AISD in Profile

Unlike many urban school districts, AISD generally has enjoyed widespread community support. But in recent years, this support has eroded under the strain of one management failure after another.

AISD is Texas' fourth-largest school district, with more than 78,000 students. But from the 1995-96 school year through 1999-2000, student enrollment grew at an average annual rate of slightly more than 1 percent-at a time when the city's population and enrollment in surrounding school districts boomed.

Some 49 percent of AISD students are economically disadvantaged, about on par with the state average. At the same time, with a property tax wealth per student estimated to exceed $301,000, AISD is one of the state's 88 "property-wealthy" districts and, in 2000-01, will become subject to provisions of the Texas Education Code, requiring it to share its property wealth with the state's poorer districts. Although AISD is among the wealthiest of the state's school districts, the district spends only 48 cents of every education dollar on instruction.

AISD's 1999-2000 budget is more than $579 million. More than 80 percent of its revenues come from local property taxes. From 1996-97 to 1999-2000, AISD's budgeted expenditures rose by an average of $39 million a year. AISD's 1999-2000 tax rate is $1.54 per $100 of property valuation, 12 cents higher than in the previous year. The rate hike is expected to generate an estimated $34 million per year in additional revenue.

In 1999-2000, the district had more than 9,600 full-time employees, making it one of the largest employers in the greater Austin area. More than 5,000 of these employees are teachers. The student body is 44 percent Hispanic, 36 percent Anglo, 17 percent African-American, and 3 percent "other." The teaching staff is 70 percent Anglo, 21 percent Hispanic, 8 percent African-American, and 1 percent "other." The district has more than 100 campuses, including 11 high schools.

TSPR in AISD

Typically, the Comptroller's review team goes to a school district in response to a local call for assistance. The AISD study, however, is the second school review that Comptroller Rylander has ordered under her statutory authority and under criteria she established for selecting school districts for reviews. Under these criteria, the Comptroller gives priority to districts that are judged poor performing academically or financially and to hands-on reviews that will benefit the greatest number of students. *These are the school districts and children that need help the most*.

In the 1990s, AISD had *six* superintendents, a recipe for instability. Before the start of the 1999-2000 school year, the AISD Board of Trustees hired Dr. Pascal D. Forgione, Jr. as the district's new superintendent. Dr. Forgione is a former U.S. Commissioner of Education Statistics, with experience in educational administration at both the state and federal levels. He won early, enthusiastic praise in Austin for his blunt assessment of AISD's chronic managerial problems. With board approval, he reorganized AISD's executive cabinet and put a new management team into place.

Under a previous Comptroller, TSPR reviewed AISD in 1993. That report contained 174 recommendations with projected five-year savings of $9.3 million. Following its release, AISD's administration initially rejected the recommendations outright. Subsequent work by the board resulted in the district accepting 88 percent of the recommendations, but the district reported savings of only $1.8 million.

Comptroller Rylander began this second review of AISD in October 1999, just after Dr. Forgione assumed leadership of the district. The new

superintendent inherited an educational system that lacked accountability at all levels. In recent years AISD's board--and parents, taxpayers, and community members--faced repeated setbacks in student performance, data integrity, and financial management.

AISD's student performance falls below state and regional averages. The district's overall 1998-99 TAAS passing rate of 68 percent (most recent data available) trailed behind both the statewide average of 78 percent and the Central Texas regional average of nearly 79 percent. Under the state's school accountability system, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) assigns annual ratings to each district and campus based upon its TAAS student passing rate, student attendance and dropout rates, and data quality, as measured by information reported to the state.

In 1998-99, AISD had 16 schools rated by TEA as "low-performing," up from four in 1997-98. The 1998-99 results gave AISD the highest percentage of low-performing schools in the state. Two are alternate schools. Of the remaining 14 low-performing schools, 13 have a majority of minority students. Six of the district's 10 regular high schools were rated as low-performing for high dropout rates or poor TAAS scores. Five AISD schools have been rated as low-performing for three of the last five years. When a school is in trouble and does not improve, children are trapped. On the other hand, AISD also has had some remarkable successes, with nine schools rated as exemplary and seven as recognized schools for about 17 percent of its campuses.

AISD's reporting of dropout students is another agonizing challenge for the district. TEA created a new category, "Unacceptable: Data Quality," for AISD and three other Texas districts whose dropout data was judged to be so severely flawed that the state could not be confident of its accuracy or completeness. In February 2000, TEA revised AISD's ratings for the 1997-98 school year (most recent data available), bringing the district's overall dropout rate to 8.5 percent, more than *four times* the rate AISD originally reported.

In April 1999, a Travis County grand jury indicted the AISD Board of Trustees on criminal charges of tampering with 1998 state--reported TAAS data. The board later reached a settlement with the county attorney and pledged to create dropout prevention strategies and better controls on its data reporting system. AISD officials acknowledge that its methods for data gathering and reporting--including student enrollment and dropout information required by the state--have been flawed and unreliable for years. AISD blames its data integrity problems on outdated information systems. An AISD-funded assessment of its information technology, however, found that human error has been a significant factor in its data

integrity problems--one previously unrecognized and unacknowledged by the district.

For years, AISD has had inefficient, obsolete, or cumbersome systems for personnel, business and technological functions. Some remain manual and paper-driven. From 1997 through 1999, AISD was unable to produce accurate, timely student report cards, progress reports or transcripts. While, as already noted, AISD cites outdated technology as the cause of its data integrity problems, it has taken no significant action to upgrade its information technology. In 2000, AISD began a new initiative to replace its current business and student information systems.

AISD's financial oversight and accounting practices are unsound at best. The district's finance personnel are located on school campuses and in various departments, including Food Services, Athletics, and Community Education. These separate functions have little direct interaction with the central finance department. AISD's new chief financial officer is attempting to consolidate the district's fragmented financial services, an encouraging first step.

The district's employee policies and performance expectations are not clearly defined and documented, making performance appraisals ineffective. Some campus administrators have been repeatedly moved from one position or school to another, without meaningful job appraisals or counseling.

Another persistent challenge is AISD's inefficient use of school facilities. On many elementary campuses, enrollment growth is high and classrooms are crowded. Elsewhere in AISD, facilities at several middle and high schools are significantly underused--a fact TSPR had noted in its 1993 performance review. In 1996, Austin voters approved a $369 million bond package to finance one of the state's largest school construction and renovation projects. Cost overruns and additional scope later added $54.9 million to the program, and total costs are currently estimated at $424 million. With funding from the 1996 bond issue, AISD opened three elementaries and one middle school in 1999 and a middle school in January 2000. A high school and two more elementary schools are set to open later in 2000 and one more elementary school opens in 2001.

In summary, AISD has a new leadership team that is not tied to previous administrations and business-as-usual practices. By selecting this team, the AISD board has set a promising new course for the district. AISD now must seize the opportunity to regain the community's confidence. To do this, the superintendent must demonstrate that AISD is accountable, committed to improving low-performing schools, ready to meet the needs

of at-risk students, and serious about redirecting dollars back into the classroom.

Listening to the AISD Community

Deloitte & Touche was selected to assist the Comptroller with this review. The TSPR team interviewed district employees, school board members, students, parents, business leaders, and community members. TSPR also held informal public forums over two nights at 10 district high schools. Participants were invited to submit written observations on major topics of concern or to be interviewed by a member of the TSPR review team. The team also collected comments from letters to the Comptroller and calls to the Comptroller's toll-free hotline. TSPR also sent written surveys to a random sample of district administrators and support staff, principals, teachers, and students.

To gain additional insight into community concerns and perceptions, TSPR held 12 focus groups with AISD stakeholders, including the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce; the Austin Area Research Organization; the League of United Latin-American Citizens; Austin Latino Alliance; the Austin Council of Parent-Teacher Associations; the Community Education Consortium; representatives of the Hispanic and African-American communities; Spanish-speaking parents; and AISD principals, assistant principals, teachers, and bilingual teachers. Community members and AISD staff who participated in focus groups gave oral and written comments about 12 functional areas under review in this report.

TSPR also conducted 650 telephone interviews with adults in a random sample of households in AISD's service area. Details from TSPR's surveys and public forums appear in **Appendices A** through **H**. It should be noted that comments received by TSPR illustrate community and AISD school staff perceptions and do not necessarily reflect the findings or opinions of the Comptroller or TSPR.

TSPR also consulted two databases of comparative educational information maintained by TEA--the Academic Excellence Indicator System and the Public Education Information Management System. Finally, TSPR asked AISD to select "peer" school districts with similar characteristics for comparative purposes. AISD chose Alief, Corpus Christi, Fort Worth, Northside (Bexar County), and Pasadena Independent School Districts as peers. TSPR also compared AISD to district averages in TEA's Region 13 Education Service Center, to which AISD belongs, and to state averages.

Acknowledgments

The Comptroller and Deloitte & Touche wish to express their appreciation to the AISD Board of Trustees, Superintendent Forgione, and the many district employees, students, and community residents who helped during the review. Special thanks are due to Drs. David C. Duty and Lynda L. Haynes, who acted as AISD's liaisons with TSPR. Drs. Duty and Haynes worked tirelessly and cheerfully to accommodate the review team's requests for staff interviews, campus visits, and information. They also devised an innovative method to facilitate TSPR's findings meeting with the district--no small feat for a district of AISD's size and complexity.

Exemplary Programs and Practices

AISD is a school district with some notable successes, and TSPR has identified numerous "best practices." Through commendations in each chapter, this report highlights model programs, operations, and services provided by AISD administrators, teachers, and staff members. 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 include the following:

- *Superintendent's Performance Contract*: The AISD board has hired a new superintendent using a contract including job-specific goals that will aid trustees in objectively measuring performance.
- *Magnet Program*: Through three magnet schools, AISD has done an outstanding job providing opportunities for students to explore advanced, challenging curricula in science, mathematics and liberal arts. At LBJ High School, the class of 1999 (120 students) included 14 National Merit Scholars, 17 National Merit semifinalists, 17 National Merit Commended Scholars, two National Achievement Scholarships for Outstanding Negro Students and five National Hispanic Scholarships. At Kealing Junior High, about 60 students received state recognition for academic achievement in the Duke University Talent Search.
- *Account for Learning*: AISD has developed a locally funded initiative, Account for Learning, to assist campuses with a high percentage of economically disadvantaged students in improving their reading and mathematics performance.
- *School to Career*: AISD offers a School-to-Career program that moves students into career preparation while allowing them flexibility for movement from one pathway to another as their interests and skills evolve.
- *Student Health Care*: Through partnerships with Travis County, the City of Austin, and the Children's Hospital of Austin, AISD provides high-quality health care services to its students.
- *Austin Partners in Education:* This nationally recognized program involves businesses and community organizations in enriching all

AISD schools through volunteer services, in-kind contributions, and financial support.

- *Community Education*: Over its 25-year history, AISD's Community Education program has worked effectively with local organizations to provide tutorial and after-school services for more than one million area children and their families. The program has received national recognition.
- *Qualified Substitutes*: AISD's automated substitute teacher calling system has proven effective in ensuring the availability of qualified substitute teachers.
- *Building Prototypes*: AISD uses building prototype designs to ensure quality and control school construction costs. In 1996, AISD developed building prototypes for elementary, middle, junior-high, and high schools with specific interior and exterior features. The district uses these prototypes in all new construction and renovation.
- *Insurance*: AISD adopted a novel insurance initiative known as the Rolling Owner Control Insurance Program (ROCIP) as part of its 1996 bond construction program. ROCIP has achieved estimated savings of $3.6 million and has expanded the participation of smaller local contractors in the district's bond construction program.
- *Bonds*: AISD saved $4.8 million after refunding its Series 1996 bonds and has effectively managed its debt since the 1996 bond election.
- *Telecommunications*: The Greater Austin Area Telecommunications Network is a state-of-the-art wide area network capable of delivering virtually unlimited volumes of data directly to any computer system anywhere in the district.
- *School Resource Officers*: AISD's school resource officers are the focal point of the district's safety and security efforts. They work harmoniously with schools and provide an important asset to the AISD community.
- *Absent Student Assistance Project* (ASAP): ASAP, a community-based collaborative effort involving the Austin and Del Valle school districts and the Travis County constables, improves school attendance by providing timely responses to student absenteeism.
- *Campus Crime Stoppers*: A collaborative community effort between AISD and the Travis County sheriff's office, Campus Crime Stoppers provides a "hot-line" and rewards for students who report weapons and possible criminal activity in and around schools.

Key Recommendations and Findings

District Organization and Management

- *Board Election Sequence*: The trustee structure and election sequence of the district's board do not contribute to stable governance, as two-thirds of the AISD board can be up for election at one time. By board resolution, AISD can restructure its trustee elections to change the number of positions up for election to an alternating four- and five-member sequence every two years. The new structure would improve continuity in the board's decision-making process.
- *Central Administration:* AISD's central administrative budget has grown by 22 percent since 1996-97 while student enrollment grew by only 4.6 percent. By initiating a reduction in force of 15 percent to bring down the number of administrative positions specifically assigned to work in the central office, the district can redirect resources into direct classroom instruction. A 15 percent reduction in force of central administration would result in five-year savings of more than $18 million.
- *Central Office:* The layout of AISD's central offices on West 6th Street is not functional and parking is limited. The boardroom's location and design do not promote public participation or facilitate trustee communication. By moving the district's entire central administration to the campus of Reagan High School, AISD could make more efficient use of an existing facility and bring administrators back to a school environment. As an added benefit, AISD can net nearly $12 million from the sale.
- *Legal Costs:* Compared to other districts of similar size and complexity, AISD's legal expenses are excessive. The district outsources all of its legal services and spent more than $4 million on legal fees from 1996-97 through 1998-99. A small in-house legal staff could manage routine legal services and assist with litigation. Moreover, AISD's board should adopt a policy to control costs while outlining a framework for the use of legal counsel.

Educational Service Delivery

- *Chronically Low-Performing Schools:* AISD has an unacceptably high number of campuses consistently rated low-performing by TEA. When a school fails repeatedly, new and decisive measures should be implemented. One such measure is reconstitution, a step that brings a new faculty and staff to the campus. By developing a formal district policy to allow for the reconstitution of chronically low-performing campuses, AISD could begin to free children from a school's cycle of failure.
- *Magnet Programs:* AISD's magnet school program is challenging and exemplary, and many parents have urged the district to expand the program to other curricula. By relocating the Science Academy at LBJ High School and the Liberal Arts Academy at Johnston to

the Reagan campus and adding a high-tech component, AISD could create a regional magnet program open to transfer students from surrounding districts, giving more qualified students an opportunity to succeed. Moreover, the district's magnet middle school at Kealing serves only 7th and 8th grade students, and prospective students completing elementary school must attend 6th grade at another campus. Expanding the magnet program at Kealing to include a 6th grade would allow the district to better meet the needs of its middle school magnet students.

- *Special Education:* Although AISD reports high expenditures for special education and low student-to-teacher ratios, a number of serious concerns have been voiced by parents and teachers. AISD can improve its special education services and bring accountability to its program by creating prereferral intervention teams, creating an accountability system to track successful changes to the regular education curriculum, and improving data reporting to appropriately allocate teachers throughout the district.

Facilities Use and Management

- *Facility Management:* Facilities at three AISD high schools are significantly underused, as are the district's middle schools as a group. In contrast, many elementary campuses are crowded and require portables to sustain their current enrollment. By using a balanced combination of facility closings, shifts of grade levels to underused facilities, and attendance zone changes, the district can make better use of its resources.
- *Portable Buildings:* AISD has the highest number of portable buildings per student among its peer districts and continues to acquire more, while many permanent facilities are not used to capacity. Each year, AISD spends in excess of $1 million on new portable buildings, which are more expensive to maintain than permanent facilities. By adopting a policy to control portable purchases and relocations, AISD could manage its portable space more effectively and reduce the number of portables in use, with accompanying savings in maintenance and custodial costs. By better use of existing underused space in brick and mortar buildings, new purchases could be curtailed and surplus portable buildings could then be sold. Five-year savings are projected at more than $16 million.
- *Facilities Master Plan:* Although AISD is implementing a $424 million bond program, it lacks a comprehensive facilities master plan. For any future bond programs, such a plan would allow the district to identify the current and future needs of its educational programs, the condition of existing schools, student and community growth, and capital requirements.

- *Custodial Shifts and Staffing:* AISD has not standardized its custodial shifts and responsibilities. Although the district central office makes recommendations to improve the quality and efficiency of custodial services, school principals, who manage custodians on campuses, are not obligated to follow them. A consistent approach to maximizing the efficiency of AISD's custodial services, including the elimination of some custodial positions, would yield savings of more than $1.8 million over five years.

Financial Management

- *Cash Reserves:* AISD is not maintaining an optimum fund balance, and the board is not clearly informed of the impact of budget amendments on the district's total reserves. By amending board policy to require a fiscal impact statement showing the impact on the optimum fund balance, the board will be able to make more fiscally appropriate decisions.
- *Financial Accountability and Continuity:* The district recently hired an experienced and respected school financial administrator to serve as chief financial officer (CFO). Until this action, AISD's financial functions were in disarray, with staff located in a number of departments, resulting in uncoordinated procedures and controls. By forecasting and tracking AISD's financial condition, the new CFO can ensure accountability for the district's half-billion dollar budget.
- *Payroll Functions*: AISD's payroll operation is manual and paper-intensive. As a substitute for an efficient, fully automated payroll system, AISD maintains a separate, color-coded index card file for each employee in the district. By outsourcing payroll data collection, processing, check printing, and direct deposit functions to an external vendor, AISD can improve services and streamline operations.
- *Internal Audit:* AISD's internal audit function chiefly audits student activity funds instead of district operations, and audit activities receive little attention from board members. The district would benefit from a balanced audit approach that involves an annual audit planning process and a formal risk assessment of AISD operations, programs, and controls. To ensure an independent reporting relationship, trustees should create an audit committee of the board that would hear audit findings directly and oversee Internal Audit activities.

Personnel

- *Personnel Policies:* AISD's personnel policies are outdated. A comprehensive overhaul of personnel policies can ensure that the district complies with recent changes in the Texas Education Code and reduce the district's exposure to risk and litigation.
- *Employee Performance Evaluations:* State law requires each school district to evaluate each administrator annually, yet AISD has no formal policy holding supervisors accountable for completing these evaluations. An important first step is an automated system to track the timely completion of employee performance appraisals.
- *Poor-Performing Employees:* AISD reassigns some principals and campus administrators to various positions each school year with little documentation to explain the reason for such reassignments. By clarifying its policy on involuntary reassignments, the district can ensure that administrators address employee performance problems through counseling, development plans, or progressive discipline.
- *Employee Contracts:* AISD issues employment contracts to a wide array of employees. The district should provide only those employment contracts required by law for positions that require certification. By limiting employment contracts to certified personnel, the district would lessen its exposure to the risk and expense of litigation. In addition, this recommendation would reduce the time spent administering contracts.

Asset and Risk Management

- *Employee Health Care Services:* AISD has no strategy for reducing or controlling its employee health-care costs at a time when group health care costs are rising across the nation. The expertise of its benefits consultant could help the district oversee the legal, pricing, and quality issues associated with group health plans.
- *Fixed Assets:* In 1999, 28 district VCRs and a violin were discovered in a local pawnshop, yet none of the equipment had been reported stolen. As early as 1990, internal and external auditors raised concerns about AISD's fixed-asset control weaknesses. A thorough fixed asset system would ensure accountability for district assets, provide accurate values for assets for internal and external reporting purposes, and protect the district against theft, deterioration, or other losses.

Purchasing and Warehouse Services

- *Textbooks*: From 1996-97 through 1998-99, AISD repaid the state $576,000 for lost textbooks, and students in some classes began the

1999-2000 school year without books. By requiring principals to document and control textbook inventories in their schools, the district could reduce lost textbook charges and ensure an adequate supply of textbooks for all students.

Computers and Technology

- *Technology Planning:* AISD has repeatedly attempted to acquire new technologies, but the board has not acted on long-range technology solutions. The district has earmarked a $16.7 million annual tax increase to fix its business and student information systems, and the board must take steps to ensure that this money is spent only to replace and overhaul technology. By committing to a viable technology plan that identifies necessary changes in information systems over the next five years, the district could make significant progress. AISD also should reorganize its technology services to provide better service to customers and support a new technology infrastructure. This reorganization would allow AISD to hire knowledgeable staff to support its new systems.

Transportation

- *Student Transportation:* AISD experiences some benefits from privatization in the form of savings realized from its outsourcing of transportation for magnet program students. By developing a request for proposals, the district could attract competitive bids that will enable the district to decide if outsourcing would deliver better transportation service and result in savings.
- *Staggered Bell Schedule:* AISD has adopted a staggered bell schedule for its school start and end times, but not all campuses follow it. Staggered bell times allows a district to use its buses more efficiently, with each vehicle servicing an elementary, middle, and high school. Failure to comply with the schedule forces the district to run more buses than necessary. Five-year savings are estimated at nearly $2.3 million.
- *Student Census Data:* AISD does not currently have accurate and timely student census data. With student census and demographic information, AISD can create more efficient routes, increasing the ratio of riders to miles and the district's state transportation reimbursement. Better routing should result in a five-year savings of nearly $1.2 million.

Food Services

- *Food Service Deficit:* AISD has not addressed and remedied key operational deficiencies in food services that have contributed to substantial financial losses since 1997-98. A series of extensive corrective measures are detailed for making the district's operation more effective and efficient. A regular evaluation of the desirability of outsourcing food services could also be a useful tool in ensuring that students receive the highest-quality meals at the lowest cost.

Safety and Security

- *Crime Incident Data:* AISD has not updated its district and campus improvement plans to meet new state requirements for disclosure of statistics on the number, rate, and type of violent or criminal incidents occurring on each district campus. State law also requires campus improvement plans to contain goals and methods for crime prevention and intervention. By sharing such information with the AISD community, AISD can enhance its commitment to a safe and secure learning environment for all students.

Savings and Investment Requirements

Many of 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 savings or the enhancement of productivity and effectiveness.

Summary of Net Savings

Full implementation of the recommendations in this report could produce net savings of nearly $6 million in the first year **(Exhibit 1)**. AISD could achieve total net savings of more than $57 million by 2004-05 if all of TSPR's recommendations are implemented.

Exhibit 1
Summary of Net Savings
TSPR Review of Austin Independent School District

Year	Total
2000-01 Initial Annual Net Savings	$ 5,823,066
2001-02 Additional Annual Net Savings	$ 11,085,927
2002-03 Additional Annual Net Savings	$ 11,995,103
2003-04 Additional Annual Net Savings	$ 9,023,951

2004-05 Additional Annual Net Savings	$ 9,265,372
One Time Net Savings	$ 10,248,384
TOTAL SAVINGS PROJECTED FOR 2000-2005	**$ 57,441,803**

A detailed list of costs and savings by recommendation appears in **Exhibit 2**. The page number for each recommendation is listed in the summary chart for reference purposes. Detailed implementation strategies, timelines, and estimates of fiscal impacts follow each recommendation in this report. The implementation section associated with each recommendation highlights the actions needed to achieve the proposed results. Some items should be implemented immediately, some over the next year or two, and some over several years. Many TSPR recommendations would not have a direct financial impact but nonetheless would improve the district's operations.

TSPR recommends that the AISD board ask district administrators to review the recommendations, develop an implementation plan, and monitor its progress. As always, TSPR staff members are available to help implement these proposals.

Chapter 1
DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the Austin Independent School District's (AISD) organization and management in five sections:

A. Governance
B. Planning
C. Policies and Procedures
D. District Management
E. School Management and Site-Based Decision-Making

School boards are responsible for setting policies to be developed and carried out by the district administration. School boards that govern well ensure that the district obtains and delivers the services, products, tools, and equipment that its employees need to do their jobs; adheres to state law; and sets local policies that chart the direction of educational programs and services and establish standards to measure success.

When the board, district employees, parents, students and the community work together to achieve their goals as a team, they can adapt to and embrace change and build an enduring reputation for educational and administrative excellence.

Chapter 1

A. GOVERNANCE

School board governance is determined by the leadership of a Board of Trustees. Board leadership roles includes the hiring of a superintendent to administer and lead day-to-day district operations. Trustees also set district policies, approve the budget, monitor expenditures, set the tax rate and call bond elections. Trustees must reflect community expectations when setting policies that guide educational achievement and district administration.

AISD's legislated board structure consists of nine members elected to four-year terms. Seven of the trustees are elected from single-member districts; the president and vice-president are elected at large. Three board seats and then six seats are filled during elections held every two years on the first Saturday in May. If a vacancy occurs, it is filled by appointment until the next regularly scheduled election. In keeping with the Texas Education Code, board members are not financially compensated for their board service. AISD's board is listed in **Exhibit 1-1**.

AISD holds regular board meetings on the second and fourth Mondays of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Carruth Administration Center, 1111 West Sixth Street. Posted public notices are required for all called board meetings. Board meetings are held to transact the business of the district and are open to the public in accordance with the state's Open Meetings Act. Board meetings may be closed to the public only during executive sessions when personnel matters, student hearings, real estate transactions and other specific legal matters are discussed. Trustees hold special meetings and work sessions as needed. All public meetings are broadcast live on AISD Cable channel 22 and are periodically rebroadcast.

Exhibit 1-1
AISD Board of Trustees
1999-2000

Name	Title	Term Expires May	Length of Service as of May 2000	Occupation
Kathy Rider	President	2002	8 years	Clinical Social Worker
Doyle Valdez	Vice President	2002	2 years	Business Owner

Ted Whatley*	Secretary	2000	8 years	Consultant
Loretta Edelen	Member	2002	6 years	Research Manager, Austin Community College
Rudy Montoya, Jr.	Member	2000	5 years	Deputy Director, Office of the Attorney General of Texas
Liz Hartman*	Member	2000	8 years	Education Advocate
Ave Wahrmund	Member	2002	2 years	Business Owner
Patricia Whiteside	Member	2002	2 years	CPA
Olga Garza	Member	2002	2 years	Special Projects Consultant, Texas Education Agency

Source: AISD Director of Special Projects and Intergovernmental Relations.
*Trustee who did not seek reelection.

Citizens may sign up to speak at board meetings on the day of the meeting from 7:45 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. in the Superintendent's Office, Room A250 of the Carruth Administration Center, and during the hour preceding the meeting in the Board Auditorium. Speakers must sign up in person and compete a form indicating the issue about which they will speak and whether they want the administration to provide a response. Citizens may voice complaints about specific district personnel, but these individuals may not be named. Each speaker is given three minutes before the board, but the board reserves the right to shorten speaking periods to ensure that everyone who has signed up has the opportunity to speak within the hour allowed for citizens' communications.

According to local policy, the board and superintendent take no votes or specific actions on citizens' requests or complaints during the meeting. Following the board meeting, citizens' communications that require responses are forwarded by the superintendent's office to the appropriate staff members. These employees respond to the citizen, document the communication, and return the completed response to the superintendent's office. The special assistant to the superintendent reviews and files these responses. Board members are kept up to date about the progress of any particular issue. In cases where requiring additional follow-up is required,

the special assistant confers with staff members and restarts the resolution process until the citizen's concerns are addressed or resolved.

In December 1999, the superintendent and board completed a reorganization and hiring process that finalized the superintendent's top administrative team. In January 2000, the superintendent redefined his cabinet as follows **(Exhibit 1-2)**:

Exhibit 1-2
Superintendent's Cabinet
1999-2000

Title
Deputy Superintendent, Accountability & Information Systems
Deputy Superintendent, Bilingual Education and Human Resources Development
Deputy Superintendent, Curriculum, Instruction & Professional Development
Deputy Superintendent, Finance/Chief Financial Officer
Area 1 Superintendent
Area 2 Superintendent
Area 3 Superintendent
Area 4 Superintendent
Area 5 Superintendent
Associate Superintendent, Development and Community Partnerships
Special Assistant to the Superintendent

Source: AISD Director of Special Projects and Intergovernmental Relations.

The superintendent's cabinet meets weekly to discuss the development and progress of major district initiatives and other important issues related to district operations and upcoming board meeting agenda items. Weekly cabinet agendas are distributed to cabinet members and other senior staff members in each division. Cabinet members are encouraged to involve other division employees in cabinet meetings when the agenda includes items specific to their work.

As of January 2000, the superintendent's office is using a more consistent approach to better inform the board of progress on major district initiatives. For example, the board receives quarterly reports prepared by deputy superintendents overseeing various programs. The report dates are

reflected in the board agenda calendar. The calendar is a working document that includes board meeting agendas through September 2000 as well as a schedule of annual items brought before the board, such as the yearly district calendar, the District Improvement Plan, Campus Performance Objectives and other items.

Agendas are developed with direct input from the superintendent's cabinet and the Board of Trustees. Notices for lunch-hour agenda-setting meetings are posted and open to all board members. The district is experimenting with alternatives to these agenda-setting meetings, however, as the lunch hour is not convenient to all board members. After the superintendent's team develops the board agenda, the cabinet completes the research and planning required for the board's deliberations.

Agenda development requires careful planning, attention to detail, good communication and trust. A good agenda covers the important business of a school district as well as routine processes. It should be ordered so that critical items receive the time they need to be adequately addressed. If a board has a high level of trust in its superintendent, based on demonstrated competence and leadership, routine decisions, such as the paying of bills, personnel hiring and the selection of contractors should take a minimum amount of the board's meeting time. Every agenda should be designed to address the development and implementation of board policy and district management over the long term.

FINDING

During the 1990s, AISD had six superintendents. **Exhibit 1-3** summarizes their tenure since 1990.

Exhibit 1-3
AISD Superintendent Tenures
1990-Present

Title	Dates of Service
Gonzalo Garza (Interim)	June 1990 - February 1991
Jim Hensley	February 1991 - July 1993
Terry Bishop (Interim)	July 1993 - December 1994
Jim Fox	January 1995 - May 1998
A. C. Gonzalez (Interim)	May 1998 - August 1999
Pascal D. Forgione, Jr.	August 1999 - Present

In TSPR's review published in February 1993, AISD was described as possessing few if any of the characteristics essential to effective governance and management. Interviews with board members and senior administrators at that time indicated that the relationship between the board and district managers was at best adversarial and at worst counterproductive.

In 1998-99, well-publicized reports of Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) tampering, inaccurate dropout data, an inability to produce report cards, school facilities design and construction errors, and miscalculated food service department revenues all added to the perception of a district gone awry. Participants in TSPR focus groups consistently reflected public doubts concerning the board's ability to choose a competent, dedicated superintendent.

Former AISD boards offered superintendents and interim superintendents contracts that did not include clear goals and performance measures to facilitate their achievement. These contracts also did not tie performance to pay.

In October 1999, interviews with board members revealed that they are keenly aware of the need for stability and are willing to make changes from past practices. Before the start of the 1999-2000 school year, trustees hired a new superintendent and approved a new superintendent contract that ties performance to compensation by including a bonus for the achievement of stated goals. The district is now one of a handful of Texas districts with such superintendent contracts.

In a September 1999 board retreat, board members worked with the superintendent to develop superintendent performance goals, as required by Texas state law. In December, the board and superintendent met again to develop a final product. Key elements of the superintendent's performance goals developed at the December retreat included the following:

1. Students show improved achievement.
2. Students graduate on time.
3. AISD will have quality teachers and principals in all schools.
4. AISD will collaborate and communicate with parents and the greater community.
5. All data systems provide reliable, accurate and useful information.
6. All schools and district facilities are safe, clean and have orderly environments.

7. The bond program will be successfully implemented.

Each of these elements includes specific goals and indicators and one- and three-year deliverables for each, and designates the primary (superintendent) and secondary person(s) responsible for achieving them. The first evaluation of Superintendent Forgione will take place before the end of August 2000. At the end of each contract year, the superintendent is eligible for a performance bonus as determined by the board in a formal annual review.

COMMENDATION

The AISD board has hired a new superintendent using a contract that includes job-specific goals that will aid trustees in objectively measuring performance.

FINDING

The structure and election schedule of the AISD board do not contribute to stable governance. Two-thirds of the AISD board members are up for election at one time. Three positions are up for reelection in May 2000; the remaining six will stand for election in 2002. If all of the 2002 group decline to run again, six positions will change at once, including the president and vice president. In 1998, four members of the board changed.

The business of a public school district of AISD's size is challenging and complex and it may take several years for some new trustees to feel confident in the role. When up to six members can change at one time, the board's ability to function smoothly through the transition can be sorely tested. Most Texas school districts elect their board members in a more balanced, yearly sequence. Typically, Texas districts have seven-member boards with three-year terms and hold elections for two or three seats every year.

The 1991 Legislature, however, made changes to Section 21.023 of the Texas Education Code that specifically affected AISD. These changes, which took effect in 1992, required the district to adopt four-year terms, create single-member districts, and hold at-large elections of the board's president and vice-president. Later legislation (reflected in Section 11.059) keeps these provisions in force. Section 11.062 allows the board to change the board election structure regarding the three/six split through a resolution.

Recommendation 1:

Restructure AISD's process for board elections by passing a resolution to change the number of trustee positions up for election to a four- and five-member sequence every two years.

The board should pass a resolution to allow for an election cycle that would put four and then five board members up for election every other year. This is allowable under Education Code 11.059 and 11.062. Because seven of the members are elected from single-member districts and the president and vice-president are elected at large, it would be advisable for both the president and vice-president to be up for election at the same time.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board directs the superintendent to assign the director of Special Projects and Intergovernmental Relations to formulate the restructuring plan.	October 2000
3.	The board approves the plan and seeks community consensus for the structural change.	November 2000
4.	The board passes a resolution to implement the restructuring plan.	December 2000
5.	The plan is implemented and the new structure begins with the May 2001 board election.	December 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Some AISD board members have departed from their legitimate policy-making roles to become involved in the day-to-day management roles that should be performed by the superintendent and his staff. In interviews, some trustees said they make a conscious effort to avoid becoming involved in district management issues such as employment decisions. However, participants in administrative staff interviews and community focus groups said that some trustees do occasionally assume the management prerogatives of principals and central administrators. In a TSPR survey, 51 percent of principals and assistant principals disagreed, while 31 percent agreed, that board members understand their role as policymakers and stay out of the day-to-day management of the district.

Some board members may view such interference as benign or even as necessary. However, board forays into the administration's domain can undermine trust in the relationships that exist among principals, teachers, central administrators, and the board as a whole. While the majority of the board said that they understand their role as a policymaking body, board micromanagement in administrative and operational areas still occurs.

Board micromanagement is not uncommon. Board members seek the position because they are concerned about education and are problem-solvers, and it is not surprising that they may tend to jump in to try to "fix" some situations. The Spring Independent School District board has a best-practice model in this arena; Spring ISD's board and superintendent team have been repeatedly commended on their ability to govern and oversee the management of their district. The members practice self-discipline and monitor themselves to avoid imposing their wills on the district's day-to-day operations. This "self-policing" is supported by a combination of one-on-one talks among the superintendent, board president and board members, as well as discussions during board work sessions.

Since the mid-1990s, Spring ISD's board presidents and administrators have made presentations to other school district boards regarding board management, use of board committees, and long-range planning at state and national educational conferences and in other school districts.

Recommendation 2:

Establish board self-censorship guidelines to avoid micromanagement activities.

The AISD board could benefit from examining the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) guidelines for self-policing, as Spring ISD has done. Recognizing that training alone is not sufficient, the board and superintendent should continue their present efforts to communicate frequently outside of board meetings. Special AISD board meetings and retreats should include ongoing discussion of good governance practices.

As specific governance issues are addressed, the board can discuss specific remedies or practices that would support their efforts to avoid micromanagement. For example, in the case of parent/student problems, board members should inform citizens about the proper use of the chain of command for addressing such issues. The use of a facilitator for guidance and the support of knowledgeable, externally designated volunteers for feedback also would be helpful.

While the board and administration have specific roles and functions that should be clearly delineated, their roles and functions are interrelated and

interdependent. Additional internal AISD board training and discussions on governance should focus on legal and local updates of board policy and procedures and guidelines concerning planning, accountability, and personnel.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Special Projects and Intergovernmental Relations obtains self-censorship guidelines from TASB.	July 2000
2.	The board reviews the guidelines.	August 2000
3.	The superintendent's office obtains the training schedule from TASB and other vendors and provides those to the board along with information regarding meeting facilitators.	September 2000
4.	The board members attend training sessions, designate external "feedback" persons and use a facilitator in special district meetings and retreats.	September 2000 and Ongoing
5.	The board members, using an evaluation instrument developed by the Superintendent's Office, assess the value of additional training and the use of facilitators and "feedback" persons.	January 2001 and yearly thereafter

FISCAL IMPACT

Additional costs for training and facilitators would be $2,000 per year based on an eight-hour session a year at a cost of $250 an hour for a facilitator ($250/hr. x 8 hours = $2,000 a year).

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Establish self-censorship guidelines to avoid micromanagement activities.	($2,000)	($2,000)	($2,000)	($2,000)	($2,000)

FINDING

AISD's board conducts two regular meetings a month. The meetings each last an average of five or more hours. An October 1999 board meeting that TSPR attended began at 6:30 p.m. and lasted until 1:45 a.m. (Several central administrative personnel indicated that this particular board meeting was unusually long.)

However, a focus group meeting with an Austin civic group and interviews with present and former board members revealed that the time

spent on board duties is a key issue that should be examined. Several members of the civic group said that, due to a lack of proper meeting preparation and management, "being on the board has turned into a full time job." Former and present board members also expressed concern about the length and frequency of board meetings. Several said that more time spent in meetings did not translate into greater confidence that they received better or more useful information about district matters.

In addition to the two regular meetings per month, the board also holds two agenda-setting meetings per month, and can hold special meetings as well. Including planning time, these meetings require the involvement of the superintendent's cabinet and other district employees essentially for the whole month.

Many large Texas districts hold a board "work session" in the week prior to regular board meetings. These sessions include a review of the agenda developed by the superintendent's administrative team and board officers the week before. Reports from administrators are presented at this time. The work session allows the board an additional period to ask questions before the regular board meeting. No votes are taken during work sessions.

Recommendation 3:

Reduce the number of regular board meetings to one meeting a month and begin holding board work sessions prior to each meeting.

Reducing the number of board meetings would encourage better use of trustee and administration time and would require district administration to better plan how items are presented to the board.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board charges the administration to plan for reducing the number of regular board meetings from two to one meeting a month.	July 2000
2.	The administration presents a restructuring plan to the board.	August 2000
3.	The board votes to reduce the number of regular board meetings to one meeting a month and to begin holding board work sessions prior to each meeting.	September 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

The time required for regular board meetings would be reduced, encouraging better use of time and better organization. Meeting costs also would be reduced as would the cost of reproduction for printed materials and of producing and airing the meetings for cable viewing. However, these savings cannot be estimated.

FINDING

AISD's board uses a timed agenda where every board agenda item is allocated a certain amount of time for discussion. The time allocated for some items, however, seems too long and often these periods are prolonged further due to board questions or speakers and presenters who exceed their allotted agenda time.

Meetings also are lengthened in part by presentations or reports that are not adequately summarized. Many presentations contain extensive personal references and stories and do not focus on key points. Current and past board members say that reports often lack executive summaries and are not clearly written or presented, particularly financial and budget reports. Current and past board members said that asking some administrators for better reports produced little in the way of results.

Recommendation 4:

Develop an executive reporting format for board materials that provides pertinent summary data to better enable the board to make informed decisions.

The format should incorporate current guidelines and use graphics such as bar graphs and pie charts to illustrate comparative data and explain significant variances.

Improved executive summaries, along with better presentations by administrators, should result in a better-informed board. Training and presentation feedback sessions should be used to support improved reporting by administrators and staff. Reports and presentations should include information that is relevant and the content should be developed in a manner and framework that can be clearly understood.

A more knowledgeable board should be able to make better decisions. This should help build and sustain a greater level of confidence, trust and cooperation between the board and administration. Less repetitive and unproductive discussion would take place and board meetings would be shorter and more effective.

This recommendation would require administrators to devote some time to the improvement of their board presentations, but eventually should result in shorter, more productive board meetings. This would allow administrators to spend more time attending to other district business.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent, together with his cabinet, develops several samples of executive summary reports and submits them to the board for review and comment.	May 2000
2.	The board responds with suggested revisions and the administrative staff finalizes the reporting format.	June 2000
3.	Human Resources and Professional Development form a team of administrators and others who make presentations to the board to practice and critique the style and content of each other's presentations. Outside trainers are brought in for a presentation and report training session.	June 2000 and Ongoing as needed
4.	The superintendent submits executive summary reports to the board for appropriate agenda items.	July 2000 and thereafter

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 1

B. PLANNING

Proper planning establishes a district mission and identifies goals and objectives, sets priorities, identifies ways to complete the mission, and determines performance measures and benchmarks to chart progress toward the achievement of the goals and objectives. In its purest sense, planning anticipates the effect of decisions, indicates the possible financial consequences of alternatives, focuses on educational programs and methods of support, and links student achievement to the cost of education.

Certain plans and reports are required by law. These include the District Improvement Plan (DIP), an annual report on student achievement goals; Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs), annual reports on each school's student achievement goals; a biennial district evaluation report, and a district performance report. To further meet the requirements of the Education Code, the district must form specific committees to develop the DIP, CIPs and other mandatory plans. These committees include a district-level DIP committee and campus-level CIP committees. The district-level committee also must consult with the superintendent concerning the planning, operation, supervision, and evaluation of the district's educational program (Education Code 11.252(f)).

Other plans and reports not specifically required by law are nonetheless essential to sound district operations and can have a significant impact on district management and fiscal accountability. These planning efforts include the calculation and planning of student enrollment projections; facilities planning; planning for food service, textbook acquisition and distribution, and school staffing; and districtwide budgeting and financial planning. The accuracy of these plans is extremely important to the smooth functioning of any district.

FINDING

Over the last five years, AISD's student enrollment has grown at an average annual rate of only about 1 percent, at a time when the city's and county's population have grown by 3 to 4 percent per year, according to the City of Austin Planning Department. Moreover, in contrast to this enrollment trend in AISD, student enrollment in surrounding school districts is booming. The Round Rock ISD is growing by nearly 5 percent per year; Del Valle ISD by more than 6 percent; Pflugerville ISD by more than 8 percent; and Leander ISD by more than 10 percent.

If AISD's student enrollment had kept pace with Austin's growth, the district would be in better financial shape as it enters Chapter 41 status. Each new child enrolled in AISD equates to about $5,000 in revenues that the district would be able to keep. The state's funding formulas are tied directly to the average daily attendance of students.

The calculation of a district's property wealth per student is simply the total appraised property values in the district divided by the weighted average number of students in attendance. As the number of students in attendance goes up, the calculated property wealth per student goes down, and the amount of money the district has to send back to the state goes down. And, as long as a Chapter 41 district does not charge tuition for non-resident students, the district benefits from any non-resident students that transfer into the district.

Other districts in the state have taken aggressive steps to increase student enrollment to maximize funding, improve staff productivity and make better use of underused facilities.

In 1996, for example, the Ysleta ISD in El Paso was faced with a declining student enrollment, similar to that experienced by many other urban districts. Ysleta capitalized on its strong student performance and opened its doors to students from outside the district, if space was available. In the first year, 1,250 students from other districts took advantage. In 1998, more than 2,000 students transferred into Ysleta; some transfer students must travel from one end of the county to the other to attend the school of their choice. Parents are expected to show some commitment by providing transportation to and from school-and they do.

Those transfer students and their parents must show their will to learn in other ways as well. Ysleta sets student standards for conduct, attendance, and grades-and enrollment can be revoked if these standards are not met. Moreover, Ysleta specifically requires a parent or guardian to participate in *all* parental activities in the district or at the student's campus. Opponents to the district's transfer policy claim that Ysleta's taxpayers are subsidizing other districts' children. But under the state's funding formulas, education dollars are attached to the students. And, as is the case in AISD, the district had excess capacity at certain schools and in certain classes within certain schools. Therefore, the district could make better use of facilities and improve the productivity of staff by serving more students in these underused locations.

Recommendation 5:

Develop a comprehensive strategy to boost student enrollment and average daily attendance in the district.

In concert with city, county and area business and civic leaders, AISD should develop a comprehensive strategy to bring students back to the district. This plan should include strategies for drop out recovery, truancy reductions and enhancements to current magnet and special programs that could attract other students and families to the district. In addition, the district may want to enlist the help of area businesses in publicizing the many positive programs available in AISD.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The superintendent creates a task force made up of civic, business and governmental groups and supported by AISD educators, public relations staff and other administrators to research the issue including best practices in other districts, and to develop recommendations.	May 2000
2.	The task force concludes their study and presents a report to the board and administration for consideration and approval.	December 2000
3.	The superintendent and board consider, modify and finally approve the recommendations of the task force.	January 2001
4.	The board and administration begin the task of implementing the task forces recommendations.	February 2001
5.	The administration regularly reports to the board, either monthly or quarterly, on the district's progress in implementing the recommendations and on the current student enrollment and attendance figures.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. Although no fiscal impact is being claimed as part of this recommendation, AISD could achieve additional revenues of $3.85 million annually if student attendance were to increase by even an additional 1 percent next year (77,000 students X 1% = 770 students X $5,000 = $3.85 million). A 5 percent enrollment increase over the next five years could result in additional annual revenues of $19.25 million (77,000 X 5% = 3,850 X $5,000 = $19.25 million).

FINDING

Coordination between AISD departments and divisions and school campuses in developing student enrollment projections has not been effective. For the 1999-2000 school year, initial enrollment projections for elementary schools and the total for all regular education campuses were accurate.

However, 1999-2000 student enrollment projections for AISD high schools and middle and junior high schools were from 1 to 5 percent of the target figure. Thus while overall district enrollment projections in 1999-2000 were accurate, some secondary campus-specific data varied in quality. Even a variance of several hundred students can have a significant effect on planning for facilities, textbooks, school staffing, food service and other vital district functions.

The accuracy of enrollment projections can also be undermined by flawed student attendance data collected by individual district campuses, particularly at the high school and middle school level. Given the district's recent problems with the integrity of student dropout data, the higher student enrollment projections developed for individual high schools and middle schools are at least partially affected by the inaccurate attendance numbers from those particular campuses.

Exhibit 1-4 provides the projected and the actual enrollment figures for the 1999-2000 school year for four consecutive six-week enrollment periods ending on February 18. All of the columns listed as "Difference" and "Percent Off-Target" represent the difference between the projected 1999-2000 student enrollment figures and the actual figures reported from the schools for the six-week period. Student enrollment on special campuses is represented separately in the exhibit.

A February 2000 reorganization placed the primary responsibility for developing student enrollment projections in the Office of Student Services and Planning under the deputy superintendent for Accountability and Information Systems. Before this reorganization, responsibility for developing enrollment projections was split between the office of Student Services and a planning group in the department of Construction Management and Maintenance Services. These two planning groups also obtained input from school principals and from support service administrators about conditions that would affect student enrollment. Some of the data collection is outsourced.

The methodology that is employed includes long-range planning models with up to ten years of historical data as well as shorter four-and one-year planning models. AISD's geographic approach includes monitoring household growth and decline in fully built subdivisions and projected building in undeveloped or in-fill property areas. A small area model divides the district into 1,042 planning areas within the 230 square mile AISD boundary. A cohort survival model, which uses a four-year history that shows enrollment progression from year-to-year through grade levels within schools, is used to project enrollment for new schools.

Student Services and Planning looks at growth and decline trends and uses ten years of historical data by school and by grade level. These numbers are further impacted by the average daily attendance reports generated by the schools, new boundaries tied to the opening of new schools and readjustment of boundaries for overcrowded schools. The first benchmarks for the next year projections are taken at the end of the first six weeks of classes. Final projections are made in March and are used in the budgeting process.

Exhibit 1-4
Projected and Actual Enrollment
1999-2000 School Year

School Level	Projected 1999-2000 Enrollment	Six Week Period Enrollment		Difference	Percent Off-Target
High Schools	20,266	1st Six Weeks Ending 09/17/99	20,045	-221	1%
		2nd Six Weeks Ending 10/31/99	19,901	-365	2%
		3rd Six Weeks Ending 12/16/99	19,720	-546	3%
		4th Six Weeks Ending 02/18/00	19,151	-1,115	5.5%
Middle/ Junior Highs	16,069	1st Six Weeks Ending 09/17/99	15,550	-519	3%
		2nd Six Weeks Ending 10/31/99	15,631	-438	3%

		3rd Six Weeks Ending 12/16/99	15,556	-513	3%
		4th Six Weeks Ending 02/18/00	15,695	-374	2%
Elementary Schools	42,113	1st Six Weeks Ending 09/17/99	42,442	+329	1%
		2nd Six Weeks Ending 10/31/99	42,157	+44	Less than .10%
		3rd Six Weeks Ending 12/16/99	42,091	-22	Less than .10%
		4th Six Weeks Ending 02/18/00	42,327	+214	0.5%
Special Campuses	187	1st Six Weeks Ending 09/17/99	159	-28	n/a
		2nd Six Weeks Ending 10/31/99	164	-23	n/a
		3rd Six Weeks Ending 12/16/99	143	-44	n/a
		4th Six Weeks Ending 02/18/00	135	-52	n/a

Total for all regular Schools Total for Special Campuses District Total	78,448 187 78,635	1st Six Weeks Ending 09/17/99 - Regular	78,037	-411	0.5%
		1st Six Weeks Ending 09/17/99 - Special	159	-28	n/a
		2nd Six Weeks Ending 10/31/99 - Regular	77,689	-759	1%
		2nd Six Weeks Ending 10/31/99 - Special	164	-23	n/a
		3rd Six Weeks Ending 12/16/99 - Regular	77,367	-1,081	1.4%
		3rd Six Weeks Ending 12/16/99 - Special	143	-44	n/a
		4th Six Weeks Ending 02/18/00 - Regular	77,173	-1,275	1.6%

		4th Six Weeks Ending 02/18/00 - Special	152	-35	n/a

Source: AISD Office of Student Services and Planning.

While these current enrollment numbers do not agree with enrollment figures reported to TEA or in other areas of this report, these were the most up-to-date numbers available from the district.

School districts that have similar or greater challenges than AISD and are able to consistently generate significantly better enrollment projections are Cypress-Fairbanks ISD (CFISD) and peer district, Northside ISD. According to CFISD's director of Planning and Research, their goal and the target that they achieve is within 1 percent of accuracy for each level of high school, middle and junior high school, and elementary. One percent is a general standard for districts the size of AISD.

Recommendation 6:

Create a cross-functional planning team to develop reliable student enrollment projections.

AISD should examine the core causes of inaccurate student enrollment projection. The district has now combined the function of projecting student enrollment that was previously split across Student Services and Planning Services in Construction Management. The next step is to develop a cross-functional district wide team to investigate current problems and shortcomings in methodology. The cross-functional team approach should be an ongoing district effort. More accurate projections will have a positive impact on many of AISD's planning efforts.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board president directs the superintendent to investigate the methodology and other possible sources or causes of inaccurate student enrollment projections.	May 2000
2.	The superintendent directs the Office of Student Services and Planning to create a cross functional districtwide planning team to investigate and to develop a better methodology.	June 2000
3.	The superintendent and team report the results to the board.	September 2000

4.	The superintendent directs the team to reevaluate the 2000-2001 school year enrollment projections and make recommendations for necessary adjustments.	October 2000
5.	The board and superintendent receive periodic progress reports from the team regarding the methodology and the accuracy of student enrollment projections.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Since the early 1990s, AISD's overall planning efforts have been fragmented and have not consistently met Texas Education Code requirements. The AISD board, superintendent, and the superintendent's leadership team are responsible for the district's overall planning effort. While the district does a generally good job of involving key players in the planning process-such as the board, central administration, school campus personnel, parents, business, and community leaders-AISD also has a history of starting a planning process and then failing to follow it through to completion.

The Texas Education Code requires school districts to develop a new DIP every year. Until recently, the last AISD DIP was completed and approved by the board in the early 1990s. A new DIP was drafted in 1997-98 but was not approved by the board. Superintendent Forgione completed a final draft DIP in November 1999. On January 10, 2000, the AISD board approved DIP district goals and objectives. The completed DIP was finalized and passed by the board in February 2000. The district had been without a current DIP since 1992.

A long-term strategic plan for the district was completed and approved by the board for the period of 1992 to 1997. A "Comprehensive Plan" was completed in 1997 to be implemented until 2001. This Comprehensive Plan, however, was never formally approved by the board. At the time of its completion, the board did not consider this plan to be a functional long-term strategic plan. Nevertheless, central administrators and principals made an effort to accomplish the plan's goals, which included a number of administrative initiatives.

In all, AISD lacks a comprehensive planning approach that ties long-term strategic goals to short-term management goals. In addition, the plans and reports that are produced vary in quality and usefulness. This problem affects all of the numerous types and levels of district plans and reports,

and suggest a need for better methods. Administrators do not use strategic planning as a management tool at the central or levels to achieve their stated goals and objectives. Good strategic planning can be used to support long- and short-term management plans.

A sample of completed plans approved by the board shows that most do not include an implementation methodology, timetables, assigned accountability for various action steps, analyses of their immediate and long-term impact on the district's budget, or methodologies for measuring plan outcomes. AISD's budget, moreover, is not used as a tool to support the planning process.

A best-practice example is Cypress-Fairbanks ISD's use of a comprehensive planning and budgeting process that integrates all of the district's plans and budgeting within a yearly timetable.

Exhibit 1-5 shows CFISD's planning and budget process. **Exhibit 1-6** describes the various plans, processes and reports.

Exhibit 1-5
Timetable
Cypress-Fairbanks ISD Yearly Planning and Budget Process

Planning Activities and Products	Month (by number)													
	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Long Range Plan		X	X	O	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	
Board Goal Setting		X	X	O	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	
District Improvement Plan			X	X	X	⇒	O	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
Budget Development		X	X	⇒	⇒	⇒	⇒	⇒	O	E	E	E	E	
Student Enrollment	x	X	⇒	O	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E		
Staffing	E	X	X	⇒	O	E	E	E	E	E	E			
Salary Package*	x	X	X	⇒	⇒	O								
Superintendent/ Principal Student Achievement Meetings										x	O	O	O	
Superintendent's Staff Development for Principals			O	O	O	O	O	O		O	O	O	O	O
Campus Improvement Plans			E	E	E	E	X	X	X	⇒	X	O	E	⇒
District Evaluation Report			E	O / X	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
District Performance Report			E	O / X	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E

Legend: x = planning begins; X = planning process begins; ⇒ = planning process is ongoing; O = process is complete/product presented; E = monitoring and evaluation is ongoing; * = non legislative year

Source: CFISD Central Administration/Superintendent's Office.

Exhibit 1-6
Description of
Cypress-Fairbanks ISD Yearly Planning and Budget Process

CFISD Plans and Reports	Description of CFISD Plans, Reports and Processes
Long Range Plan	The Long Range Plan encompasses five years and is developed based on the State Board of Education's Long Range Plan. District progress is constantly monitored and evaluated. The plan then is modified yearly to reflect current trends and measurements.
Board Goal Setting	The board sets annual district goals based on the Long Range Plan and evaluation and performance report data.

	The board drafts goals in February after receiving input from the community and staff.
District Improvement Plan	The District Improvement Plan is also referred to as the District Action Plan. It is developed based upon board goals. The DIP is approved by the board in May and then is given to the principals for their use in developing the Campus Improvement Plans. The annual DIP is required by the Texas Education Code for the purpose of guiding the district and campus staff in the improvement of student performance for all student groups to meet state standards concerning academic excellence indicators. Several district committees representing school personnel, central administrators, parents, business and community volunteers are part of subcommittees that form the DIP committee. These subcommittees provide recommendations and input into the development of the plan.
Budget Development	The development of the district budget begins in December and is adopted in July or August. Budget data are incorporated in the development of the DIP and CIPs.
Student Enrollment	Planning begins for the calculation of yearly student enrollment numbers in November of every year for the next school calendar year beginning in August. CFISD also has an ongoing, long-range planning process for projecting student enrollment.
Staffing	Projections for the staffing needs of schools and administration support services begin in January of every year for the next school calendar year that begins in August. Staffing is integrally linked to the student enrollment projections.
Salary Package	Planning for the employee salary package begins in January of every year. The package is developed based on the fiscal impact of student enrollment projections and the district's budget for the next calendar year.
Superintendent/ Principal Student Achievement Meetings	The superintendent meets with every campus principal through the months of October, November, and December to discuss each campus' performance and goals, improvement opportunities and actions the central administration can take to help each school achieve its goals. The progress of each campus is monitored and evaluated by and meetings continue to take place as required.
Superintendent's	The superintendent provides staff development for

staff development for principals	principals each month. Training is focused on leadership.
Campus Improvement Plans	Planning for the development of Campus Improvement Plans begins in May of every year. CIPs are completed and then approved by the board in October of every year. Each school forms a CIP Committee, made up of representatives of school personnel, parents, and business and community representatives, who help develop the plan.
District Evaluation Report	The District Evaluation Report, as required by the Texas Education Code, is reported concurrently with the District Student Performance Report and provides statistical data that evaluates the accomplishment of board goals and the District Action Plan or DIP.
District (Student) Performance Report	The District (Student) Performance Report, required by the Texas Education Code, is reported concurrently with the District Evaluation Report and provides statistical data that evaluates Goal 1a - Student Performance and Academic Achievement, in the DIP. Also included in the evaluation data is the Academic Excellence Indicator System Report.

Source: CFISD Central Administration/Superintendent's Office.

Recommendation 7:

Create and link various district plans based on proven planning and evaluation principles and processes.

By using the CFISD or a similar example above as a model and adapting it to AISD, the district could begin to institutionalize a planning process that meets Texas Education Code requirements and results in a structured, reliable approach to district planning.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board directs the superintendent to develop a comprehensive planning process based on the CFISD or a similar model.	July 2000
2.	The board approves and supports the model.	September 2000
3.	The superintendent makes an annual report to the board regarding the implementation and impact of the model.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

In interviews and a focus group, AISD principals said they find the centrally imposed CIP development process cumbersome and the product inadequate as a management tool. Section 11.252(d) of the Texas Education Code requires each district to evaluate its decision-making and planning policies, procedures, and staff training activities at least biennially to ensure that they are effective. AISD's principals indicated that this evaluation either is not being done or is ineffective in making real change in the CIP development process.

The principals believe that the CIPs take an inordinate amount of time to develop, considering their benefits. They say that the CIP is a chore rather than a meaningful exercise because the result is not a useful tool. A strong complaint is that the required software provided by central administration for developing the plan is inadequate. It does not allow space for the full expression of the developers' plans and is seen as a roadblock to meaningful content.

Principals also said the value of the CIP should be in how it inspires the achievement of plans and goals in everyday practice and the regular use of it in faculty meetings and within the vertical teams. According to this group, that does not occur.

Another obstacle is how the plan's student and school performance data requirements must be generated and evaluated. School administrators, teachers, and support staff do not want to nor are necessarily capable of digging through all of the data. Central administration is perceived as providing little or no support for this data collection and analysis. In addition, because the AISD CIP is so TAAS-driven, principals of high-performing schools or those who are concerned about motivation of individual high performing students feel that they are not encouraged to set goals outside of its curriculum limitations and special program boundaries. Principals generally agreed that higher-goal setting would help all students.

Recommendation 8:

Improve the development of Campus Improvement Plans.

An evaluation of the current process and subsequent implementation of appropriate changes would result in a CIP that can help each campus focus

on student achievement goals and learning, and should also evaluate how central administration's weak support for data development, management, and analysis affects the development and use of CIPs.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board directs the superintendent to assemble an evaluation team made up of principals, teachers, district administrators, and others who make up CIP committees conduct an evaluation of the CIP development process.	July-August 2000
2.	The superintendent assigns responsibility for the evaluation project to the deputy superintendent of Accountability & Information Systems.	July-August 2000
3.	The deputy superintendent conducts the evaluation and develops recommendations.	September-November 2000
4.	The superintendent recommendations presents to the board for approval.	November 2000
5.	The superintendent recommendations implements for the next CIP development cycle school year of 2002-2003.	September 2000
6.	Every two years, the superintendent assembles another evaluation team to repeat the process.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 1

C. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Policies and procedures are necessary to the management of any organization, particularly those as complex as a local school district. Policies support and sustain the organization's guiding principles and goals. They become a contract that holds an organization to a standard of behavior. Procedures are developed to implement policy.

Texas independent school districts have two levels of policies-those that derive from Texas law, particularly the Education Code, and local school board policies developed to support the implementation of state policies. Procedures developed at the local level to implement state and local policies become part of a district's administrative guidelines or regulations manual.

Exemplary school districts have up-to-date policy manuals and accompanying administrative procedures that support sound management practices. Successful districts see policy as an opportunity to implement district goals, and develop procedures to ensure that these outcomes are achieved.

FINDING

Neither AISD's *Board of Trustees Policy Manual* nor its administrative procedures are up-to-date. The Education Code requires school districts to keep board policy manuals and administrative management guidelines up-to-date, yet much of the state policies contained in AISD's manual are incomplete or outdated. Some local policies and procedures are outdated as well. While some sections of the manual have been updated, AISD has not comprehensively reviewed and updated its entire policy manual since the mid-1980s.

Administrators of large urban districts often assume that their issues and problems are unique. They attempt to reinvent programs, processes and systems that can be acquired elsewhere for far less than the cost of creating and developing them in-house. School districts, for instance, can use TASB's policy development service to update state policies and develop local ones to comply with the Education Code. TASB also has a "Policy On-Line" service that offers online access to the manual. Users can navigate through the manual by accessing a discrete district site. A search engine allows users to conduct "keyword" searches. Two of AISD's peer districts use the online policy service. Spring ISD subscribes to the

service and plans to put its own administrative guidelines and regulations online as well.

One board member said that AISD's board previously approved the use of TASB policy service and participation in "Policy On-Line." As of January 2000, however, the district was not using the policy service fully and was not online. In February 2000, the AISD administration presented a plan to the board to use TASB's policy service and to put the district's polices on-line. In focus groups, principals and other AISD employees expressed a strong interest in the online service. This group is keenly aware that AISD's policies and procedures are severely outdated.

Recommendation 9:

Update the board Policy Manual and regulations and put the manual online.

The board should immediately enlist the policy update services of TASB to ensure that AISD's policy manual is current for all Texas legal statutes and local policy. TASB's system for distributing legal updates is routine; changes in leadership or administration should not interfere with the updating and maintenance of the legal sections of the manual. Keeping it current then would become an in-house task of distributing TASB updates to the appropriate administrators and board members.

The next step, after the local policy in the manual is updated, is to subscribe to TASB's "Policy on Line."

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent assigns the director of Special Projects and Intergovernmental Relations responsibility for coordinating state policy updates and the development and revision of local policy with TASB.	February 2000- Completed
2.	The board approves the use of the TASB policy update service.	February 2000- Completed
3.	The director develops a timeline with TASB to complete state and local policy development and revisions that include the process of board review and adoption.	February 2000- Completed
4.	The director develops a timeline to subscribe to TASB's "Policy On-Line" that allows for board review and approval.	May 2000
5.	The director updates district policies.	June 2000- Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

TASB policy update development charges are based on actual consultant time at a rate of $80 an hour. The hourly rate includes the consultant's compensation and benefits and the cost of proofing, production support, and administrative overhead. Because AISD has significant policy issues to resolve, cumulative billing may reach 150 hours, or approximately $12,000. This would be a one-time, up-front charge. Participating in the updating service costs an average of less than $2,000 per year.

The first-year fee for TASB's "Policy On Line" service is $1,700. This pays for a software license, installation, and support. In subsequent years, "Policy On Line" customers are assessed a $750 maintenance fee.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Update the board *Policy Manual* and regulations and put the manual online.	($13,700)	($2,750)	($2,750)	($2,750)	($2,750)

FINDING

Given its lack of an updated policy manual, AISD has no central source to which administrators and the public may refer to determine and correctly implement state and local policies. Participants in a principals' focus group said that "there is no person or source to tell you the policy on any issue or, if there is a policy, what procedures should be used to implement it" and "there are no updates to policy being sent to administrators."

Local AISD policy holds the superintendent and administrative staff responsible for developing and enforcing procedures for the district's operation. This policy is consistent with the duties of the superintendent outlined in Education Code 11.201(d). Procedures must be consistent with board policy and law and should be designed to achieve the district's goals and objectives. All administrative regulations, including manuals, handbooks, guides, and forms, must be kept up-to-date. The Government Code also requires that regulations and support materials be made accessible to staff and to the public.

El Paso ISD distributes a comprehensive binder containing bulletins with specific directions and procedures for implementing district policies. The binder is distributed to each district department and is used to interpret the meaning of both state and local policies. The binder contains bulletins covering the following functional areas:

- Communications and Business Partnerships

- Finance
- Operations (includes custodial, facilities, food service, transportation, and warehouse operations)
- Regions
- Superintendent's Office
- Support Services (includes curriculum and instruction, human resources, research and evaluation, special services, and technology and information systems)

Recommendation 10:

Develop administrative procedures and guidelines incorporating instructive examples to aid the implementation of district policy.

This process will also give AISD the opportunity to reengineer district programs in consultation with departmental staff.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent assigns the director of Special Projects and Intergovernmental Relations the responsibility for coordinating and developing administrative procedures and guidelines.	May 2000
2.	The director develops a timeline to complete the development of administrative procedures and guidelines that includes coordination with the policy update and development process, coordination with district staff and board reviews.	June 2000
3.	The director begins the coordination and development of administrative procedures and guidelines.	July 2000
4.	The director begins to compile a binder of administrative procedures and guidelines and regulations.	August 2000
5.	The director ensures that the binder is completed and is available to the public and is updated on a regular schedule.	November 2000 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

AISD is not complying with the Education Code in regard to charter schools and programs (Section 12.058). The code requires all school districts to adopt local policies addressing campus charters and campus

program charters by January 1, 1998. The concepts of open enrollment charters were approved by the State Board of Education in 1995. In rewrites of the Education Code during the 1997 legislative session, school boards were given the authority to grant charters to designated campuses and programs within their districts.

A school granted a campus charter remains part of the school district but is granted the freedom to operate according to provisions in its charter and free from certain district rules and policies. A campus charter is given to the parents and teachers of an existing school who, under the charter, can put in place their preferred instructional programs.

Unlike open enrollment charters, locally granted charter schools and programs come from and remain a part of the districts that form them. Local boards have a voice in their establishment and continuation and students attending a charter campus or program remain students of the district. In passing this legislation, the Legislature indicated its support for innovation and flexibility in traditional public education.

Recommendation 11:

Develop a local policy and guidelines for charter campuses and charter programs.

The local policy should define a process for the application and approval of campus charters or campus program charters based on state legal guidelines. For example, a petition for support of a campus charter or program must be signed by a majority of both the school's parents and teachers.

AISD can refer to TASB's Policy On-Line Service to obtain a tool kit called *Starting Points* that contains information regarding legislative requirements as well as suggestions for how local policies should be written to comply with state law.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent develops a local policy to implement a state mandate guiding the creation of Charter Campuses and Charter Programs within the district.	May 2000
2.	The board approves the policy along with implementation procedures and guidelines.	July 2000
3.	The superintendent offers a training and information session to inform district parents and teachers about the policy.	September 2000

4.	The superintendent implements the policy.	September 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

AISD complies with state law in retaining records for the appropriate length of time. However, the district has no system to assure that records are not kept too long or are tracked or labeled adequately. Systematic districtwide storage procedures are not in place. The result is paper piling up in office areas and an abundance of file cabinets. The manual and paper-intensive nature of many of the district's business and education management processes creates a challenge for managing the control, tracking, retention, storage, and disposal of paper records. In central administration, each department or service area is given a space in the basement of the Carruth Administration Building. AISD has taken some steps to reduce the space needed for storage by placing some records onto microfiche, scanning some records, and archiving data onto CD-ROM.

All public school districts in Texas are required to follow detailed state laws and guidelines for records retention (Local Government Records Act of 1989). These guidelines govern management and retention of records including, among others, student academic records, district financial records, transportation and food service records, and individual employee records. The Texas State Library and Archives Commission is the state agency responsible for distributing the records retention guidelines and schedule to all school districts.

AISD's Office of Student Services and Planning receives and is responsible for distributing these guidelines on an annual basis. While the office coordinates the district's records retention and management activities, it does not regulate enforcement. Student Services and Planning distributes the State Library's guidelines to each school and department. From that point, each principal and department head is the party responsible for adhering to the state guidelines. The office also coordinates periodic meetings with various department heads and operations personnel to discuss strategies for dealing with records management and alternative methods for storing documents.

The Arlington Independent School District created a department of Records Management in the mid-1990s. The mission of the group was to develop a records management program to meet the requirements of state

law and to better manage and purge accumulated records. The sequence of implementation steps the district took to accomplish the mission follow.

- Created a records management group accountable for developing, implementing and maintaining the program
- Designated discrete facilities as central records storage centers
- Acquired a software package that controls and tracks records from creation to destruction which can be used and expanded on both a network and on personal computers
- Used the software's support package that includes updates on new schedules published by the Texas State Library and Archive Commission
- Did a comprehensive inventory of records located throughout the district
- Developed the local retention schedule required by law using the software
- Added, deleted and customized records
- Used the software to do one-time entries of departments, forms, local owners, location of records and other data
- Formed a records management committee to approve creation of all new forms
- Standardized file storage of records into uniform file cabinets and storage containers and how files are labeled
- Standardized the classification and status of records
- Developed a system for destroying records at the end of each calendar month

According to Arlington ISD's Records Management Officer, the district has saved thousands of dollars each year with a computerized and better organized record labeling, storage and purging system.

Recommendation 12:

Develop a districtwide records management policy, guidelines and procedures.

A good records management system that includes a computerized component can support a district's efforts to comply with state law. It can also save thousands of dollars a year in storage space requirements, in time spent filing and retrieving records and in deciding how records will be retained and when they will be destroyed.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	With the direction of the board of trustees, the superintendent assigns the responsibility of developing a	July 2000

	district records management policy to the office of Student Services and Planning.	
2.	The office forms a multi-disciplinary task force to develop a new records management policy. The task force should consist of various service department heads and school administrators.	July 2000
3.	The task force drafts a new records management policy, guidelines and procedures.	July 2000- August 2000
4.	The task force seeks board approval of the policy and the acquisition of necessary resources, including the purchase of software.	September 2000
5.	The task force develops a training course for all department managers and administrators in how to use the software, conduct an inventory and other applicable processes.	October 2000
6.	The task force trains all department managers and administrators.	November 2000- December 2000
7.	The policy is implemented district-wide.	January 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

The recommendation will require a one-time cost of approximately $14,000 for a records control, management and retention schedule software package. Annual updates will cost approximately $1,200 per year. As a cost savings, uniform records containers can be recycled and purged paper can be sold in compliance with Texas Local Records Law (September 1986) to a recycling company.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Develop a districtwide records management policy, guidelines and procedures.	($14,000)	($1,200)	($1,200)	($1,200)	($1,200)

Chapter 1

D. DISTRICT MANAGEMENT

Texas school districts are managed by a superintendent and senior administrators or cabinet members. The superintendent's primary duties include:

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

AISD's board encouraged and supported the new superintendent's review of top-level administrators and expected a reorganization of the administration. In December 1999, the superintendent announced his reorganization as essentially complete. His goal is to create a structure that lends itself to better managerial accountability. He is arranging departments and divisions under deputy superintendents who have experience and expertise in the areas they manage.

All four of his deputy superintendents were hired, with a few positions remaining to be filled within four administrative areas and Internal Audit. The deputy superintendents manage Accountability and Information Systems, Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development, Finances/Chief Financial Officer, and Bilingual Education and Human Resources Development. Three of the four deputy superintendents hired are new to the district.

In addition to the deputy superintendents, five other administrators report directly to the superintendent; these include a special assistant and divisions responsible for Special Projects and Intergovernmental

Relations, Communication and Media Services, Internal Audit, and Development and Community Partnerships.

In addition to six department and division heads, the deputy superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development manages five area superintendents who in turn manage vertical administrative teams made up of secondary, middle, and elementary principals.

Exhibit 1-7 illustrates the organization structure of AISD.

Exhibit 1-7
AISD District Organization and Management
Organization Structure
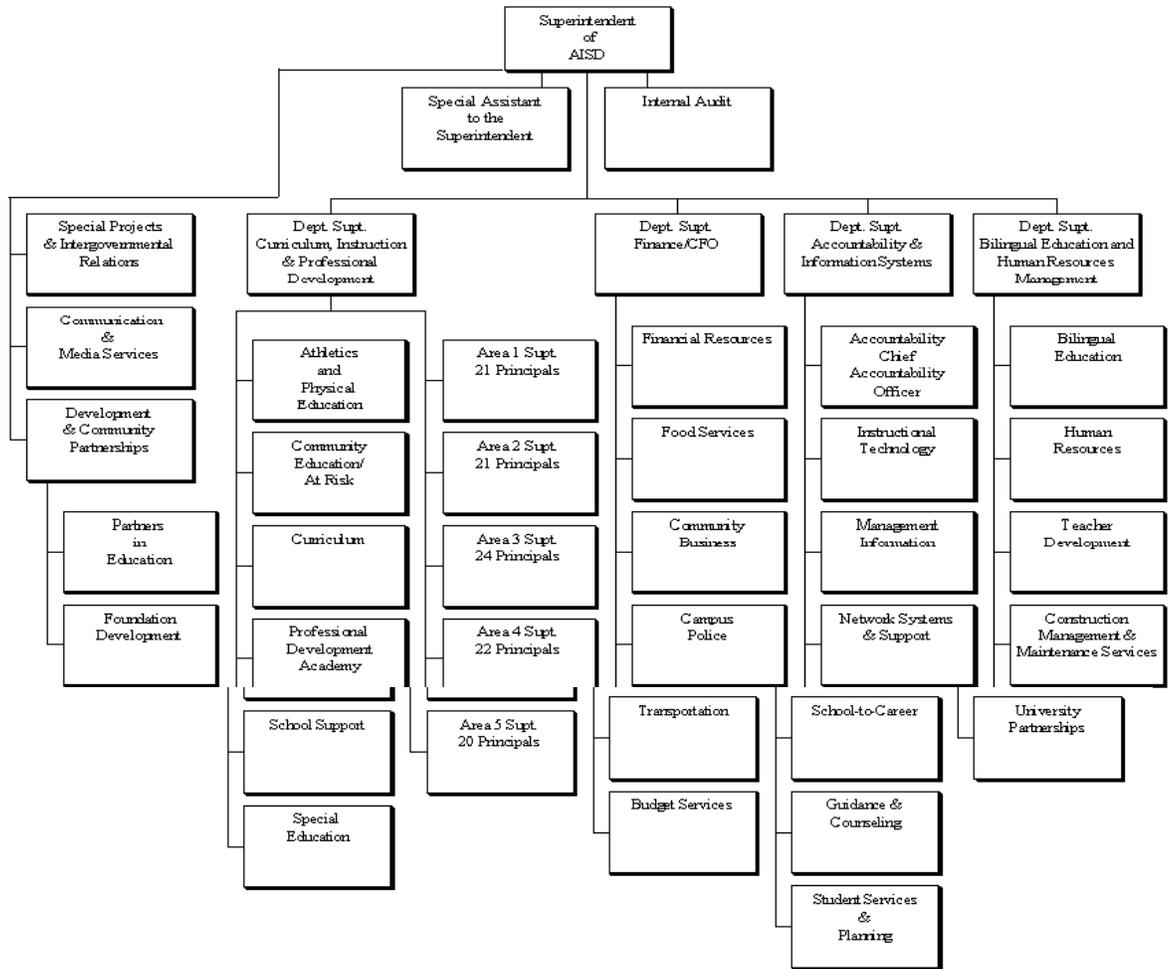
Source: AISD Director of Special Projects & Intergovernmental Relations.

FINDING

Superintendent Forgione arrived in August 1999 and quickly assessed the leadership in top administrative positions. With the support of the board, he proceeded to reassign administrators and hire individuals to fill vacant and newly created positions. While this decisive approach created some anxiety, it also helped to create a useful sense of urgency. The superintendent has made it clear that he expects results from district employees and will help them succeed.

The superintendent asked AISD principals and administrators to send him their thoughts on a shared vision for the district and to list their

suggestions about the types of actions and procedures that could make a real difference in the district's operations. This was, in effect, a quick organizational audit. In October 1999, he shared their responses in an informal communication that listed the issues described and his analysis. Making the results of this inquiry public revealed many systemic problems that affect the district's support services and how these problem areas affect student achievement.

Moreover, with board support, he reorganized AISD's executive cabinet and put a new management team into place. This team is made up of nationally recognized experts in their respective fields.

COMMENDATION

AISD's superintendent has demonstrated decisive leadership and vision in managing organizational change and moving the district toward achieving its stated mission and goals.

FINDING

Considering that AISD's primary mission is the education of students, funding priorities seem focused inward. The number of deputy superintendents, assistants, associates, special assistants, directors and other executive and management personnel suggest "title inflation" and "position creep" within the ranks of central administration.

The chain-of-command in an organization is the network through which communication occurs and work is achieved. In AISD, lines of communication have broken down. Focus groups told TSPR that seeking information, starting at the school level and working through the chain-of-command, can be a frustrating process.

Since 1996-97, AISD's budget has grown by more than 48 percent, from $390.7 million to $579 million in 1999-2000, while student enrollment during this same time period has risen by only 4.6 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 $12.5 million in 1996-97 to $15.2 million in 1999-2000, an increase of 22 percent.

The definition of central administration can, in some cases, be misleading. For example, the Carruth Administration Building alone houses 441 AISD employees; 68 more AISD employees are located in two other administrative centers. The general public refers to these 509 people as

administrators. Yet AISD reported only 50 central administrators to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) in 1998-99, using the definitions that all school districts use for accounting and reporting purposes. For reporting purposes, these central administrators do not include such positions as assistant and deputy superintendents for guidance and counseling or coordinators, directors, or assistant superintendents for instruction that are classified by TEA as Instructional Leadership or Support functions.

Recommendation 13:

Reduce the levels of administration between line staff and the superintendent.

At a minimum, AISD should set a goal of reducing the number of administrative positions specifically assigned to work in the central office, regardless of the titles or TEA classifications, by 15 percent. When instituting these reductions in force, the district should examine positions to determine the value being added to classroom instruction by the retention of that position.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	Superintendent notifies each department and division in central administration to prepare a plan for a reduction in force by a minimum of 15 percent.	May 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.	June 2000
3.	The superintendent compiles the plans and presents a new staffing plan to the board for final approval.	July 2000
4.	Staffing reductions are implemented in each department and division in central administration based upon the approved plan.	August 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

Assuming that 15 percent of the administrative staff currently housed in the Carruth Administration Building and elsewhere are reduced, 76 positions would be eliminated. Average central administrators, professionals and classified employee base salaries range from $25,000 to $85,000, without benefits. Benefits include $1,947 for health, life and dental insurance plus 7.65 percent for FICA and 1 percent for workers' compensation for administrative, professional and clerical staff. Assuming an average salary for each position eliminated of $42,242 plus benefits, or $47,843, annual savings of $3,636,068 (76 X $47,843) are estimated.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Reduce the levels of administration between line staff and the superintendent.	$3,636,068	$3,636,068	$3,636,068	$3,636,068	$3,636,068

FINDING

The Carruth Administration Center is inadequate for the functional and economical operation of AISD's school and business administration. Before the district purchased the property and redesigned and renovated its buildings, the Carruth Administration Center was a dual-use small commercial retail and multi-family apartment complex. The cost of operating the complex is high. Separate air conditioning units must be maintained and are more expensive to operate than a single large plant would be. The multiple roofs and many outside walls and entrances add to the site's maintenance costs. The multi-building layout also is awkward. The general public and parents who visit the complex find that locating the right office can be difficult and available parking during the business day is sparse. Structurally, the center offers limited flexibility, since walls cannot be moved without great expense.

The boardroom is a case in point. The arrangement of the dais in the boardroom and the pillars interspersed throughout the public seating area do not enhance communication. The dais is not curved so that board members can see each other during board discussion. Instead, members often must look at monitors to see the faces of those who are speaking. The public and district staff also are forced to look around pillars to see the board and each other; otherwise they must also look at a television screen. Board members sometimes ask presenters to move so that they can be seen. In all, the room does not support easy board interaction and communication.

The Carruth Administration Center cannot be economically redesigned for optimal use. As of March 2000, the Carruth Administration Center housed 441 persons. About 60 other employees were moved from Carruth to the district's Baker complex because of crowded conditions.

AISD has existing school facilities that are significantly underused and that could readily accommodate the district's central administrative staff. For example, Reagan High School operates at only 60 percent of its permanent classroom capacity.

Recommendation 14:

Sell the Carruth Administration Center and move the central administration function to the Reagan High School facility.

By relocating its central office to the campus of Reagan High School, AISD could make more efficient use of an existing facility and bring administrators back to a school environment.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board directs the superintendent to develop plans to transform Reagan High School into AISD's central administration office and, with redistricting, to transfer students currently assigned to Reagan to other area high schools.	June 2000
2.	The board votes to sell the Carruth Administration Center and to renovate Reagan High School.	August 2000
3.	The superintendent and executive cabinet begin to renovate Reagan High School and Carruth Administration Center is put up for sale.	June 2002
4.	The superintendent oversees renovation of Reagan High School until the work is substantially completed and move-in begins.	July 2002 and Ongoing
5.	Students currently assigned to Reagan High School begin to attend other AISD high schools.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

The 1999 Travis County Appraisal District valuation of Carruth Administration Center is $12.1 million. Based upon an estimated 4 percent increase in appraised values, TSPR estimates that AISD could realize one-time revenue in 2002-03 of $13 million for the sale of the Carruth complex. TSPR also assumes that AISD will incur one-time moving and renovation expenses of $1.25 million, resulting in additional net revenue of $11,750,000.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Sell the Carruth Administration Center and move the central administration function to the Reagan High School facility.	$0	$0	$11,750,000	$0	$0

FINDING

AISD established five area superintendent positions in 1992. The persons filling these five positions since that time have had relatively short tenures. Since 1996-97, there has not been a full school year in which all five positions were filled. As of January 2000, one position was vacant and another had just been filled. The area superintendents are managed by and report to the deputy superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development. The deputy superintendent has significant additional responsibilities in managing six support departments, including curriculum, special education, and professional development, whose missions are vital to educating children.

The area superintendents manage and evaluate district principals in vertically aligned teams that include secondary schools and their "feeder" primary and middle schools. The original premise of this structure was that the area superintendents would be strong managerial and instructional mentors who would serve as model leaders and coaches for principals. In interviews, focus groups, and surveys during fall and early winter 1999, a common theme emerged among board members, parents, administrators, community members, and business people: The role of the area superintendents is not clear and their record of performance as a group is mixed.

Principals vary in their evaluation of area superintendents. Many principals, for example, believe that central administration support services, particularly in the areas of technology and human resources, are not addressing the schools' needs effectively. Some principals who are new to the district see the area superintendents as a source of help when asking for services from central administration. Others with more experience in the district have developed their own relationships with central support services departments and do not require their area superintendent's help.

The amount of time area superintendents spend in their respective schools varies. One principal said in a survey that "more time should be spent evaluating principals at the schools, not just on paper." Another said "we need campus administrators to be supervised closely by area superintendents." Another principal observed: "AISD [vertical teams] are run by area superintendents that intimidate people and have forgotten that the bottom line is what's best for the kids."

The lack of consistent leadership from the area superintendents is a problem for AISD's vertical teams. In fall 1999, the superintendent announced plans to "reinvent" the area superintendent positions. His goal

is to define their role as a student-focused curriculum and instructional leader and mentor to principals.

Recommendation 15:

Clearly define the role and responsibilities of area superintendents and change their reporting relationships to the superintendent.

The area superintendent position's role and responsibilities should be clearly defined. The responsibilities should be defined within categories such as evaluation of principals, curriculum and instructional leadership and mentorship, central administration support services, and community. The job definition also should define the limits of the role-what the job is not. This approach should help create appropriate expectations on the part of the area superintendents, principals, central administration staff, the board, parents, and the community at large.

Area superintendents should be managed by and report directly to the superintendent, who in turn should hold them directly accountable for the performance of principals and schools within their area. Their annual evaluations should include specific performance measurements that focus on student achievement and leadership as well as an annual survey that asks principals, administrators, and others to evaluate how they are doing. Every year, a job match evaluation should be conducted to ensure that the people in these five positions fit the job and can perform the role.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent forms a task force to develop a job description and evaluation for the area superintendent position. The task force includes the superintendent, all four deputy superintendents, a parent and a business representative, two current area superintendents, and others whom the superintendent deems appropriate.	May 2000
2.	The task force develops a job description and evaluation and presents them to the board for review and comment.	July 2000
3.	The job description and evaluation are adopted and put into place.	August 2000
4.	Area superintendents are interviewed by the superintendent, the deputy superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development and others to review the position and assure a match between the job and the person, looking at expectations, commitment, experience and skills.	August 2000
5.	The superintendent and deputy superintendents, together with the	September

	area superintendents, evaluate the results of the interview and identify the strengths and weaknesses of the area superintendents.	2000
6.	The superintendent, along with the deputy superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development and others as assigned, designs a professional development program for each of the area superintendents that will become part of their annual evaluation.	September 2000
7.	The area superintendents commit to work together as a team to share their strengths and build greater competency in areas of weakness.	Ongoing
8.	Interviews and evaluations occur twice a year.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

AISD outsources all of its legal services. For three years, from 1996-97 through 1998-99, AISD spent $4,066,295 on legal fees. Compared to other districts of similar size and complexity, AISD's legal expenses are excessive. **Exhibit 1-8** shows AISD legal expenses, by category. Some firms are retained for more than one area of legal counsel. For example AISD's General Counsel Services includes all legal services categories under the lead law firm, AISD's general counsel. Another firm is retained for four different types of legal work and the totals reflect expenses for all four categories. AISD retains about a dozen law firms in all. The costs of hearings and settlements are separated at the bottom of the exhibit starting with the category of "Personnel Hearing."

Exhibit 1-8
AISD Legal Expenses

Legal Category	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	TOTAL
Administrative Legal Costs				
General Counsel Services	$564,914	$787,619	$1,080,544	$2,433,077
Special Education	$165,827	$126,545	$183,455	$475,827
Trustees, Students, Personnel, Greater Austin Area Telecommunications Network (GAATN)	$273,697	$97,518	$42,813	$414,028

Fiber Optics Sale/Lease, Network Infrastructure	$53,881	$73,559	$113,390	$240,830
Trustees			$206,556	$206,556
Bond		$124,349		$124,349
Tax Roll Audit			$57,585	$57,585
GAATN		$13,511	$41,513	$55,024
Capital Metro	$2,964	$1,377		$4,341
Sub-Total	$1,061,283	$1,224,478	$1,725,856	$4,011,617
Hearings/Settlements/Court Costs				
Personnel Hearing	$3,351	$367	$11,658	$15,376
Special Education Hearing	$5,750	$1,500		$7,250
Hearing	$5,717			$5,717
Special Education Settlement	$6,549		$8,100	$14,649
Title VI	$1,027			$1,027
Other court hearing fees	$10,659			$10,659
Sub-Total	$33,053	$1,867	$19,758	$54,678
TOTAL	**$1,094,336**	**$1,226,345**	**$1,745,614**	**$4,066,295**

Source: AISD Central Administration and Bickerstaff, Heath & Smiley, AISD General Counsel

The exhibit above includes all categories, including operational expenses of attorney and legal services that the district uses. An example of a type of legal expense AISD incurs under general services is legal counsel used to review and respond to open records requests. State law does not allow AISD to charge for the legal fees it incurs in reviewing and responding to open records requests. As AISD does not have in-house counsel, it refers to its general counsel. In 1999, over the course of three months, AISD used 30 hours of legal services to review open records requests at a cost of about $4,000. Other examples are a March 1998 invoice from the district's general counsel that billed AISD $6,450 for legal counsel in regard to a contract with a soft drink firm for vending machine sales. The firm also billed the district $28,163 for Policy Manual updates in the same month.

AISD conducted a survey of the legal expenses for the 1998-99 school year of a number of school districts throughout the state in February of 2000. Of the districts that responded by early March, the cost of legal services ranged from approximately $465,000 for El Paso ISD, $750,500

for Corpus Christi ISD, $1.065 million for San Antonio ISD and $2.127 million for Houston ISD.

While Cypress-Fairbanks is smaller than AISD by about 17,000 students, it has some similar urban characteristics on its east side and has a growing minority and special education population. Cypress-Fairbanks has also been one of the fastest growth districts in the State of Texas over the last decade. In the past five years, the rate of growth of bilingual students has been significantly higher than non-bilingual students.

Before Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District hired an in-house attorney in November of 1996, its three-year average for legal expenses for the 1993-94, 94-95 and 95-96 school years was $329,475. This figure includes litigation costs but does not include bond counsel expenses for bond issues. The district's associate superintendent of Business Services indicated that each bond sale incurs between $20-$25,000 in legal expenses which are charged to the bond issue. After the in-house lawyer was retained, the three-year average for legal expenses for the 1996-97, 97-98 and 98-99 school years dropped to $249,236. Again, this total does not include bond counsel expenses for a building program that was being implemented. These figures, both before and after the district hired in-house counsel, are significantly below AISD's expenses for the same period.

According to the associate superintendent of business services, Cypress-Fairbanks ISD reports a cost savings of $75,000 per year since hiring an in-house attorney and a secretary to assist the attorney. Cost savings do not reflect the savings gained by the in-house attorney's containment of legal expenses over three years or the benefit to the district of having counsel to refer to on a daily basis. The attorney attends all district board meetings and besides the practice of general law, has significant expertise in three areas, special education, personnel, and policy development. The district strategically hired an attorney who brought this type of expertise with her to the job so that outside counsel expenses could be reduced.

Some AISD's legal costs are related to the district's lack of updated board policies and absent procedures and regulatory guidelines. Training is also deficient in areas of special education and personnel. Once the district gets these areas in order, its legal expenses should begin to diminish. The board and superintendent will not be obliged to use outside legal counsel to do work that could be done by administrative staff.

Recommendation 16:

Hire an in-house attorney, a legal assistant, and a secretary to reduce the district's legal costs.

An in-house lawyer and a small staff could greatly assist the district in bringing its legal expenses to a level more in line with its peers. The legal group would handle routine legal services and assist with litigation. The district should hire an attorney, who reports to the superintendent, with proven expertise in general education law as well as some experience in specific areas such as special education. The district should consider top expense categories such as special education, personnel, and policy development when hiring its legal group.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board recommends that the positions of attorney, legal assistant, and a legal secretary be created.	June 2000
2.	The director of Human Resources ensures that job descriptions are developed and advertised.	July 2000
3.	The director fills the positions.	August 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost of hiring an attorney and staff for AISD is based on a salary of $90,000 for the attorney plus benefits of $9,732, $45,000 salary for a legal assistant plus benefits of $5,840 and $26,000 salary for a legal secretary plus benefits of $4,196 and an additional allowance of $40,000 a year for training, supplies, legal documents and reference materials. Based on this estimate, the cost of hiring the group would be $180,768 per year plus an annual allowance of $40,000. AISD should be able to reduce its costs for outside legal services by up to 50 percent over the next five years assuming average annual legal costs of $1,485,979 (the average of 1997-98 and 1998-99). In 2000-01, TSPR assumes AISD can reduce legal costs by 10 percent; in 2001-02, by 20 percent; in 2002-03 by 30 percent, in 2003-04 by 40 percent; and in 2004-05 by 50 percent. Five year savings would amount to more than $1.1 million.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Hire an in-house attorney, a legal assistant, and a secretary to reduce the district's legal costs.	($220,768)	($220,768)	($220,768)	($220,768)	($220,768)
Reduced legal costs.	($148,598)	$297,196	$445,794	$594,392	$742,990

Net Savings (costs).	($72,170)	$76,428	$225,026	$373,624	$522,222

FINDING

AISD's local legal policy is not adequate to control costs and provide a framework for the use of legal counsel. In addition, the district has no written procedures to guide the board and staff in making the best use of attorney time and expertise.

A local policy issued in October 1998 allows the board attorney, general counsel or referred counsel to "be available, within reasonable limits, to serve as a consultant to individual board members, the superintendent and other designated personnel, and to advise them in the formulation of recommendations or discussions they may be required to make in execution of their responsibilities." In September 1999, the board authorized the superintendent to use specialized legal aid on a case-by-case basis due to the need for specialized experts. This change went into effect when the TAAS investigation was initiated.

The lack of clear guidelines within this framework allows the board and administration to indiscriminately call on legal counsel for advice. An example is AISD's costs associated with trustee-generated legal requests; see **Exhibit 1-8**.

Specific referral policies on legal matters are managed by AISD's general counsel. A 1995 memorandum from the general counsel to the board and superintendent provides an explanation of how the referral policy operates. The document states that "legal matters will be referred by the district to the general counsel." The decision as to whether a legal matter is referred to another firm is based "on the professional judgment of the general counsel." Generally, a referral will be made if a conflict of interest is involved or if specialty counsel has significant expertise in the relevant field or prior experience with a particular matter. This policy is broad and gives the general counsel a great deal of discretion.

Recommendation 17:

Develop a new local policy and guidelines for using legal counsel.

Better local policy and guidelines for the use of legal counsel by administrators and trustees should help reduce AISD's legal costs. The policy and guidelines should be designed to provide stricter control over the referral policies of AISD's general counsel. Clear guidelines regarding trustee and administrative staff use of all internal and external legal

counsel should be developed by the administration and in-house legal counsel and supported by the board.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board directs the administration to develop new local policy and guidelines for using legal counsel; these would include consideration of the costs involved in requests for proposals for outside or external professional legal services.	May 2000
2.	The director of Special Projects and Intergovernmental Relations and in-house legal staff, if hired, ensures that the policy and guidelines are developed.	June 2000
3.	The policy is approved by the board and guidelines are completed and reviewed periodically.	September 2000 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 1

E. SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND SITE-BASED DECISION-MAKING

Effective schools meet the needs of communities they serve. Population diversity, the economic and ethnic background of the students, special service requirements, the adequacy of facilities, staffing resources, and the instructional priorities of the community all help to shape the unique organization of each school.

State law requires a site-based model for decision-making in Texas school districts. The Texas Education Code specifies many requirements for site-based decision-making (SBDM), including the following:

- A district improvement plan and campus improvement plans must be developed, reviewed, and revised annually.
- District and campus performance objectives that, at minimum, support state goals and objectives must be approved annually.
- Administrative procedures or policies must clearly define the respective roles and responsibilities of the superintendent, central office staff, principals, teachers, and district-level committee members in the areas of planning, budgeting, curriculum, staffing patterns, staff development, and school organization.
- District and school-based decision-making committees must be actively involved in establishing administrative procedures.
- Systematic communications measures must be put in place to obtain broad-based community, parental, and staff input and to provide information to those persons about the recommendations of the district-level committee.
- Administrators must regularly consult with the district-level committee on the planning, operations, supervision, and evaluation of the district's educational program.

SBDM provides a mechanism for teachers, parents, and community members to assist central and campus administrators in improving student performance. Schools must have adequate resources and the flexibility to develop programs tailored to meet the unique needs of the students they serve.

AISD has more than 100 schools spread out over 230 square miles in the Greater Austin area. The schools are divided into "vertical teams" led by five area superintendents. Each area superintendent has two to three vertical teams within his or her area. The vertical teams are organized by feeder patterns. For example, a number of elementary schools feed into

several middle schools and junior high schools that then feed into one or two high schools.

Exhibit 1-9 lists the vertical teams and special campuses of AISD, with the Texas Education Agency's 1998-99 school accountability ratings for Recognized, Exemplary, and Low-performing campuses in regular education programs.

Exhibit 1-9
Summary of AISD Schools by Area/Vertical Teams
1999-2000

AREA 1	AREA 2	AREA 3	AREA 4	AREA 5
Vertical Team	**Vertical Team**	**Vertical Team**	**Vertical Team**	**Vertical Team**
High School McCallum (LP)	High School Akins	High School Austin	High School Crockett (LP)	High School Reagan (LP)
Junior High Kealing	Middle Paredes	Middle O'Henry	Middle Bedichek	Middle Dobie (LP)
Elementary Blackshear (LP) Campbell Lee (E) Maplewood Oak Springs	Elementary Casey Langford Menchaca (R) Palm (LP)	Elementary Barton Hills (E) Bryker Woods (R) Casis (E) Mathews Pease Zilker (R)	Elementary Odom Pleasant Hill Williams Middle Covington	Elementary Graham Jordan Norman Walnut Creek Winn Creek
Middle Lamar	**Vertical Team**	Middle Small	Elementary Boone Cowan	Middle Webb
Elementary Brentwood Gullett (E) Highland Park (E) Ridgetop	High School Bowie Middle Bailey Elementary Baranoff Kiker (R) Kocurek (R)	Elementary Mills (E) Oak Hill (R) Patton (E)	Cunningham Middle Porter Elementary Galindo Joslin St. Elmo Sunset Valley	Elementary Barrington Brown Hart J.J. Pickle Reilly
Vertical Team	**Vertical Team**	**Vertical Team**	**Vertical Team**	**Vertical Team**
High School Lanier (LP)	High School Johnston (LP)	High School Travis (LP)	High School LBJ	High School Anderson
Middle Burnet	Junior Martin	Middle Fulmore	Middle Pearce (LP)	Middle Murchison
Elementary Cook McBee Pillow Wooldridge (LP) Wooten	Elementary Allan Allison Brooke Govalle (LP) Metz Ortega Sanchez Zavala	Elementary Becker Dawson Linder Travis Heights Middle Mendez (LP) Elementary Houston Rodriguez Widen	Elementary Andrews Blanton Harris Pecan Springs (LP) Sims	Elementary Davis (R) Doss (E) Hill (E) Summitt
--------	--------	--------	--------	--------
Garza Independence Alternative Learning Center		Gardner Betts Dill	Rosedale	Clifton Center

Source: AISD Office of Student Services and Planning. LP = Low-performing R = Recognized E = Exemplary.

FINDING

More than 50 percent of AISD's principals are relatively new to their jobs, with five or fewer years of experience in the job or in the district.

According to a deputy superintendent and a human resources administrator, the known causal factors in these percentages include the lack of adequate attrition projections that include regular and early retirement projection planning, requested or assigned transfer, and termination. Other specific factors thought to influence AISD principal turnover are poor or intrusive managerial oversight, reassignment to "less desirable" schools, inadequate compensation, and lack of campus or administrative support. High turnover and a lack of experience in the job create an excessive burden for schools.

In its 1998-99 accountability ratings, the Texas Education Agency rated 16 AISD schools as low-performing due either to unacceptable dropout rates or low TAAS scores. While these poor results can have numerous causes, the district lacks the sort of accountability measures that can guarantee improvement. No principals are on a growth plan to help them improve their performance. Known problems with reliable data collection and analysis make it more difficult for principals to examine problem areas, adjust their curricula, and redirect staff.

Spring and Cypress-Fairbanks ISD superintendents and top administrators conduct regular one-on-one meetings with principals. While student performance and Campus Improvement Plan goals are discussed, an equally important aspect of these meetings involves asking principals how central administrators can help them to achieve their campus goals. A high level of trust is developed when this type of communication leads both sides to contribute to solving problems.

Recommendation 18:

Create a plan to improve principal performance and longevity.

Principal tenure is a district issue and should be addressed with systemwide solutions. AISD should develop a strategic plan that includes necessary improvements to technological systems and other support services; recruitment and training; school assignment policies; regular interviews with the superintendent, area superintendent, and the deputy superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development; and compensation.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent designates a task force to develop the plans. The task force includes the deputy superintendents for Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development, Accountability and Information Systems, and Bilingual Education and Human Resources Development, appropriate	July 2000

	staff members from each of their areas, and selected principals from elementary and secondary schools.	
2.	The task force develops the plans and confers with the superintendent on their progress once a month.	August to October 2000
3.	The task force presents the plans to the superintendent.	November 2000
4.	The plans are approved by the superintendent and a report is presented to the board.	December 2000
5.	The plans are implemented.	January 2001
6.	The plans are periodically reviewed and revised as needed.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

AISD lacks a decision-making model for the implementation of site based decision-making. Although central administrators generally believes that SBDM is working at the school level, principals disagree. Principals at all levels stated during interviews and focus groups that they do not feel adequately supported in campus-level decision-making. They are especially troubled when parents and community members take problems to board members and central administrators rather than the campus for resolution. Another example cited by principals is that they are often assigned assistant principals or "helping teachers" and given little to no discretion regarding who will work in these positions. They also expressed the need for greater clarity in regard to their control over SBDM at the campus level.

AISD conducts periodic SBDM training and follows a set of council bylaws in implementing the SBDM plan required by the Education Code. At the beginning of the 1999-2000 school year, AISD conducted a SBDM training program for all of the school principals and their Campus Advisory Councils. The schools were separated for the day of training into each of the five area vertical teams. Each area was trained on separate day. In October 1998, approved revised bylaws for the schools' Campus Advisory Councils, the district's five Area Advisory Councils, and the District Advisory Council (DAC). The bylaws determine how the councils are formed and structured and also state their purpose, objectives and member duties. In focus group meetings, principals felt that the response

to these efforts is generally positive. However, principals and members of the CACs say they need additional resources and clarification to be sure that both they and their area superintendents are using SBDM appropriately according to the Education Code.

Recent changes in state law required AISD to revise its board policy and district bylaws for SBDM. Beginning in October 1999, the AISD District Advisory Council Policy and Bylaws Subcommittee and designated administrative staff members began to work on the necessary revisions. The group is retooling the decision-making structure, clarifying the role of the DAC, and rewriting the bylaws. This process is to be completed and presented to the board for approval during the 2000 spring semester.

While the bylaws are helpful in describing an organizational framework, they do not adequately address how SBDM policy is to be implemented at the campus level. These should be developed and presented in a matrix type of format so that each campus's authority is clear.

Educators in Spring ISD use a SBDM model adapted from a model first developed by Spring Branch ISD. The model uses a matrix to organize eight functional categories along the vertical axis and a group of letters, defined in a legend, that assigns authority or accountability on the horizontal axis. These eight functional categories are planning, staffing patterns, organizational development, budgeting, curriculum, school organization, district organization, and data collection and accountability. The six functional categories are further divided into one to two levels of sub-functions.

For example, the district improvement plan and campus improvement plan are under planning. Recruitment, personnel units/staffing, selection/placement, and evaluation/discipline/contract renewal are under staffing patterns. **Exhibit 1-10** provides an example of the SBDM functional category of staffing patterns.

Exhibit 1-10
Example of a SBDM Model

SBDM Model Example – Staffing Patterns							
Legend:							
A – Approve; representing authority to make decisions regarding issues							
ACE – Advisory Committee on Education: the district-level decision-making committee							
BOT – Board of Trustees							
CIC – Campus Improvement Committee, the campus-level decision-making committee							
CO – Central Office; administrators of centralized functions							
CP – Campus Principal; the school administrator							
DIP – District Improvement Plan; the annual objectives of the Five-Year Education Plan							
I – Input; representing authority to provide comment regarding issues							
R – Recommendation; representing authority to propose actions regarding issues							
SOS – Superintendent of Schools							
TL/DC – Team Leader/Department Chair; the grade-level or subject area instructional leader							
FUNCTION II. Staffing Patterns	CIC	TL/DC	CP	CO	ACE	SOS	BOT
A. Recruitment							
1. Research and design recruitment strategies, materials, and schedules			I	A	I	I	
2. Communicate to Personnel Office performance of substitute and student teachers		I	R	A		I	
B. Personnel Units and Staffing							
1. Develop staffing guidelines based on: a. Personnel units to be allocated based upon enrollment and programs and b. Minimum staffing levels for specific programs and/or staff	I	I	I	R	I	R	A
2. Determine staffing for special programs such as vocational, special education, federal			I	R		A	
3. Develop a campus staffing plan based on personnel units allocated and staffing guidelines	I	I	R	R		A	
4. Manage teacher transfers and assignment of excess teachers			I	R		A	
5. Select new building principal	I	I		I		A	
C. Selection/Placement							
1. Determine certification requirements of applicants				R		A	
2. Make final recommendations for selection of new personnel and assignment of new and current campus staff		I	R	R		A	
3. Offer contracts			R	R		A	

Source: Spring Independent School District.

The model is easy to read and understand and makes the lines of authority in decision-making clear at all levels.

Recommendation 19:

Develop a site-based decision-making matrix.

This recommendation will help all involved in SBDM develop appropriate policies and processes that adhere to the Education Code.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the creation of a task force to develop a SBDM matrix model for AISD. The task force should include the deputy superintendents for Bilingual Education and Human Resources Development and Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development and a staff member from each area, two area superintendents and three principals, as well as other staff as deemed appropriate by the superintendent.	July 2000
2.	The task force begins its work to develop a SBDM matrix model, using other districts' models as a guide.	August 2000
3.	The task force completes a draft that includes required changes in administration processes and procedures to fit the Education Code.	September 2000
4.	The SBDM matrix is presented to the superintendent for review and approval.	October 2000
5.	The matrix is distributed and periodically reviewed and updated.	November and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2
EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

This chapter discusses the Austin Independent School District's (AISD's) educational service delivery system and student performance measures in nine sections:

A. Student Performance and Education Service Delivery
B. Dropout Prevention, Recovery and Leaver Codes
C. Instructional Resources
D. Bilingual Education
E. Advanced Academic Services
F. Special Education Programs
G. School to Career Programs
H. Health Services
I. Compensatory Support Programs

Effective educational service delivery requires appropriate instructional guidance, capable teachers, adequate resources and a thorough understanding of students' instructional needs. Well-designed and implemented instructional programs are essential to meet the needs of all students in a district as diverse as AISD. Instructional leadership from AISD's central office and on campuses is directly responsible for these programs' effectiveness.

BACKGROUND

AISD selected five Texas school districts to serve as their peer districts for this review's comparative purposes: Alief, Corpus Christi, Fort Worth, Northside (Bexar County) and Pasadena. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) provided information on the state-mandated student achievement test scores, the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) results and other student performance measures, such as the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT).

Demographic, staffing and financial data for each school district and campus also are reported in TEA's Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) report. These reports are sent to each campus and district and are available on TEA's Internet Web site (www.tea.state.tx.us). The latest AEIS data published by TEA in November 1999 are for 1998-99.

Exhibit 2-1 presents demographic information for AISD, the selected peer districts, Regional Education Service Center 13 (Region 13) and the state. TEA's AEIS report for AISD showed that the district's student enrollment for 1998-99 reached 79,496. AISD's director of accountability said that the

actual enrollment figure that should have been reported to TEA was 77,200. The director said the discrepancy of more than 2,000 students was prompted by a procedural/technical problem, where student information in one data file was overriding information in another file. The problem of data accuracy occurred throughout the review and is reflected throughout this report.

Exhibit 2-1
Demographic Characteristics of AISD
And Peer School Districts
1998-99

District	Student Enrollment		Ethnic Groups				Eco-Disadvantaged	
	Number	5 Year % Change*	% African American	% Hispanic	% Anglo	% Other	Percent	5 Year % Change*
Austin	**79,496**	**8.6%**	**17.4%**	**44.1%**	**35.7%**	**2.8%**	**49.0%**	**(1.6%)**
Fort Worth	77,956	7.8%	32.3%	41.1%	24.0%	2.5%	54.8%	(2.5%)
Northside	61,308	9.3%	6.7%	52.0%	39.0%	2.4%	44.5%	14.7%
Corpus Christi	40,290	(3.8)%	5.8%	69.1%	23.8%	1.3%	53.0%	3.7%
Pasadena	41,240	5.2%	5.6%	58.7%	32.1%	3.6%	53.9%	3.5%
Alief	41,056	18.4%	35.9%	32.8%	13.8%	17.4%	48.2%	27.2%
Region 13	258,660	16.3%	9.9%	32.3%	55.3%	2.5%	37.3%	(2.4%)
State	3,945,367	7.5%	14.4%	38.6%	44.1%	2.8%	48.5%	4.8%

Source: 1998-99 Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) Reports. * Percent Change is defined as 1998-99 values minus 1994-95 values divided by 1994-95 values.

Fort Worth is closest in size, with a student enrollment of 77,956. Minority student enrollment in the districts ranges from 86.2 percent in Alief to 61 percent in Northside; AISD has the second lowest percentage.

The percentage of economically disadvantaged students among the five peer districts ranges from 44.5 percent to 54.8 percent. AISD ranked approximately in the middle with 49 percent economically disadvantaged students. The percentage of economically disadvantaged students has increased in three of the peer districts over the past five years. As reported to TEA's Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS),

economically disadvantaged student enrollment in AISD has decreased by 2 percentage points.

As noted in **Exhibit 2-2**, AISD has the highest property value per student of the peer districts and is significantly wealthier than the state average. While the comparative data indicate AISD had the lowest tax rate, in October 1999, AISD's Board of Trustees increased the tax rate to $1.5486 $100 of property value, about equal to the state average, but still below four of the five peer districts.

A school district's Administrative Cost Ratio is defined as the ratio of actual administrative costs to actual instructional costs as defined in the Texas Education Code, Chapter 42, Subchapter D. Higher values mean that more money is spent on administration compared to instruction. AISD has a higher Administrative Cost Ratio than all but one of the peer districts. AISD's cost ratio is also higher than the state average, but it is still within an acceptable range.

Exhibit 2-2
Property Value per Student and Administrative Costs
1998-99

District	Value/ Student	Administrative Costs*	
		1996-97 Cost Ratio	Rank
Corpus Christi	$147,772	8.3%	2
Austin	**$341,637**	**7.8%**	**1**
Northside	$183,277	7.7%	3
Fort Worth	$155,860	7.6%	4
Pasadena	$124,615	7.2%	5
Alief	$128,161	6.0%	6
State	$190,769	8.5%	

Source: 1998-99 TEA AEIS Reports.
* Source: Texas Association of School Boards Bench Marks 97-98.

AISD has 96 regular campuses that were included in the state accountability rating system in 1998-99. The number of students per grade level is provided in **Exhibit 2-3**. There are a larger number of students in grade nine than other grades because a large number of students are retained at this grade level. This pattern is common among most school districts in Texas.

Exhibit 2-3
Number of Students by Grade Level
1998-99

Grade Level	Number of Students	Percent
Early Childhood Education	643	0.8%
Pre-Kindergarten	3,258	4.1%
Kindergarten	6,502	8.2%
Grade 1	6,653	8.4%
Grade 2	6,587	8.3%
Grade 3	6,428	8.1%
Grade 4	6,016	7.6%
Grade 5	6,184	7.8%
Grade 6	5,683	7.1%
Grade 7	5,551	7.0%
Grade 8	5,630	7.1%
Grade 9	7,348	9.2%
Grade 10	5,173	6.5%
Grade 11	4,268	5.4%
Grade 12	3,572	4.5%
Total	**79,496**	

Source: 1998-99 TEA AEIS Reports.

Comparing AISD to its peer districts, AISD's $2,941 in expenditures per student places it fourth among the six districts (**Exhibit 2-4**). Only Pasadena ISD and Fort Worth ISD spent less per student than AISD.

Approximately 80 percent of the district's instructional expenditures are directed to regular education. This percentage is higher than the peer districts. AISD reports that only 0.2 percent of its instructional expenditures are allocated for gifted and talented education, even though, as seen in **Exhibit 2-5**, 7.6 percent of AISD students are listed in a gifted and talented program. AISD's and Pasadena's expenditures for gifted and talented are much lower than the peer districts. AISD and the peer districts have different patterns of expenditures.

Exhibit 2-4
Instructional Expenditures in AISD and Peer Districts
1998-99

District	Total Expenditures	Instruct Expend Per Student	% Regular	% Gifted & Talented	% Special Educ.	% Career & Tech.	% Bil/ESL	% Compen-satory
Northside	$365,308,672	$3,204	71.6%	1.4%	16.6%	4.1%	0.6%	5.8%
Alief	$234,817,086	$3,077	70.6%	2.1%	10.4%	1.5%	10.3%	4.2%
Corpus Christi	$220,664,433	$2,996	69.9%	1.4%	11.4%	3.7%	7.2%	2.5%
Austin	**$474,799,719**	**$2,941**	**78.8%**	**0.2%**	**16.2%**	**1.6%**	**0.9%**	**2.3%**
Pasadena	$216,904,014	$2,900	70.0%	0.2%	8.8%	2.9%	2.8%	15.3%
Fort Worth	$430,259,596	$2,882	67.4%	3.8%	11.3%	3.5%	6.3%	7.6%
State	$23,092,945,910	$3,071	71.3%	1.6%	12.3%	4.0%	3.5%	7.3%

Source: 1998-99 TEA AEIS Reports.

As seen in **Exhibit 2-5**, AISD is similar to the state and the peer districts in the percentage of students enrolled in Gifted and Talented, Special Education, and Career and Technical education. The percentage of expenditures for students enrolled in bilingual or English as a second language (ESL) varies among the districts.

Exhibit 2-5
Student Enrollment by Program
1998-99

District	% Gifted & Talented	% Special Education	% Career & Technology	% Bilingual / ESL
Northside	8.5%	15.1%	13.6%	4.0%
Fort Worth	5.9%	11.2%	17.7%	23.2%
Alief	7.7%	11.3%	9.4%	24.0%
Austin	**7.6%**	**11.5%**	**13.6%**	**13.5%**
Pasadena	4.8%	7.3%	11.3%	19.1%

Corpus Christi	4.3%	14.6%	17.7%	8.4%
State	8.4%	12.1%	17.8%	12.1%

Source: 1998-99 TEA AEIS Reports.

Exhibit 2-6 contains information on expenditures by category for AISD and its peer districts. The data show AISD expenditures by category are similar to the peer districts and the state average.

Exhibit 2-6
Percent of Expenditures by Function
AISD and Peer Districts
1998-99

Expenditure Category	Austin	Alief	Corpus Christi	Fort Worth	North-side	Pasadena	State Ave.
Instruction *	**57.9%**	62.1%	58.8%	54.2%	59.0%	57.7%	57.5%
Instructional-Related Services	**2.3%**	2.4%	2.5%	4.2%	3.2%	2.9%	3.0%
Instructional Leadership	**1.8%**	1.1%	2.3%	2.1%	2.4%	1.8%	1.4%
School Leadership	**6.4%**	5.3%	6.0%	6.5%	5.4%	5.8%	5.9%
Support Services - Student	**3.8%**	4.7%	4.6%	5.7%	5.3%	4.1%	4.4%
Student Transportation	**3.7%**	3.0%	2.2%	2.8%	4.1%	2.0%	2.8%
Food Services	**6.8%**	5.9%	5.4%	5.2%	5.6%	7.0%	5.6%
Cocurricular/ Extracurricular	**1.4%**	1.0%	2.4%	1.6%	1.8%	1.8%	2.5%
Central Administration	**3.6%**	2.9%	3.1%	2.6%	2.7%	2.7%	4.2%
Plant Maintenance and Operations	**10.3%**	9.9%	10.6%	12.5%	9.0%	11.9%	11.2%
Security and Monitoring	**0.8%**	0.8%	0.9%	1.8%	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%

Services						
Data Processing Services	**1.3%**	0.9%	1.3%	0.8%	0.8%	1.6%	1.0%
Per Pupil Expenditures	**$5,973**	$5,719	$5,477	$5,519	$5,959	$5,260	$5,853

Source: 1998-99 TEA AEIS Reports.
* Note: AEIS reports exclude capital outlay and debt service. When capital outlay and debt service are included as expenditures, the instructional category (objects 11 and 95) percentages are as follows: State 51.2 percent; AISD, 47.7 percent; Alief, 52.8 percent; Corpus Christi, 52.6 percent; Fort Worth, 50.3 percent; Northside, 51.7 percent; and Pasadena, 53.5 percent.

Exhibit 2-7 shows the percentage of professional staff in various categories. AISD has a higher percentage of teachers than the peer districts and the state, but employs a relatively low percentage of educational aides.

Exhibit 2-7
Professional Staff
AISD and Peer Districts
1998-99

Professional Staff	Austin	Pasadena	Alief	North-side	Corpus Christi	Fort Worth	State Ave.
Teachers	**52.9%**	51.7%	51.7%	50.9%	49.6%	49.2%	51.4%
Professional Support	**7.4%**	7.1%	7.2%	8.1%	7.0%	8.6%	7.2%
Campus Administration	**2.7%**	2.5%	2.2%	2.2%	2.7%	3.2%	2.5%
Central Administration	**0.5%**	0.2%	0.6%	0.4%	0.7%	0.5%	0.9%
Educational Aides	**6.7%**	10.6%	9.4%	12.1%	9.6%	8.4%	10.3%
Auxiliary Staff	**29.8%**	27.8%	28.9%	26.2%	30.4%	30.1%	27.7%
% Minority Staff	**43.7%**	32.5%	38.2%	42.4%	61.6%	50.2%	36.5%

Source: 1998-99 TEA AEIS Reports.

Exhibit 2-8 shows teacher experience and turnover rates for AISD and the peer districts. Average teacher experience in AISD is similar to the state and to the peer districts.

Exhibit 2-8
Teacher Experience and Turnover Rate
AISD and Peer Districts
1998-99

	Alief	Fort Worth	Austin	Pasadena	North-side	Corpus Christi	State Ave.
Beginning Teachers	12.7%	10.6%	**8.6%**	8.3%	5.8%	5.3%	7.7%
1-5 Years Experience	36.5%	28.9%	**27.5%**	27.2%	26.1%	19.0%	26.7%
6-10 Years Experience	16.6%	16.3%	**16.6%**	17.0%	18.3%	20.9%	17.7%
11-20 Years Experience	19.0%	24.7%	**26.9%**	24.6%	27.8%	31.2%	27.5%
Over 20 Years Experience	15.3%	19.5%	**20.4%**	22.9%	22.0%	23.6%	20.5%
Average Years Experience (total)	9.3	11.2	**11.4**	12.1	12.1	13.0	11.8
Average Years Experience (district)	5.8	8.6	**8.4**	8.8	8.0	9.9	8.0
Turnover	16.7%	16.4%	**15.9%**	16.3%	13.4%	15.4%	15.5%

Source: 1998-99 TEA AEIS Reports.

AISD has more teachers with Masters degrees than the state average and ranks third among the peer districts in the number of teachers with a Masters degree (**Exhibit 2-9**). With the exception of Northside, AISD has the lowest percentage of teachers who do not have a degree.

Exhibit 2-9
Teacher Degrees
AISD and Peer Districts
1998-99

	Corpus Christi	Pasadena	Alief	Fort Worth	Austin	North-side	State Ave.
No Degree	1.1%	2.2%	0.7%	0.5%	**0.1%**	0.0%	1.3%
Bachelor	54.6%	74.1%	76.6%	73.7%	**72.4%**	63.2%	73.6%
Master	43.8%	23.2%	22.3%	25.3%	**26.9%**	36.5%	24.7%
Doctorate	0.5%	0.6%	0.3%	0.5%	**0.5%**	0.3%	0.4%

Source: 1998-99 TEA AEIS Reports.

While AISD is similar in size to Fort Worth, it has only one-third as many teachers with an Emergency Permit (certified) (**Exhibit 2-10**). A superintendent can activate an emergency permit for the professional services of a certified individual (Emergency-certified) or for the professional services of an uncertified individual (Emergency-uncertified). Nonrenewable permits are issued to allow an individual to complete the testing requirement stipulated for continued employment. A Temporary Classroom Assignment Permit can be activated by the local school district for a teacher who is certified to teach in departmentalized grades 6-12, but who will be assigned outside the certified area(s) at the secondary level. District Teaching Permits are activated by the local school district and approved by the Commissioner of Education for a degreed teacher who is uniquely qualified to teach a particular assignment and does not hold any type of teaching credential. A district can activate a Temporary Exemption Permit for a certified, degreed teacher who is not certified for the classroom assignment. This exemption cannot be renewed.

Exhibit 2-10
Teacher Permits
AISD and Peer Districts
1998-99

	Fort Worth	Austin	Alief	Corpus Christi	Pasadena	North-side
Emergency (certified)	244	**109**	24	97	27	14
Emergency (uncertified)	69	**80**	104	0	60	19
Nonrenewable	42	**41**	32	11	6	48
Temporary classroom Assignment	51	**28**	6	1	12	3

District Teaching	0	**5**	0	0	0	0
Temporary Exemption	0	**0**	0	0	0	0

Source: 1998-99 TEA AEIS Reports.

Under the state's school accountability system, TEA assigns annual ratings to each district and campus based upon (1) TAAS, (2) attendance, (3) dropout rates and (4) data quality. In 1999, TEA added two new rating categories: Unacceptable: Data Quality (district level) and Acceptable: Data Issues (campus level). The accountability system includes five ratings for districts: Exemplary, Recognized, Academically Acceptable, Academically Unacceptable and Unacceptable: Data Quality. These new rating categories were assigned to certain districts and campuses when serious errors in data reporting affected one or more of the base indicators (TAAS, attendance, and dropout rates) used to determine accountability ratings. Campuses or districts are assigned this rating if the data errors are of such magnitude that the results are deemed unsuitable for ratings purposes. The Unacceptable: Data Quality rating can be assigned in cases where districts acknowledge that the accuracy of their data is seriously compromised or where a TEA investigation discovers that significant reporting errors have occurred.

To receive an Exemplary rating, at least 90 percent of all students, as well as 90 percent of African American, Hispanic, Anglo, and Economically Disadvantaged students must pass the TAAS reading, writing and mathematics subtests.

To achieve a Recognized rating, 80 percent of all students and each student group must pass the same TAAS reading, writing and mathematics subtests. In 1999, to be rated Academically Acceptable, 45 percent of each student group must pass TAAS. Beginning in 1998-99, scores for students with disabilities and results from the Spanish version of TAAS, reading and mathematics in Grades 3 and 4, were included in the accountability calculations. A district was rated Academically Unacceptable if less than 45 percent of students passed TAAS. Starting in 1999-2000, the standard increases to 50 percent passing. Although the state accountability system also considers attendance and dropout rates, TAAS is the primary determining factor in ratings. According to TEA, failure to meet TAAS standards is the primary reason that a campus is rated Low-performing.

The peer districts and AISD typically received an Academically Acceptable from 1995 through 1999. Pasadena was rated Recognized in 1998 and 1999. AISD received an Unacceptable rating in 1999 due to data quality issues (**Exhibit 2-11**).

Exhibit 2-11
Accountability Ratings
AISD and Peer Districts
1994/95 to 1998/99

	1995*	**1996**	**1997**	**1998**	**1999**
Austin	**Accredited**	**Acceptable**	**Acceptable**	**Acceptable**	**Unacceptable****
Alief	Accredited	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Corpus Christi	Accredited	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Fort Worth	Accredited	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Northside	Accredited	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Pasadena	Accredited	Acceptable	Acceptable	Recognized	Recognized

*Source: TEA Accountability Reports 1994-94 through 1998-99. * Terminology was changed after 1995, Accredited and Acceptable are equivalent. ** Unacceptable due to Data Quality issues.*

Chapter 2

*A. STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY
(PART 1)*

Effective instruction depends upon adequate human and fiscal resources
and on support from the district's central office. The campus
administrative and instructional team must be qualified and active in
planning and implementing the curriculum. TAAS performance, the
primary factor in determining a district's accountability ratings, depends
on effective instruction.

TAAS is administered in grades 3-8 and 10 and currently includes a
reading and mathematics subtest in grades 3-8 and 10 and a writing
assessment in grades 4, 8 and 10. Science and Social Studies subtests are
included at grade 8. The Spanish version of TAAS is given in grades 3-6.

Included in the TAAS system are examinations in Algebra I in grades 7-
12, Biology I in grades 8-12, English II and United States History. On an
incremental basis between 2000-03, changes will be made to the TAAS
administration schedule, particularly at the high school level. By 2003,
TAAS will be administered in grades 9, 10 and 11. Reading and
mathematics subtests will be added at grade 9. The exit level examination
will be moved to grade 11 and will include science, social studies, English
language arts and mathematics. A science subtest will be added to grade 5.

Between 1995 and 1999, TAAS scores improved in AISD, Region 13 and
the state overall (**Exhibit 2-12**). The largest improvements are seen in
grades 7 and 8. In grade 7, there was an improvement of 20 percentage
points in the percentage of students passing all tests taken. In grade 8,
there was a 23-percentage point improvement. However, these grade
levels had a low percentage of students passing compared to other grade
levels five years ago. The largest gains have been made on the
mathematics subtest.

Exhibit 2-12
Change in Percent Passing
All Tests Taken (1994-95 to 1998-99)

District	1995 Rank	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999*	% Change	Change Rank
Northside	1	61%	68%	74%	79%	78%	28%	5
Alief	2	58%	65%	72%	76%	75%	29%	4

Corpus	3	56%	64%	70%	77%	76%	36%	3
Austin	**4**	**54%**	**59%**	**66%**	**70%**	**68%**	**26%**	**6**
Pasadena	5	53%	63%	70%	78%	80%	51%	1
Fort Worth	6	47%	52%	57%	63%	67%	43%	2
Region 13		65	69%	75%	79%	79%	22%	
State		61	67%	73%	78%	78%	28%	

Source: 1998-99 TEA AEIS Reports.
*1999 include scores for special education students and Spanish TAAS.

While AISD has improved its TAAS scores, it has not kept pace with the peer districts

(**Exhibit 2-13**). The percentage of students passing all tests taken increased from 54 percent in 1995 to 68 percent in 1999, but AISD's peer districts have shown more improvement.

Exhibit 2-13

Percent of Students Passing All Tests Taken*
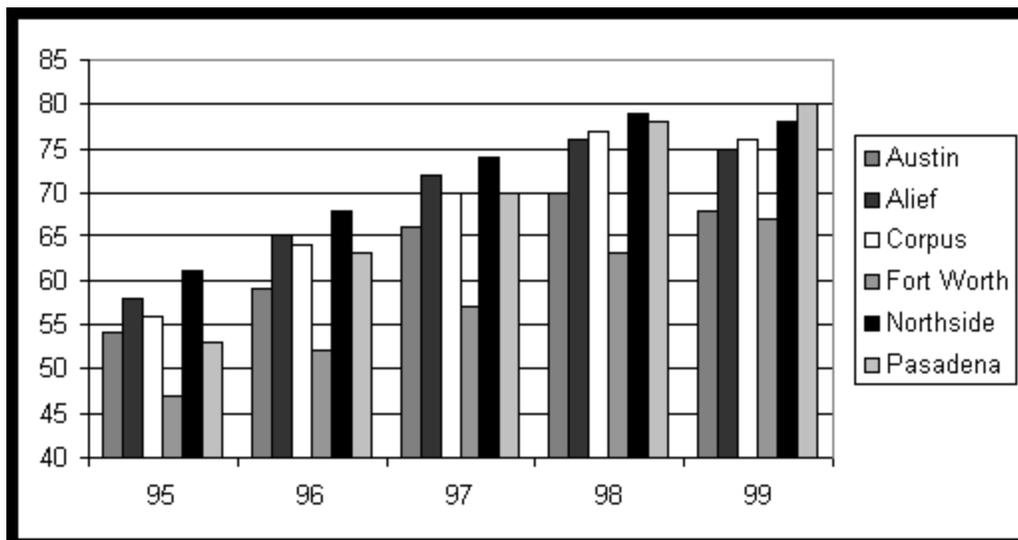
1994-95 to 1998-99

Source: TEA AEIS reports (1994-95 through 1998-99).
* All Test Taken include Reading Writing and Mathematics. At grade 8,
Science and Social Studies are also included.

Performance on all tests taken depends upon passing reading, writing and mathematics. Writing tests are given in grades 4, 8 and 10. The percentage of students passing writing, as noted in **Exhibit 2-14**, is significantly lower than the state average in grade 8. At grade 8, science and social studies subtests are also included. This normally makes grade 8 the lowest performance grade level for all tests taken because five subtests are included in the computation of all tests taken. (Science and social studies are not included in determining accountability ratings.)

Because reading and mathematics are given at every grade level, these two subject areas are most important from an accountability point of view. As illustrated in **Exhibit 2-14**, there is a significant gap between the state and AISD in average percentages of students passing reading. However, the gap is considerably larger for mathematics. While there has been a gain in mathematics performance, the percentage of students passing mathematics is still lower than the percentage passing reading.

Exhibit 2-14 indicates that students are improving from grade 3 to grade 5, but there is a sharp decline in mathematics performance from grade 5 to grade 6. The same pattern was also reported in 1994-95.

<div align="center">

Exhibit 2-14
Percentage of Students Passing TAAS
In AISD, Region, and State
1994-95 to 1998-99

</div>

	Reading		Mathematics		Writing		Science		Social Studies		All Tests Taken	
Grade Level	**95**	**99**	**95**	**99**	**95**	**99**	**95**	**99**	**95**	**99**	**95**	**99**
Grade 3												
AISD	77	83	68	77							63	71
Region 13	81	88	75	84							69	80
State	80	88	73	83							67	79
Grade 4												
AISD	78	83	67	78	83	84					61	70
Region 13	82	89	72	86	85	88					66	78
State	80	89	71	88	85	88					64	78
Grade 5												
AISD	74	81	65	84							60	76
Region 13	81	87	74	90							69	83
State	79	86	73	90							67	83
Grade 6												
AISD	73	76	55	74							53	67

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Region 13	82	86	69	87							67	80
State	79	85	65	87							61	80
Grade 7												
AISD	70	75	49	72							46	66
Region 13	81	85	67	85							64	79
State	79	84	62	85							59	78
Grade 8												
AISD	67	79	48	72	68	76	72	78	59	61	40	63
Region 13	78	87	62	85	77	85	82	89	70	73	52	66
State		88		86		86		87		70	47	63
Grade 10												
AISD	74	84	60	74	83	87					54	68
Region 13	82	90	67	82	89	91					62	77
State	76	89	60	82	86	91					55	76

Source: 1998-99 TEA AEIS Reports.

In 1999, 47 AISD campuses were rated Acceptable, seven rated Recognized, and nine were rated Exemplary. Three campuses-Doss Elementary, Highland Park Elementary and Hill Elementary-have been rated Exemplary in each of the last five years.

AISD has made gains in the number of campuses rated exemplary or recognized. In 1994-95, sixty-five campuses were rated Acceptable, eight were rated Recognized, four were rated Exemplary, and fifteen campuses were rated as Low-performing. **Exhibit 2-15** lists campuses that were rated Exemplary in 1994-95 and in 1998-99.

Exhibit 2-15
AISD Campuses Rated as Exemplary
1994-95 and 1998-99

1994-95	1998-99
	Barton Hills Elementary
	Casis Elementary
Doss Elementary	Doss Elementary
Gullett Elementary	Gullett Elementary
Highland Park Elementary	Highland Park Elementary
Hill Elementary	Hill Elementary

	Lee Elementary
	Mills Elementary*
	Patton Elementary

*Source: TEA AEIS Reports (1994-95 and 1998-99). * Not established in 1994-95.*

In 1994-95, 13 percent of AISD campuses were rated either Exemplary or Recognized, compared to 21.4 percent of campuses statewide. In 1998-99, 17 percent of AISD campuses and 47.5 percent of campuses statewide were rated Exemplary or Recognized (**Exhibit 2-16**). While AISD has seen the number of campuses rated Exemplary double over this period from four to nine schools, the percentage of campuses statewide rated exemplary has quadrupled from 255 to 1,120. There has been a slight decrease in the percentage of campuses rated Recognized in AISD, while the statewide percentage has risen 12.4 percentage points.

Exhibit 2-16
Percentage of Campuses Rated Exemplary and Recognized
AISD and State
1994-95 and 1998-99

Rating	AISD 1994-95		State 1994-95		AISD 1998-99		State 1998-99	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Exemplary	4	4.3%	255	4.1%	9	9.5%	1,120	17.9%
Recognized	8	8.7%	1,004	17.1%	7	7.4%	1,843	29.5%
Acceptable	65	70.7%	4,347	74.0%	47	49.2%	3,147	50.4%
Acceptable: Data Issues*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	16	19.8%	36	0.6%
Low-performing	15	16.3%	267	4.5%	16	16.8%	96	1.5%
Total Number	**92**		**5,873**		**95**		**6,242**	

Source: 1999 Accountability Reports, Texas Education Agency
Performance Reporting Web Site.
* Acceptable: Data Issues rating was not used in 1994-95. Accountability

ratings of "Not Rated" and "Alternative Education" are not included for comparability purposes.

FINDING

AISD has an unacceptably high number of campuses rated Low-performing. Thirteen campuses were originally rated low-performing in August 1999, including five that received this rating for three of the last five years. In January 2000, after reviewing district data files, TEA changed the accountability rating of three high schools, increasing the number of Low-performing schools to sixteen. Out of 96 campuses, approximately 16 percent of AISD's campuses are rated Low-performing. **Exhibit 2-17** lists the campuses that were rated Low-performing from 1994-95 to 1998-99.

Exhibit 2-17
AISD Campuses Rated as Low-performing
1994-95 and 1998-99

1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
	Blanton El			
	Blackshear El**		Blackshear El**	Blackshear El**
				Govalle El
Harris El				
Sims El		Sims El		
				Palm El
				Pecan Springs El
			Travis Heights El	
				Wooldridge El***
Dobie Mid**	Dobie Mid**			Dobie Middle**
	Fulmore Mid			
Kealing JH				
Lamar Mid				
	Martin Mid			

Mendez Mid**	Mendez Mid**			Mendez Mid**
O Henry Mid				
Pearce Mid				Pearce Mid
Webb Mid				
	Anderson HS			
	Austin HS			
Bowie HS				
				Crockett HS°
	Johnson HS			
				Johnston HS
Lanier HS				Lanier HS
McCallum HS**	McCallum HS° **		McCallum HS**	McCallum HS° **
Reagan HS**			Reagan HS**	Reagan HS**
Travis HS				Travis HS°
				ACC/Robbins*
Alternative Learning Center				
			Special Placement Center*	Special Placement Center*

Source: TEA Accountability Reports (1994-95 to 1998-99).
* Not established in 1994-95.
** Rated as Low-performing for three of last five years.
*** Year-round school.
° These schools were added in January 2000, after a TEA review of AISD's data records.

Five AISD campuses-one elementary, two middle schools and two high schools-have been rated low performing for three of the last five years. Compared to the peer school districts, this represents a significant number of schools. **Exhibit-2-18** shows the number of schools rated Low-performing for the last two years for AISD and the peer districts.

Exhibit 2-18
Number of Campuses Rated Low-performing
1997-97, 1998-99

District	Number of Campuses Rated 1998-99	Number of Low-Performing Campuses 1998-99	Number of Campuses Rated 1997-98	Number of Low-Performing Campuses 1997-98
Austin	**96**	**16**	**94**	**4**
Northside	66	3	60	0
Corpus Christi	62	1	61	1
Pasadena	52	0	51	0
Fort Worth	126	0	116	1
Alief	34	0	34	0

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

In January 1999, TEA conducted an accreditation visit in three AISD Low-performing schools. Known as the Peer Review Accreditation Team, including members from TEA and The Texas School Improvement Initiative (TSII), the team visited McCallum High School, Travis Heights and Blackshear Elementary schools. The TEA team made several recommendations such as regular assessments to determine how students are progressing and monthly meetings (at a minimum) with area superintendents.

The team also recommended that teachers on Low-performing campuses receive significantly more assistance from support teams than normally provided. Blackshear Elementary particularly concerned the peer review team. TEA found that communication from the principal to the teachers was unclear and ineffective, and a lack of instructional support throughout the campus was evident. For Blackshear Elementary, the peer review team recommended:

> "...the district take immediate action to develop a strong intervention process....In light of the school's history of low performance since 1993-94, the peer review team recommends the district to consider all options at its discretion–including the possible restructuring of the school–to ensure that the students on the campus have an educational program that meets their needs and fosters success on a long-range basis."

In 1999-2000, the district assigned a new principal to Blackshear Elementary, along with a district intervention team consisting of two curriculum specialists, two retired principals and the new principal. Members of this team said this was clearly a "quick-fix" and lacked confidence the team could implement long-term solutions to improve student performance. The principal expressed concern with the intervention process.

Because personnel hiring began too late in the school year, most of the experienced teachers in the district had already been assigned to other schools. In addition, the principal said she did not have the option to hire most of her staff. She said that it has been difficult working with inexperienced teachers. Teachers said the school had experienced a 75-percent teacher turnover rate and that the majority of teachers had less than two years experience.

Teachers in this school were significantly frustrated and said that the district did not provide any support for the new staff. Staff said, "everything is a major ordeal and nothings gets done...." Teachers also said they had a difficult time obtaining such things as pencil sharpeners and blinds for the classrooms. Teachers felt that the children are exemplary and ready to learn, but said that the district is not providing an appropriate instructional environment.

Blackshear Elementary underwent facility renovations in the summer of 1999. Due to a lack of campus leadership and coordination, teachers said several aspects of the school's remodeling were mismanaged. For example, the new library was not wired for computers and the library did not have a cataloguing system.

Despite social and economic inequities that hinder the delivery of equal educational opportunity, in Texas and around the nation, there are numerous examples of successful schools in which underprivileged students meet high academic standards. Schools that chronically produce low test scores and high numbers of high school dropouts must be challenged to change.

When a district is in trouble, and help has been provided over a period of time and the school has not improved, then new and decisive measures should be implemented. One such measure is reconstitution. According to a White House press release (January 20, 1999), thirty-five major city school districts nationwide have moved to overhaul their chronically Low-performing schools. Though most of these efforts have not been fully evaluated, the press release notes "preliminary data indicate that these measures...are improving student achievement in big city school systems across the country..." School districts in San Antonio, Houston, Corpus

Christi and El Paso have reconstituted schools. Most of these districts report some measures of success. School officials with the most experience in reconstitution agree it is a strategy of last resort, only to be exercised when intensive and sustained efforts to improve a school do not succeed. Reconstitution is not a solution in and of itself, but a mechanism to open a school to change, by replacing existing staff and providing adequate resources.

Several organizations like the American Federation of Teachers and the New American Schools Development Corporation have developed well-conceived models of how to fix a failing school, including intervention models, re-design and reconstitution. Local parents and school leaders can choose the right model to fit their community. In 1998, the U.S. Department of Education published *Turning Around Low-Performing Schools: A Guide for State and Local Leaders*.

School intervention teams are created to overhaul a school. The team must develop guidelines and plans that detail what must be accomplished to transform individual failing schools in the district. The right interventions are essential whether or not a school is reconstituted. Ron Wolk, a member of the Pew Forum on Standards-Based Reform, (*Education Week*, November, 1998) argues that school districts, not just local schools, must be willing to change policies and practices that contribute to the problem, such as the practice of assigning the newest teachers to the most difficult schools. To produce the right intervention strategies, Wolk suggests focusing on three critical questions.

- What are the definitions of "failure" and "success?"
- What interventions are most likely to transform a failing school into a successful school?
- What is in the best interest of the children in the school?

Chapter 2

A. STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND EDUCATION SERVICE DELIVERY (PART 2)

Recommendation 20:

Implement a formal district policy on school reconstitution for consistently low-performing schools.

Create a district school intervention team to develop a specific plan that considers a variety of intervention strategies, like reconstitution, re-design or overhaul.

A public school that is rated Low-performing for TAAS failures for two consecutive years should be placed on probationary status. The school should make use of the technical assistance available at the Region 13 Education Service Center, which can provide advice in areas such as staffing and resource allocation. If the school fails to improve by the end of the third year, the superintendent should order the complete reconstitution of the campus.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant director of the Office of Program Evaluation performs a literature review and develops a list of current successful reconstitution practices across the country. The director makes this information available to the school intervention team.	June 2000
2.	The superintendent creates a district-level school intervention team that includes two teachers, two principals, counselors and district staff from the Department of Curriculum, the Department of Accountability, the Budget Office and the Office of Program Evaluation.	June 2000
3.	The superintendent contacts teacher associations to obtain teacher concerns and suggestions on a school intervention/reconstitution policy.	September 2000
4.	The superintendent develops a school intervention/reconstitution policy and a detailed plan listing AISD's intervention approach for chronically low-performing schools.	October 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

AISD has no internal controls to ensure the integrity of TAAS participation data, including the correct number and percentage of students tested. In September 1998, TEA cited AISD for problems related to the inappropriate manipulation student identification numbers during the spring of 1998. TEA found that "AISD manipulated TAAS results last spring to make it appear as if several schools performed better that they did" (*Austin American Statesman*, September 15, 1998). An audit conducted by an outside consulting firm found that the district boosted ratings at four schools by changing the identification numbers of some students taking the TAAS. When the student identification numbers did not match the previously assigned numbers already recorded in TEA data files, the students' tests were automatically excluded in the calculations that determine school ratings. TEA said (*Austin American Statesman*, September 15, 1998) that these changes were calculated changes, not mistakes. As a result of this tampering, TEA lowered the ratings of three schools: Travis Heights, Bryker Woods and Blackshear elementaries.

As a result of the data tampering, the Travis County District Attorney's office initiated an investigation into whether AISD broke any laws when it manipulated student identification numbers to improve school ratings. In September 1999, AISD's case with Travis County was settled in an agreement that included the creation of a dropout task force.

Under the state's accountability system, schools are not just rated for the percentage of all students passing the TAAS. Schools and districts also are rated based on the TAAS passing rates for certain student subgroups, such as ethnic minorities. Through the 1998-99 school year, for a student group to be included in the accountability system, there must have been 30 students tested, and these students must account for at least 10 percent of the tested population. For example, if there are 31 Hispanic students tested across all grade levels on a campus and they comprise 15 percent of the tested population, this forms a group for which the campus is responsible in the accountability system. On the other hand, if the number of Hispanic students falls to 29 students, there will not be a Hispanic group examined for this campus. This characteristic of the state accountability system means that minor changes in the number of students tested can have a major impact on a school's rating.

Recommendation 21:

Closely monitor student TAAS participation data to ensure the correct number and percentage of students are tested and included in the accountability system on each campus.

The district must institute a mechanism to monitor problems related to inappropriate data manipulation. The district should analyze the differences between student enrollment data and the number of students tested and the number of students included in the state accountability system. TEA, for instance, used a statistical model to determine if the percentage of students included in special education is outside of reasonable expectation. A similar approach can be used to determine when the percentage of a specific student group tested appears inappropriate.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of accountability sets standards for the percentage of each student group expected to be tested in each grade level and subject area.	June 2000
2.	The internal auditor reviews campus records in which the percentage of student groups tested and included in the accountability system appear in conflict with the standard set by the director of accountability.	June 2000 Ongoing
3.	If the internal auditor finds discrepancies, the area superintendent institutes appropriate disciplinary action or provides, as needed, appropriate training for data clerks and other campus personnel.	July 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

AISD middle school students perform at a lower level on TAAS than do elementary school students. **Exhibit 2-19** demonstrates that this difference is greater than in three of the five peer districts and exceeds the difference at the state level and in Region 13 for reading. In tested mathematics performance, AISD has the greatest difference between elementary and middle schools and is at the bottom overall in performance in middle school. Because AISD has a combination of K-5 and K-6 elementary schools, the performance difference may be greater than shown because some grade 6 students are still enrolled in elementary schools while others are in middle schools.

Exhibit 2-19
Percent of Students Passing TAAS Reading

**Difference between Elementary and Middle Schools
1998-99**

District	Reading			Mathematics		
	Elementary	Middle School	Difference	Elementary	Middle School	Difference
Austin	**82.3%**	**76.7%**	**5.6**	**79.7%**	**72.7%**	**7.0**
Corpus Christi	89.0%	80.7%	8.3	86.3%	81.0%	5.3
Fort Worth	81.0%	75.0%	6.0	79.0%	74.0%	5.0
Pasadena	90.7%	85.3%	5.4	91.3%	87.0%	4.3
Northside	89.0%	84.7%	4.9	86.3%	82.7%	3.6
Alief	87.0%	85.4%	1.6	86.0%	90.0%	(4.0)
State	87.7%	85.7%	2.0	87.0%	86.0%	1.0

Source: 1998-99 TEA AEIS Reports.

In interviews, principals, counselors and teachers said students often have difficulty making the transition from elementary to middle school. The effectiveness of the district's transitional activities to prepare students for middle schools is uneven across the district. Middle school students also believe that they are becoming more independent of school and responsibilities. Motivation for the student to perform well on the TAAS may be lacking for many students, and there are few serious consequences for students failing TAAS in the middle school years.

At the 1999 National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform, information was presented on identifying high-performing middle schools. After a year of collaboration, the forum identified criteria to describe high-performing schools that serve students in the middle grades. Such schools are academically excellent, responsive to the developmental challenges of young adolescents and socially equitable with high expectations for all students. The Forum conducted a national search for three "schools to watch" that meets its criteria, and so far have identified two schools that have been recognized: Barren County Middle School in rural Kentucky, and Jefferson Middle School in Champaign, Illinois. This information is available at the Educational Development Center's Web site (www.edc.org).

The Texas Mentor School Network (TMSN) began in 1991 with a group of middle schools that were implementing research-based practices identified *in Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21st Century*, the Carnegie report published in June 1989. Texas Mentor School Network connects school staff and policy makers to important research and promising practices. The network shares findings statewide with the goal of creating a first step in crafting effective solutions to improve middle schools. Through the mentor network, all campuses in the state have access to the knowledge about other campuses with similar demographics and high student performance.

Recommendation 22:

Establish a districtwide middle school initiative and dedicate selected central office curriculum staff to focus and support additional attention to middle school issues.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for curriculum designates at least one central office curriculum staff member as a middle school curriculum specialist to each of the areas of reading, mathematics, science and social studies.	June 2000
2.	The deputy superintendent for curriculum directs central office middle school staff to examine and disseminate successful practices to all middle school principals and teachers.	July 2000
3.	The superintendent directs more compensatory support to middle schools.	August 2000
4.	Staff in the Office of Program Evaluation evaluates the effectiveness of additional support and the impact of participating in the Middle School Network.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

In September 1999, AISD required campuses to administer practice TAAS tests to all students in grades where TAAS is given. In addition, an achievement test, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) is also administered to students in grades 3, 5, and 8.

Interviews with principals and teachers in AISD campuses confirmed that one of the best ways to predict whether a child will pass a test is to examine how the child has performed on similar tests in the recent past. Teachers and principals said that students who have difficulty passing the TAAS benefit from the opportunity to take a practice test. Some noted, however, that for some higher performing students, taking a practice TAAS test is a "waste of time." Staff members noted that many students were bored by taking a practice TAAS and that this boredom could extend and affect a student's performance on the actual TAAS.

To help campus staff decide which students should take or re-take a practice TAAS, in December 1999 the director of accountability developed guidelines for campuses to determine which students should take the practice TAAS. The relationship between the guidelines' suggested selection criteria and subsequent student performance has not been examined to determine if the criteria are helpful in determining which students actually pass and fail TAAS. These criteria include an examination of student performance as indicated by the Texas Learning Index (TLI).

The AISD Division of Systemwide Testing consists of three professionals and one support staff. Staff in this office is responsible for distributing, collecting and documenting testing materials for the practice and actual TAAS, end-of-course examinations and the ITBS among other duties. Staff scan answer sheets for the practice TAAS and ITBS and produce reports using AEISIT software. Staff said that a great deal of extra time (nights and weekends) is required to meet these demands. According to AISD, booklets and other materials costs are $64,914 for each practice TAAS administration.

Each of the peer districts had a different testing policy for practice TAAS tests and for administering norm-referenced instruments such as the ITBS. The number of employees dedicated to testing varied from one to nine. However, in several districts, staff were responsible for both program evaluation and testing.

In AISD, there are 20 permanent positions, plus temporary staff, assigned to program evaluation and testing (in two separate divisions). Three of the peer districts do not have a policy requiring campuses to administer a practice TAAS. One district creates new tests from an item bank and uses an external scoring service. Only one district administers two practice TAAS tests. For districts that did not have a policy on practice TAAS, most often the campuses were responsible for either hand-scoring the tests or using funding from the campus budget to secure outside scoring services. The district administering two practice TAAS during the year

gives the first in mid-October, the second in January and relied on their MIS department for scoring services.

Recommendation 23:

Ensure the appropriate students are selected to take the practice TAAS by validating and expanding AISD's procedures for TAAS practice testing.

While TSPR supports the decision to allow campuses to decide which students should be administered a practice TAAS, the guidelines covering which students are likely to benefit from taking the practice TAAS should be further developed. Current AISD guidelines should be examined and more detailed information should be included in the decision-making process.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	Office of Program Evaluation (OPE) staff analyzes AISD student-level data to determine appropriate guidelines for predicting students who are likely to pass subsequent testing based on TLI values.	August 2000
2.	OPE staff provides campuses lists of students likely to fail future TAAS examinations based on performance on the TAAS administered in 2000.	August 2000
3.	Campuses test all grade 3 students and other grade levels/students using the testing guidelines developed by OPE.	October 2000
4.	Campuses test only students most likely to benefit from the practice TAAS.	January 2000
5.	OPE staff analyze the effectiveness of guidelines in selecting students based on TAAS performance.	July 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The AISD budget document for 1999-2000 states "SAT and ACT average composite scores will continue to exceed the state and national averages." While the district's SAT and ACT scores and the percentage of students taking these examinations do exceed the state average, there are significant differences in the performance of the district's high schools.

The ACT Assessment (ACT) includes English, mathematics, reading and science reasoning with scores ranging from 1 to 36 on each component. The ACT composite is the average of the four component scores. The SAT I: Reasoning Test (SAT I) is also a college entrance examination. Scores range from 200 to 800 for each test component (verbal and mathematics). The combined total is the most frequently reported score and ranges up to a maximum of 1600.

Exhibit 2-20 presents SAT and ACT information for the 1998 class at AISD and the peer districts. AISD has the third highest percentage of students taking either the SAT or ACT. A district's SAT or ACT score is related to the percentage of students taking the test. In general, the higher the percentage of students taking the examinations, the lower the scores will be.

AISD exceeds all of the peer districts in performance as measured by the percentage scoring over the criterion points of 21 on the ACT and 1,110 on the SAT. In addition, AISD students have the highest average scores on the SAT and ACT.

Exhibit 2-20
College Entrance Examination Scores
AISD and Peer Districts
Class of 1998

District	% Scoring Above Criterion	% Taking Examinations	Average SAT Score	Average ACT Score
Austin	**42.6%**	**62.6%**	**1,063**	**21.4**
Northside	29.9%	67.1%	998	21.2
Corpus Christi	24.8%	60.2%	985	19.4
Alief	23.5%	73.9%	961	19.2
Fort Worth	23.4%	56.2%	951	18.8
Pasadena	22.7%	44.2%	978	19.5
State Average	27.2%	61.7%	992	20.3

Source: 1998-99 TEA AEIS Reports.

Exhibit 2-21 shows that while AISD as a district has a high percentage of students taking either the ACT or SAT, there is considerable variance among the high schools. The exhibit shows the scores for Anglo, African American and Hispanic students and includes the percentage of students

taking either the ACT or SAT. (Scores for economically disadvantaged students are not available).

The exhibit shows that scores for Anglo students are higher than for African American and Hispanic students. However, the difference between Anglo students' scores from the lowest to highest campus (350 points) actually exceeds the average difference between Anglo and African American students (255 points) within AISD as a whole.

Even excluding the two magnet programs, the difference between Anglo students on the highest scoring campus and the lowest is 207 points. In addition, there is a 193-point difference between African American scores on the highest and lowest performing campuses. According to the College Board, the organization responsible for administering the SAT, the more advanced courses a student takes, the higher the SAT score. There is a large discrepancy among AISD's high schools in the percentage of students completing advanced courses.

Exhibit 2-21
College Entrance Examination Scores
High School Campuses Within AISD, Class of 1998

Campus	% Minority	% Econ Disadv	% Advanced Courses	Anglo		African American		Hispanic	
				% Taking Either SAT or ACT	Ave SAT I Total Score	% Taking Either SAT or ACT	Ave SAT I Total Score	% Taking Either SAT or ACT	Ave SAT I Total Score
Johnson (LBJ)*	71.6%	32.2%	29.2%	86.7%	1319	51.1%	920	75.6%	1180
Johnston *	82.2%	47.0%	12.5%	86.8%	1212	40.7%	956	41.8%	959
Austin High	43.7%	23.4%	20.5%	85.6%	1176	62.1%	902	38.4%	1020
Anderson	35.2%	15.4%	26.2%	78.0%	1148	58.3%	859	60.9%	983
McCallum	43.0%	23.0%	21.1%	70.4%	1129	40.0%	891	48.7%	998
Bowie	32.7%	7.7%	23.9%	74.4%	1062	71.4%	993	54.6%	1021
Crockett	59.1%	26.0%	13.5%	76.8%	1044	65.6%	800	45.5%	942
Reagan	93.1%	59.7%	5.3%	66.7%	1006	51.3%	812	33.3%	888

Lanier	75.5%	51.6%	5.2%	51.5%	987	53.8%	812	23.9%	887
Travis	83.8%	53.2%	5.6%	43.9%	969	52.4%	844	26.1%	911
Austin (District)				74.8%	1127	51.5%	872	41.0%	992
State Ave.				69.4%	1045	55.9%	848	44.6%	904

Source: 1998-99 TEA AEIS Reports.
* Magnet School.

Recommendation 24:

Identify effective strategies in selected high schools that prepare and improve students' performance on the SAT and ACT for implementation at lower-performing campuses.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	Office of Program Evaluation (OPE) staff surveys non-magnet high schools on preparation for ACT and SAT.	May 2000
2.	OPE staff surveys seniors in high schools on their preparation for ACT and SAT.	May 2000
3.	The curriculum director publicizes the relationship between students taking advanced courses and the SAT and implements a plan to increase the percentage of students taking advanced courses.	August 2000
4.	OPE and curriculum staff analyzes and reports information for implementation at high schools with lower scores and participation rates.	October 2000
5.	OPE and curriculum staff analyzes and report information on middle schools in feeder patterns associated with high and low performance patterns	November 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

B. DROPOUT PREVENTION AND RECOVERY

Ensuring that all students receive a quality education and graduate from high school is the primary goal of all schools. Accurately tracking students who leave school is critical to the district's achieving this goal. To intervene with students who have dropped out or are at-risk of dropping out of school, schools must be able to distinguish between which students have dropped out and those who have moved to other schools.

TEA and the state accountability system have made this task a priority. TEA requires districts to report information on their dropout rates so TEA can use the data in its accountability rating system. Districts must use the guidelines in the TEA Leaver Codes and Definitions to report information on students who withdraw from school (**Exhibit 2-22**).

Exhibit 2-22
TEA Leaver Codes and Definitions

Code	Interpretation
01*	Student graduated
02	Student withdrew from/left school to pursue a job
03*	Student died while enrolled in school or during the summer break after completing the prior school year
04	Student withdrew from/left school to join the military
06*	Student withdrew with no declared intent to enroll elsewhere, but the district has received acceptable documentation of enrollment in another school district or private school outside Texas
07*	Student withdrew from school with declared intent to enroll in another public or private school outside Texas
08	Student withdrew from/left school because of pregnancy
09	Student withdrew from/left school to marry
10	Student withdrew from/left school due to alcohol or other drug abuse problems
11	Student withdrew from/left school because of low or failing grades
12	Student withdrew from/left school because of poor attendance
13	Student withdrew from/left school because of language problems

14	Student withdrew from/left school because of age
15	Student withdrew from/left school due to homelessness or non-permanent residency
16*	Student withdrew from/left school with documentation of having returned to home country, but with no evidence of enrollment in school in home country
17*	Student was expelled for behavior qualifying as Class C misdemeanor or worse (Code of Criminal Procedure), the behavior occurred on school property or at school-related functions, and appropriate actions resulted in placement in an alternative setting or the offense was reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency
19*	Student failed exit TAAS, but has met all other graduation requirements
21*	Student officially transferred to another Texas public school district through completion of ACC-041B, Transfers Prior to May 1
22*	Student withdrew from/left school to attend an alternative program (GED, JTPA, trade school, drug rehabilitation program, etc.), is in compliance with compulsory attendance laws (TEC Sections 25.085-25.086), and district has acceptable documentation that the student is working toward the completion of high school (diploma or GED certificate)
24*	Student withdrew from/left school to enter college with documentation that he or she is working towards Associate's or Bachelor's degree
25*	Student withdrew from/left school to enter college with no evidence of working towards an Associate's or Bachelor's degree
26	Student was expelled (due to reasons other than criminal behavior), with no further participation in a school or educational program to continue working towards the completion of a high school diploma or GED certificate
27	Student failed exit TAAS, has not met all other graduation requirements, and has no evidence of further participation in a school or educational program to continue working towards the completion of a high school diploma or GED certificate
28*	Student withdrew from school with declared intent to enroll in another Texas public school district
29*	Student withdrew from school with declared intent to enroll in a private school within Texas
30*	Student withdrew from/left school to enter a health care facility
31*	Student completed the GED, and district has acceptable documentation and student has not returned to school

60*	Student withdrew at request of student, parent, guardian, or other person with legal control of the student for home schooling
61*	Student was incarcerated in a facility outside the boundaries of the district
62*	Student was withdrawn by the district when it was discovered that the student was not a resident or had falsified enrollment information
63*	Student had graduated in a previous school year, returned to school, and then left again
64*	Student had received a GED in a previous school year, returned to school to work toward the completion of a high school diploma, and then left
65	Student did not return to school after completing a JJAEP term, and the student had not graduated or completed/received a GED
66*	Student was removed from the district by Child Protective Services (CPS) and the district has not been informed of the student's current status or enrollment
67*	Student was withdrawn from school after failing to provide immunization records within 30 days of enrollment
70	Student withdrew from school to attend an alternative program (GED, JTPA, HEP, trade school or drug rehabilitation program) but is not in compliance with compulsory attendance laws
71	Student withdrew from school to attend an alternative program (GED, JTPA, trade school or drug rehabilitation program), is in compliance with compulsory attendance laws, but district does not have acceptable documentation that student is working toward completion of high school (diploma or GED certificate)
72*	Student was withdrawn from school by court order to attend a specific alternative program, is under compulsory attendance age, and district has a copy of the court order on file
73*	Student withdrew from/left school with no declared intent to enroll elsewhere, but the district has received acceptable documentation of enrollment in another school district in Texas
74*	Student withdrew from/left school with no declared intent to enroll elsewhere, but the district has received acceptable documentation of enrollment in a private school in Texas
99	Other (reason unknown or not listed above)

Source: TEA PEIMS documentation.
* These reasons are not associated with a dropout classification.

FINDING

AISD continues to experience record-keeping errors related to Leaver Code information. In 1998-99, AISD received a rating of Unacceptable: Data Issues because of its data quality problems, which concerned the district's inaccurately reporting Leaver Code information.

AISD initially reported a 2 percent dropout rate for the 1997-98 school year. After reviewing and correcting Leaver code records, the rate was amended to 5.5 percent. This rate is an annual rate computed from grades 7 through 12. In January 2000, after a TEA staff audit, TEA changed the accountability ratings for three schools-Travis, Crockett and McCallum high schools-from Acceptable: data issues to Low-performing. TEA found that eight secondary schools had a dropout rate that exceeded 6 percent, enough to receive a Low-performing rating. Five of the eight schools identified were already rated Low-performing. The review found a number of previously "unreported students" were actually dropouts. The overall dropout rate for the district was changed to 8.5 percent.

This problem in data reporting is not new to AISD. AISD's Office of Program Evaluation (OPE) reported a problem with the dropout rates in a longitudinal study. According to the report, the number of dropouts who were underreported to PEIMS ranged from 216 in 1994-95 to 100 in 1997-98. The number of underreported dropouts was in excess of 100 in the intermediate years. According to the report, the problems centered on duplicative record-keeping procedures, the use of local instead of PEIMS student identification numbers and missing documentation among other problems. The report also concluded that difficulties in understanding TEA Leaver codes contributed to error rates.

An AISD press release dated October 11, 1999, noted that the district's at-risk student count on the 1997-98 PEIMS report was incorrect, resulting in a financial loss to the district of approximately $2 million in state funds for the Optional Extended Year Program, a program designated to serve students, identified as potential dropouts, through a summer intervention program. Because of similar reporting problems, the district's eligibility for a Ninth Grade Success Initiative grant was in serious question. In January 2000, TEA, however, awarded AISD a $3.8 million grant to implement this program.

In the superintendent's first quarterly report (November 1999), ensuring data quality and accuracy was identified as one of the district's top priorities. To meet this goal, the district has implemented several measures, including hiring more data clerks for all secondary campuses and commissioning two independent reviews to assess the district's record keeping and data reporting. One of these reviews included an independent audit of the PEIMS data file, before its delivery to TEA in October 1999.

Many registrars at AISD campuses have reported difficulties understanding the definitions in the Leaver Code. Interviews with the director of accountability as well as campus staff revealed a great deal of confusion over Leaver Codes. Campus and district staff also said that there is difficulty in obtaining consistent, understandable interpretations from TEA.

The director of accountability said the district is taking serious measures to help school staff accurately complete Leaver Code documentation. The director said that in the fall of 1999, campuses were given reports and summaries three times, showing the frequency of use of every Leaver Code, grouped according to whether the code would cause a student to be counted as a dropout, graduate or other leaver.

To reduce or eliminate confusion over Leaver Codes, the director said the district has given personnel at every campus copies of the leaver reason codes, and that TEA staff will attend meetings of data clerks and registrars so areas of confusion in coding can be clarified. Though the director said that random audits of leaver data are planned for this year, no specific plan on how to implement the audits is available.

Recommendation 25:

Develop a comprehensive plan for accurately reporting dropout rates that includes campus and districtwide strategies.

AISD has taken positive steps to create a process that will ultimately produce accurate and high quality dropout information. Toward this end the district should implement stringent auditing practices to verify the strengths and weaknesses of current reporting practices. When discrepancies are found, individuals must be held accountable.

All staff must understand how to interpret Leaver Code and dropout information, including school registrars, data clerks, school staff, the Office of Program Evaluation and counselors and teachers working with students on a daily basis. AISD should calculate a graduation rate for each campus to supplement the dropout information obtained through the Leaver Codes and to develop a more comprehensive assessment of every school.

Using historical dropout data, it is possible to determine, for each campus, information which could help identify inaccurate data. For example, given that a certain number of students have dropped out each year from a given high school over the last five years, statistical methods can determine when a reported number of dropouts is unlikely to be correct. Values outside the determined range would warrant an investigation.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	With data from a review of TEA Leaver Codes, and from historical dropout rate patterns, the director of accountability determines, for every campus, the critical values that include the number of students expected to be reported for each Leaver Code.	May 2000
2.	The district internal auditor will review all campuses exceeding the critical values developed by the director of accountability.	June 2000
3.	If the internal auditor finds data discrepancies, the area superintendent institutes appropriate disciplinary action or provides, as needed, appropriate training for data clerks and other campus personnel.	July 2000
4.	The director of accountability develops and publicizes an estimate of graduation rates for the district and for each high school.	July 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The director of AISD Guidance and Counseling said that counselors are assigned to campuses based solely on the enrollment of the campus. **Exhibit 2-23** includes the procedures for assigning counselors to campuses.

Exhibit 2-23
AISD Counselor Assignments

Campus Type	Assignment Rule
High School	One per grade level plus one additional with an enrollment of 2,000.
Middle School	One per grade level.
Elementary	One half time for up to 599 students, one full time at 600 students, and one and a half for 1,000 students.

Source: AISD, Guidance and Counseling.

Currently, there are few ways to change this formula based on dropout rates or other variables. Campuses may add a dropout prevention specialist, but this position must be funded through campus local and or

external funds. McCallum High School has added such a position by providing 15 percent of the salary, with vertical team and transition funds distributed from central office, paying the remaining 85 percent of the position.

In addition, eleven counselors are assigned half-time (20 hours per week) to 22 elementary campuses that have a high percentage of students identified as at-risk. Campuses may choose to supplement their counselor allocation with state compensatory funds. Some high schools have identified specific counselors who specialize in dropout prevention and recovery, while others do not have a specialist in this area.

Two drug/alcohol abuse counselors have been assigned to alternative campuses. The director of guidance and counseling said that, with these additional funding sources, the districtwide counselor to student ratio is 1:500. Interviews with counselors indicate they have little opportunity to determine when their actions prevented a student from leaving school. There is no formal feedback system to help counselors judge the effectiveness of their interventions.

Recommendation 26:

Develop a formal evaluation system and monitoring strategies to ensure counseling services are effective.

Appropriately matching the number of counselors to identified problem areas is a first step to making dropout prevention more efficient. To make the process more effective, however, will require providing counselors information about how and why their intervention efforts were (or were not) successful. Using techniques that are effective with students in Garza High School-AISD's dropout recovery high school-and that can be reasonably be applied in other schools should also increase the dropout prevention program's effectiveness.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	Counselors at Garza High School conduct working sessions with other high school counselors to help them understand why students have dropped out of school.	Ongoing
2.	The director of the Office of Program Evaluation and director of the Department of Guidance and Counseling develop a formal system to evaluate and refine counselor intervention strategies and report findings to increase counselor effectiveness.	December 2000
3.	The director of the Department of Guidance and Counseling develops a better system for determining the number of	April 2001

	counselors that should be assigned to schools based on actual need as determined by dropout rates among other factors.	

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

C. INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

Instructional resources are the materials available to ensure successful learning, in the broadest sense, including fiscal and human resources. While half of AISD's students are listed as economically disadvantaged, the district has high per student wealth. TEA has notified AISD that in 2000-01 the district will be subject to provisions of Chapter 41 of the Texas Education Code requiring AISD to share its property wealth with the state's poorer districts. With estimated property tax wealth per student that will exceed $295,000 in 2000-01, AISD is among the wealthiest of the state's school districts.

FINDING

Started in the 1999-2000 school year, Account for Learning (AFL) is a locally funded district initiative to help campuses with a high percentage of low-income students to improve their students' reading and math skills. Program funds are used for a variety of purposes, including: providing an increased per pupil allocation; tutorials and other extended learning opportunities for students; more enrichment activities (field trips) for elementary students; one instructional specialist per campus; funds for parent training specialists; and extra duty days for planning and/or staff development for teachers, counselors, librarians and assistant principals.

The district also used Federal Class Size Reduction funds to provide extra support to the elementary campuses. The district provided an additional teacher in grades 1,2 or 3. Low-performing schools received two additional teachers. This project also has a strong evaluation component to determine the effort's impact on improving student learning, the quality of teaching and parental involvement. Several principals reported positive feedback on this program. For example, on one campus, extra staff duty days were used to bring teachers to school on a Saturday for a combined staff development/parent conference/fall festival day. The principal reported that many more parents attended this event than in a traditional parent conference day and teachers were provided training that same afternoon.

Though most principals welcomed the AFL initiative, little is still known about this program's affect on improved school performance. Because the program has only been implemented for one year, it is still early to evaluate the program's specific impact.

COMMENDATION

AISD has developed and implemented a locally funded initiative, Account for Learning, to help campuses with a high percentage of economically disadvantaged students to improve the students' reading and mathematics skills.

FINDING

Teachers in the lower performing campuses in AISD have fewer average years of experience than teachers on exemplary campuses. Furthermore, at the time of this report, the district does not have a plan on how to address staff retention in low-performing schools.

Exhibit 2-24 presents information for elementary schools. The difference in teacher experience is substantial. Teachers on exemplary campuses have more total years experience and more years in AISD. Only a small difference between less and more experienced teachers is seen in the percentage of teachers with advanced degrees. However, the percentage of teachers teaching with special certification is much greater at the low-performing campuses.

Exhibit 2-24
Percent of AISD Elementary Teachers
Experience, Degrees, Special Certification
Exemplary versus Low-performing Campuses

Campus Rating	% Teachers With No Experience	Average Years AISD Experience	Years Outside AISD Experience	Total Years	BA	MA/ Ph.D.	% Special Certifi- cation	Average Salary
Exemplary	2.7%	9.7	3.0	12.7	71.7%	28.3%	2.1%	$35,059
Low-performing	18.4%	5.7	2.4	8.1	75.7%	24.3%	12.2%	$31,638

Source: AISD Central Office.

There are currently seven schools that are low-performing for TAAS scores and these schools employed 389 teachers in 1998-99. As originally planned, the Account for Learning initiative would have allocated $1,000 stipends for participating teachers during the second and third years of the program. These stipends, however, were not included in the 1999-2000 AFL program budget. The director of Special Education said that the district does plan to investigate possible incentives that might be used in

the future to address staff retention at schools with high percentages of low income students.

Recommendation 27:

Retain, recruit and reassign highly qualified teachers to high-need campuses, and reward student improvement with a bonus of up to $3,000.

High-quality teachers are needed to teach in low-performing schools, and these teachers ought to receive an incentive to boost their students' performance. Providing a bonus to teachers who work at schools that rise from a Low-performing status to Academically Acceptable, Recognized, or Exemplary status would draw better teachers into these schools and reward them for making the effort necessary to turn the schools around. A bonus of $2,000 should be given to teachers at schools that move from Low-performing to Acceptable, $2,500 for moving from Low-performing to Recognized and $3,000 for moving from Low-performing to Exemplary.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the deputy superintendents to prepare a plan for administering this bonus program.	May 2000
2.	The superintendent takes the plan to the board for approval.	August 2000
3.	The deputy superintendent for Curriculum in conjunction with the deputy superintendent for Accountability implement the program.	August 2000 - Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

One high school, one middle school and five elementary schools are rated low performing for TAAS scores. If every school were to bring student scores up to acceptable levels, bonuses of $778,000 would be given based on 389 teachers x $2,000 in bonuses. The maximum one-year cost of this program is $1,167,000 ($3,000 x 389 teachers), assuming every Low-performing campus moved to Exemplary status in one year. For estimating purposes, TSPR is assuming that one-quarter of the eligible schools will move from Low-performing to Acceptable and one-quarter will move from Low-performing to Recognized, for a first-year cost of $441,000 in 2001-02 ((98 teachers x $2,000) + (98 teachers x $2,500)). If in the second year and each year thereafter, the number of Low-performing campuses is reduced to one-half of current numbers, the cost of the program would be reduced by one-half each year.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Retain, recruit and reassign highly qualified teachers to high-need campuses, and reward student improvement with a bonus of up to $3,000.	$0	($441,000)	($220,500)	($110,250)	($55,125)

FINDING

A review of documents provided by AISD indicates there are curriculum guides in every core instructional area, physical education, fine arts and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). These guides follow state standards, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and national standards.

The district does not have specific curriculum guides for the gifted and talented education program.

Curriculum guides are distributed to campuses as each document is completed or revised, for new teachers and upon campus request. In interviews, however, campus staff said that not all teachers have a copy for their personal use. Both the language arts and mathematics curriculum supervisors in the district said that all teachers do have access to the district's curriculum guides.

Curriculum guides should be dynamic in nature. As new curriculum developments occur, guides should be quickly updated to reflect the latest information. Though the Department of Curriculum has explored ways to provide the curriculum guides online, there are no specific plan or implementation strategies in place to make the guides easily available on the district's Internet site.

Curriculum guides are large, detailed documents that need constant revision and updating. It is a difficult task to supply paper copies to all teachers and other interested district and community members. Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD is in the process of transferring all of the district's curriculum guides to the Internet. To accomplish this task, the district has allocated district staff and hired a consultant. Currently, guides are only available on the district's intranet, but are readily available to all district staff. In 2000, the district plans to place the curriculum guides on the Internet, for general public access.

The Travis High School Communication Academy is a school-to-career program that allows students to specialize in the areas of multimedia, teleproduction, and telecommunications. In multimedia, students learn how to use advanced software and how to create web pages. Junior and senior students in the Travis High School Academy have the opportunity to participate in paid and unpaid internships. AISD's curriculum staff should partner with the Academy by providing internship positions for students to assist in posting the curriculum guides on the district's web site.

The Texas Association of School Boards maintains a copy of board rules on the Internet for access by local boards of trustees. These policy manuals can be quickly updated when necessary. Large documents, such as curriculum guides, can be posted to intranets with readily available software. These documents can be easily updated without the need for extensive printing and additions to paper copies of curriculum guides.

Students at Travis High School have demonstrated technical proficiency in working with technology, specifically computer applications.

Recommendation 28:

Post AISD curriculum guides on the AISD Web site.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Department of Curriculum establishes internship opportunities for Travis High School Academy Students to assist in posting curriculum guides to the AISD Web site.	August 2000
2.	Staff in the Travis High School Communications Academy make students aware of these internship opportunities.	August 2000
3.	Students are selected to participate in the internship program.	August 2000 - May 2001
4.	Students receive course credit for internship.	May 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

A TEA accreditation visit to AISD in January 1999 focused on the low performance in TAAS mathematics as a primary reason for low

accountability ratings. Although TEA noted that AISD had two initiatives in mathematics, Curriculum Framework for Mathematics and a project grant from the National Science Foundation, the peer team noted a "lack of urgency ... by either the principals or the teachers of mathematics." According to the accreditation report, "The peer review team recommended quick, dramatic intervention to ensure maximum student performance in the short term."

To support the efforts of low-performing schools, the district developed a plan-Framework for Success, 1999-2000 Focus Campuses. In addition, principals of low-performing schools are required to attend monthly meetings, known as the Principal Problem Solving and Support Meeting. At these meetings, principals, area superintendents and curriculum staff discuss needs and develop action plans.

New for 1999-2000, each low-performing school is required to prepare a Condition of Performance Campus Action Plan to help the campus improve its performance. Although AISD has implemented these strategies to address the needs of individual low-performing schools, the district does not have a comprehensive districtwide strategic plan, strict implementation tasks and timelines. There is no plan that specifically addresses high areas of need, like mathematics and social studies.

The district should have district curriculum specialists capable of helping schools analyze, design and develop a plan to meet the unique needs of each campus. According to the AISD budget document (**Exhibit 2-25**), five full-time positions are allocated to social studies and seven for mathematics. The positions include professional, administrative and classified personnel.

Exhibit 2-25
Full-time Equivalent Staff in AISD Central Office
Versus TAAS Performance
1999-2000 (Budgeted)

	Full-time Equivalents	1999 Grade 8 Percentage TAAS Passing
Science	10	80.9
English Language Arts	14.03	78.5*
Mathematics	7	72.4
Social Studies	5	61.0

Exhibit 2-25 includes positions funded through state, local and federal sources. Additional competitive grants also fund eight primary literacy specialists in language arts and nine specialists who support mathematics initiatives.

Recommendation 29:

Develop a comprehensive strategic plan that identifies specific strategies to improve student performance in mathematics and social studies.

To implement this recommendation the district must first re-allocate staff in the Department of Curriculum to increase the number of mathematics and social studies specialists. The district should examine the curriculum and involve teachers and administrators in developing a strategy. District testing and accountability experts should provide on-going support for this plan, by interpreting the district's TAAS performance in mathematics and social studies. Staff should identify similar schools with successful practices.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the director of curriculum to develop a plan to identify strategies to improve performance in mathematics and social studies and the superintendent assigns staff in critical areas (principals, teachers and testing experts) to be involved in this process.	June 2000
2.	The director of curriculum identifies national and state strategies to increase students' mathematics and social studies performance.	June - September 2000
3.	The director of curriculum determines appropriate staff reallocation to improve students mathematics and social studies performance.	June 2000
4.	The director of accountability provides on-going technical support in TAAS interpretation and student achievement.	August 2000 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

D. BILINGUAL EDUCATION

Texas Education Code Chapter 29 requires all school districts with an enrollment of 20 Limited English Proficient (LEP) students in the same grade level to offer a bilingual/ESL (English as a Second Language) or an alternative language program. The law specifies that bilingual education must be provided in pre-kindergarten through the elementary grades and that bilingual education, instruction in ESL or other transitional language instruction approved by TEA is provided in post-elementary grades through grade 8. For students in grades 9-12, only instruction in ESL is required. A LEP student is defined as one whose primary language is other than English and whose English language proficiency limits the student's participation in an English-language academic environment.

AISD defines bilingual education as a program that uses two languages for instructional purposes: the student's native language and English. The primary native language of the student is developed in addition to English as a Second Language (ESL). Content area instruction, like math, science and social studies, is provided in both languages. The district defines an ESL program as instruction in English listening, speaking, reading and composition through the use of any one method or combination of methods for teaching English to primary speakers of other languages.

AISD's Handbook for Bilingual Education/English as a Second language Program for the 1999-2000 school year states that the district provides bilingual education to LEP Hispanic, Vietnamese, Korean and Chinese students in grades PK-6. In the 1997-98 school year, most LEP students in AISD were native Spanish speakers (92 percent), followed by Vietnamese (3 percent), Korean (1 percent), Chinese (1 percent), Cambodian (1 percent), and all other languages (3 percent). LEP students in other language groups receive ESL instruction.

Exhibit 2-26 shows the per student expenditures, as shown in the AEIS report, for students enrolled in bilingual or ESL education. For the 1998-99 school year, AISD had the second largest bilingual/ESL enrollment of its peer group. District per student expenditure for the peer districts ranged from $65 to $1,120. AISD's per student expenditure for Bilingual/ESL for the 1998-99 school year was $187, the second lowest among its peers, and well below the average per student expenditure for the peer districts as a whole. This figure represents approximately 1 percent of the overall budgeted expenditures, the third lowest allocation compared to the district's peers.

Exhibit 2-26
Bilingual/ESL Per Student Expenditure
AISD and Peer Districts, 1998-99

District	Students Enrolled in Bil/ESL	Percent of Total Enrollment	Budgeted Expenditures	Percent of Budgeted Expenditure	Per Student Expenditure
Alief	9,842	24.9%	$11,022,087	8.9%	$1,120
Fort Worth	18,067	24.9%	$13,693,004	6.3%	$758
Northside	2,448	4.0%	$1,041,212	0.6%	$425
Pasadena	7,877	19.1%	$3,218,591	2.8%	$409
Austin	**10,732**	**13.5%**	**$2,009,212**	**0.9%**	**$187**
Corpus Christi	3,376	8.4%	$218,081	0.2%	$65

Source: TEA 1998-99 AEIS Reports.

FINDING

Significant discrepancies exist between information reported in PEIMS
and AEIS reports and the information provided to the TSPR audit review
team. These include:

- *Budgeted Expenditures for Bilingual/ESL Education.* The director
  of Bilingual Education said that significantly more funds are
  allocated for bilingual education than the amount shown in the
  AEIS report, which was $2,009,212. The director said AISD
  dedicates nearly $32 million to bilingual/ESL education. She said
  teacher salary allocations were not reported to TEA. Peer district
  expenditures do include teacher payroll in the budget reported to
  TEA. When $32 million is factored among the approximately
  10,000 bilingual/ESL students served in the district, the per pupil
  expenditure amount is $3,200. This number accounts for staffing
  733 bilingual teachers (**Exhibit 2-27**) reported in the AEIS reports,
  which in salary alone (approximately $30,000 per year, per
  teacher), would account for approximately $22 million.
- *Incorrectly reporting the number of students served.* A TEA audit
  of student attendance for 1997-98 (Audit SA98-842, #227-901)
  concluded there were 120 students in the program in 1997-98 who
  were ineligible for bilingual/ESL education due to parental denial
  for program services. (Parental permission is required for

participation in the bilingual program; some parents deny the participation of their children in the bilingual program, preferring to enroll their children in the regular education program.) The students were earning bilingual/ESL days of attendance in error. The director of Bilingual Education said that district had to reimburse TEA approximately $90,000 for students who were not being served. In addition, the director of bilingual education said that the district was not appropriately reporting the number of LEP students that exit the bilingual/ESL program. Because of this flawed reporting process, the district over-identified the number of LEP students and, as a result, had to reimburse TEA for funds that it received for students that were identified as LEP, but had in fact already exited the bilingual program.

- *Number of Bilingual/ESL students enrolled versus the number of students served*. The AEIS 1997-98 and the 1998-99 reports indicate that AISD served the same number of students that were identified as LEP; that is, all of the students identified as LEP were enrolled in either a bilingual or an ESL program (**Exhibit 2-27**). This is inconsistent with the rest of the peer districts. In all of the peer districts, as is the case in most districts in Texas, there is a percentage of students who are not enrolled in a program, usually due to parental denials. The director of Bilingual Education provided the TSPR staff the number of parental denials for the district. The district does report these figures in their yearly reports. The latest of these, the *Bilingual/ESL Program Evaluation Report, 1997-98*, reports that for the 1997-98 school year (data for the 1998-99 school year are not yet available), there were 758 parental denials, indicating that 93 percent of LEP students received bilingual or ESL instruction. This percentage is similar to the percentage of students served in bilingual and ESL education in the peer districts.

The Deputy Superintendent, Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development said that district staff acknowledges that the data, particularly related to the PEIMS 1999 submission reference, is inaccurate. She said areas of specific concern include programs for students who are bilingual, gifted and talented or eligible for School and Career and special education. The Department of Bilingual Education has taken measures to ensure students exiting LEP status are appropriately reported to TEA by redesigning its data collection process and developing new forms, setting new strict timelines and maintaining its own separate database. Despite these efforts, however, teachers and counselors are still experiencing a difficult time providing the necessary information to the district office in a timely manner.

Recommendation 30:

Implement an appropriate data collection process that correctly reports the number of limited-English proficient students served and the correct budgeted expenditures.

To appropriately staff and fund the bilingual education program and serve LEP students, AISD should have adequate reporting systems in place that correctly count the number of students served in the bilingual/ESL program. This process should be coordinated with other student data collection management efforts in the districts, like the PEIMS coordinator and the Department of Human Resources.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	Staff in the Department of Bilingual Education, appropriate campus staff and the district PEIMS data collection coordinator assess how the number of LEP students and the number served in a bilingual or ESL program is reported to TEA. The director of Bilingual Education identifies areas of weakness in this process.	July 2000
2.	The superintendent directs the director of Bilingual Education and the district PEIMS coordinator to develop a data collection strategic plan for Bilingual Education. This plan will detail every aspect of the data collection process and address all corrective measures needed to ensure accurate record keeping.	August 2000
3.	The director of Bilingual Education and the district's budget director correctly report the budgeted expenditures to TEA.	October 2000
4.	The Department of Bilingual Education and the district PEIMS data collection coordinator report the correct number of students served in Bilingual Education to TEA.	October 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Although AISD has a high number of bilingual teachers (733) reported in the AEIS reports, the bilingual education program is not adequately and consistently staffed across the district. Specifically, some campuses appear to have a greater need for bilingual teachers than others. The director of Bilingual Education explained the district has not kept up with the changing demographic enrollment patterns in many schools. As a result,

some schools that traditionally did not enroll a large percentage of limited English proficient students are experiencing a teacher shortage.

In interviews, teachers and campus staff consistently said there is a shortage of bilingual and ESL education teachers. In focus group meetings, teachers and principals said the LEP students are not adequately served and there are not enough full-time ESL teachers. Representatives from the Austin Area Bilingual Education Association said that there are not enough teachers, particularly ESL teachers, in AISD's middle schools.

In AISD, 10,732 students, or 13.5 percent of the student enrollment for the 1998-99 school year, were identified as LEP and received bilingual or ESL instruction (**Exhibit 2-27**). AISD ranked second in the number of students who received bilingual/ESL education, and first in the number of bilingual and ESL teachers reported as full-time equivalent employees.

Exhibit 2-27
Limited English Proficient Students
Bilingual/ESL Program Enrollment
AISD versus Peer Districts
1998-99

District	Number of LEP Students	Percent of Enrollment	Number of Students Enrolled in Bilingual /ESL Education	Percent of Enrollment Served in Bil /ESL	Number of Teachers	Percent of Teachers in Bil /ESL Program
Forth Worth	19,398	24.9%	18,067	93.1%	310	7.0%
Austin	**10,732**	**13.5%**	**10,732**	**100.0%**	**733**	**15.1%**
Alief	10,241	24.9%	9,842	96.1%	261	10.3%
Pasadena	9,243	22.4%	7,877	85.2%	300	12.4%
Corpus Christi	3,841	9.5%	3,376	87.9%	177	7.2%
Northside	3,135	5.1%	2,448	78.1%	31	0.8%

Source: TEA 1998-99 AEIS Reports.

Data in **Exhibit 2-27** show that, according to the 1998-99 AEIS report, there are 733 bilingual education teachers, indicating an approximate 15:1 teacher student ratio in the bilingual education program. The director of bilingual education said that of these, approximately 500 are certified teachers, and about 200 have a permit and are enrolled in the alternative certification program. This number is more than double the number of teachers available in any of the peer districts. Alief has a similar number of enrolled LEP students as AISD, but has only 260 bilingual education teachers. Fort Worth has almost twice the number of identified LEP students, yet has less than half as many (310) bilingual education teachers. Fort Worth, however, has an early-exit program that goes only through the third grade, and consequently, would have fewer bilingual teachers.

An examination of AISD's employee list shows that some teachers are listed as bilingual teachers, yet are not currently assigned to bilingual classrooms. In Mills Elementary, for instance, there are 26 LEP students, yet there are four bilingual/ESL teachers and nine ESL teachers. These 13 teachers (listed as either bilingual or ESL), out of a total of 43 teachers employed at Mills Elementary, account for 30 percent of the teachers on the campus, yet only 4.4 percent of the student enrollment is LEP. The director of Bilingual Education said many teachers may be properly certified to teach ESL, but these teachers must be assigned the responsibility of providing ESL instruction across content areas. Teachers and principals said that, because of inadequate allocation of bilingual/ESL staff, class sizes are, in many schools, too large. Teachers said that some classrooms have over 30 students.

Recommendation 31:

Allocate bilingual/ESL staff to each campus based on student enrollment.

Inappropriately allocating ESL staff to campuses in need of more ESL teachers has hindered the effective delivery of bilingual education. To appropriately staff the bilingual education program and serve LEP students, AISD should have a teacher assignment system in place that appropriately assigns the number of teachers in the bilingual/ESL program. Given that the district employs 733 bilingual teachers, many with ESL endorsements, a review should be conducted of how all ESL teachers are used. This process should be coordinated with other student data collection management efforts in the district, like the PEIMS coordinator and the Department of Human Services.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

| 1. | The director of Bilingual Education, campus principals and staff in | July |

		the Department of Human Services assess the status of all bilingual/ESL teachers, by campus, to determine how many bilingual or ESL teachers do not have bilingual/ESL teaching responsibilities.	2000
2.		The AISD demographer conducts a review of the change in demographic patterns in Austin to predict effectively the campuses that will need bilingual and ESL teachers.	July 2000
3.		The director of Bilingual Education and campus principals use information about demographic patterns in Austin to better allocate bilingual/ESL teaching staff.	July 2000
4.		The director of Bilingual Education and the Department of Human Services appropriately distribute the number of teachers to meet each campuses need for bilingual/ESL instruction.	August 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

A campus Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) has decision-making authority over the identification, instructional placement and reclassification of the LEP students at each school. The LPAC membership is composed of at least four people, including a campus administrator, a bilingual-certified teacher, a teacher involved in teaching English language skills to LEP students and a parent of a LEP student who is not employed by the district. Other professional staff may be included in the LPAC if the principal deems it necessary. According to AISD's Bilingual/ESL program policy, the LPAC is responsible for reviewing all LEP students' progress at the end of the year and determining future placement.

In many schools in AISD, LPAC committees are convened for every LEP student. In interviews, however, staff said that in several schools LPAC reviews are not conducted for every LEP child. Bilingual teachers said they are not given any extra time to review and prepare paperwork for LPAC committee meetings. One teacher explained that the counselor is responsible for coordinating LPAC meetings, but that meetings are not conducted for every child. Another teacher noted that teachers do not have time to conduct or coordinate meetings for every student. A Peer Review Accreditation Report conducted in Blackshear Elementary by TEA in January 1999 reports there were inconsistencies and inaccuracies in identifying, testing and meeting the individual academic needs of LEP students. A bilingual education teacher at Mendez Middle School stated

that every year, students come to the middle school from the elementary schools incorrectly identified. Many students are still identified for ESL but have already exited the program.

Recommendation 32:

Evaluate the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee's (LPAC's) process for reviewing student progress to ensure that student needs are being met.

To ensure every LEP student's needs are met and that students are exited from the program appropriately, LPAC meetings should be conducted for every student.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Office of Program Evaluation and the Department of Bilingual Education jointly conduct a thorough assessment of the LPAC committee's role, responsibility and effectiveness.	June - December 2000
2.	The Department of Bilingual Education develops and implements necessary changes in the LPAC procedures identified in the study.	January 2001
3.	Campus principals will ensure an LPAC meeting is conducted for every student enrolled in bilingual/ESL education.	August 2000 Ongoing
4.	The area superintendent will use compliance with this policy as a factor in a principal's evaluation.	August 2000 Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

In 1999, AISD ranked last among the peer districts in the percentage of students passing the Spanish version of the TAAS math test, and second to last for the TAAS reading test. In grade 4, the district significantly lags behind the peer districts' performance. In all categories, AISD trails the state averages for TAAS taken in Spanish.

Exhibits 2-28 and **2-29** present TAAS scores for the grades 3 and 4 Spanish versions of TAAS. In both grade levels, the percentage of students passing the Spanish version of TAAS significantly increased from 1997 to 1999.

Exhibit 2-28
Percent of Students Passing Spanish TAAS
Grade 3 AISD and Peer Districts
1997-99

District	Reading			Mathematics			All Tests Taken		
	1997	**1998**	**1999**	**1997**	**1998**	**1999**	**1997**	**1998**	**1999**
Austin	**35%**	**61%**	**64%**	**42%**	**59%**	**62%**	**26%**	**48%**	**53%**
Alief	46%	71%	65%	70%	83%	66%	43%	68%	53%
Corpus Christi	19%	67%	78%	35%	50%	72%	19%	42%	63%
Forth Worth	43%	68%	68%	56%	65%	78%	35%	56%	63%
Pasadena	53%	67%	84%	64%	72%	85%	47%	57%	76%
Northside	30%	53%	62%	43%	59%	67%	17%	44%	54%
State	45%	65%	74%	53%	65%	75%	37%	54%	65%

Source: 1997-99 TEA AEIS Reports.

Exhibit 2-29
Percent of Students Passing Spanish TAAS
Grade 4 AISD and Peer Districts
1997-99

District	Reading			Math			All Tests Taken		
	1997	**1998**	**1999**	**1997**	**1998**	**1999**	**1997**	**1998**	**1999**
Forth Worth	31%	34%	N/A*	41%	58%	N/A*	23%	29%	N/A*
Corpus Christi	19%	29%	50%	20%	50%	90%	6%	21%	54%
Pasadena	31%	37%	50%	52%	63%	87%	26%	33%	49%
Alief	27%	35%	43%	47%	70%	78%	22%	27%	40%
Northside	54%	41%	45%	46%	56%	67%	34%	26%	35%
Austin	**24%**	**22%**	**36%**	**34%**	**34%**	**52%**	**19%**	**19%**	**33%**
State	37%	39%	46%	48%	59%	72%	30%	33%	40%

Source: 1997-99 TEA AEIS Reports.
** TAAS scores for grade 4 were not reported in the 1998-99 Fort Worth
ISD reports.*

Recommendation 33:

Provide teachers with detailed TAAS, Spanish version performance analyses in a timely manner so they can be used for instructional planning for limited-English proficient students.

Providing TAAS data to teachers allows them to examine individual students' performance and to develop an individual instructional plan that identifies specific areas of weakness. Using these data also can allow a teacher with particular instructional strengths to be paired with a teacher who needs help in specific areas.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Office of Program Evaluation provides teachers with Spanish TAAS objective level and item analysis data at the student level.	August 2000
2.	The Office of Program Evaluation trains campus staff on Spanish TAAS score interpretation.	September - December 2000
3.	Teachers and campus improvement teams use TAAS data to develop goals and objectives for each weakness identified.	September - December 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

While AISD employs 733 bilingual teachers, AISD principals, teachers and members of the Austin Area Association of Bilingual Education said that recruiting and retaining *qualified*, native Spanish speaking staff continues to be a problem. Finding qualified and experienced bilingual education teachers is a challenge for all districts. Some schools are struggling with this issue, hiring inexperienced teachers, permanent substitute teachers, teachers that are or have gone through the Alternative Certification Program and requesting emergency waivers for bilingual education classrooms. AISD has identified this problem as a critical issue.

In interviews, bilingual education teachers and the director of Bilingual Education said the district is not adequately addressing the needs of the increasing number of recent immigrants, particularly those students enrolling in middle and senior high schools. Though this problem relates in part to the districts' staffing allocation practices, it also is related to teacher quality.

Several teachers throughout the district said that their biggest challenge is to provide *quality* content area instruction to middle school ESL students. Content area instruction is extremely important, yet many teachers are not certified in both ESL and other content areas like math and science. Though the regular teacher is supposed to provide content area instruction to these students, many, because of language barriers, need extra reinforcement using a bilingual/ESL instructional approach. Many ESL teachers don't have enough time during the school day to provide both ESL and content area instruction. As a result, many students get further behind-a problem that becomes more difficult to overcome as students move into high school.

TEA has instituted the Texas-Spain Teacher and Student Initiative. This program, sponsored by TEA and the Spanish Ministry of Education, includes a program for visiting teachers from Spain, and a teacher exchange program. AISD participates in this program and has hired 11 Spanish teachers who are employed in elementary and middle schools. Though the program has had success in filling needed teaching positions, staff indicates that it has been difficult for some teachers to assimilate the cultural differences between Spanish, American and the other cultures of (primarily Mexican and Central American) Texas' limited English proficient students.

Recommendation 34:

Assess the quality of all middle school ESL teachers and implement recruiting practices that attract the largest possible pool of qualified bilingual/ESL teachers.

Region 4 Education Service Center and TEA have developed ways to improve the recruitment of quality, native Spanish-speaking teachers. Region 4 coordinates a program, The International Initiative, with two universities in Mexico, The Universidad Autónoma de Guadalajara and the Universidad Regiomontana de Monterrey. Through this program, qualified Spanish-speaking teachers (with a degree from an accredited university equivalent to a U.S. bachelor's degree) who meet minimum requirements, can obtain a bilingual education teacher certification through the Alternative Certification Program (ACP), approved by the State of Texas.

According to Region 4 coordinators, current data indicate that ACP teachers score as well as traditionally trained teachers on evaluation instruments, have a high retention rate in the profession and demonstrate a high degree of professional competence. The program appears to have particular success recruiting ESL teachers for academically challenging courses in middle schools, like mathematics and physics.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Bilingual Education and Human Resources Development take the lead to develop a program with Region Education Service Center 13, neighboring districts (like Del Valle ISD, Round Rock ISD, Leander ISD, Dripping Springs ISD, Georgetown ISD), and area universities to establish a similar international program to increase the pool of qualified Spanish-speaking teachers.	August 2000-May 2001
2.	When recruiting efforts are under way, the Department of Bilingual Education and the Division of Human Resources jointly establish recruiting booths at all state-level and at least one national-level conference to increase the pool of qualified applicants.	Ongoing
3.	The director of Bilingual Education and the assistant director of the Office of Program Evaluation work together to identify Bilingual/ESL teacher quality issues in AISD.	May 2000-September 2000
4.	The deputy superintendent for Bilingual Education and Human Resources Development instructs the director of Bilingual Education to take appropriate measures to enhance the quality of the Bilingual/ESL teaching staff.	September 2000-May 2001
5.	The Department of Human Resources surveys districts across the state to identify other successful bilingual education teacher recruiting strategies, including recruiting native Spanish speaking teachers.	June-August 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

One national-level conference at a cost of $1,500 per person and two state-level conferences at a cost of $400 each are used to calculate travel expenses. Travel for three staff costs $6,900; this includes two state- and one national-level conferences (3 x ($1,500 + $800)). General conference expenses, like set-up fees, are estimated at $2,000 for all three conferences and for all three staff. The total cost for three staff members to attend three conferences is $8,900 ($6,900 +$2,000 = $8,900).

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Assess the quality of all middle school ESL teachers and implement recruiting practices that attract the largest possible pool of qualified bilingual/ESL	($8,900)	($8,900)	($8,900)	($8,900)	($8,900)

teachers.					

Chapter 2

E. ADVANCED ACADEMIC SERVICES

The Office of Advanced Academic Services for AISD is responsible for coordinating several programs, including the gifted and talented programs, honors programs, the Duke Talent Search Program, three magnet school programs, advanced placement studies, the International Baccalaureate program, Future Problem Solving and the summer institute.

FINDING

AISD has three magnet programs, one in a junior high school and two in high schools. The junior high school magnet program, housed at Kealing Junior High School, offers both a science and liberal arts magnet curricula. The Science Academy, housed at LBJ High School, offers science and math curricula. The third program, housed at Johnston High School, offers a liberal arts magnet curriculum. These three schools combined accept approximately 1000 students every school year. Currently, the district is planning to open a second junior high magnet program at Fulmore Middle School in the 2000-01 school year.

Magnet schools provide a challenging and innovative educational environment for qualified middle and high school students. The main goal is academic acceleration and excellence, with an emphasis on independent study and learning. These programs prepare students for higher-level educational opportunities. AISD students may apply to these programs by completing an application form that considers grades, ITBS scores, teacher evaluation and a personal essay. Usually, students must score at or above the 70th percentile on an achievement test and have grades of 80 or above.

Teachers and parents interviewed said that magnet programs are places where teachers can observe exemplary practices, and new, successful approaches to instructional delivery. Among the various programs and activities, one finds a rich variety of course offerings and an active involvement with area colleges, universities and local businesses. This involvement offers internship programs for both AISD and university students and brings expert speakers and tutors from various educational fields.

Students from every campus are encouraged to apply. Program directors make efforts to increase participation from schools with high minority student enrollment. Kealing Junior High School recruits from every sixth grade in the district. The school has a partnership with the University of

Texas at Austin and with Ortega, Zavala, TA Brown, Walnut Creek, Barrington and Pecan Springs Elementary Schools to participate in a Young Scientists program that identifies and prepares students in the district's predominately minority schools for Kealing Magnet Program. In one elementary, a science teacher from Kealing works one period every other day with the grade 6 teachers.

At LBJ High School, the class of 1999 (120 students) included: 14 National Merit Scholars, 17 National Merit Semifinalists, 17 National Merit Commended Scholars, 2 National Achievement Scholarships for Outstanding Negro Students and 5 National Hispanic Scholarships. The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) was administered to 120 students. The average verbal score was 613, and the average mathematics score was 636. At Kealing Junior High, approximately 60 students received state recognition in the Duke Talent Search.

COMMENDATION

Through the three magnet schools, AISD has done an outstanding job providing opportunities for students to explore in depth, advanced, challenging curricula in science, mathematics, technology and liberal arts.

FINDING

AISD's magnet program is challenging and exemplary, and many parents have urged the district to expand magnet programs to include other curricula. Seventy-two percent of community members responding to a survey said AISD should expand its magnet school offerings to include additional programs like engineering and fine arts. Community members also said that they would like the district's high school magnet programs to have their own campus.

AISD magnet programs function as a "school within a school," with one segment of the student body enrolled in the magnet program. Interviews with program directors, teachers, principals and community members demonstrate an uncertainty over whether the original intended effect of housing magnet programs in campuses that educate high percentages of economically disadvantaged students helps the host school, or if they create an antagonistic, resentful relationship between magnet and non-magnet student and teacher groups.

AISD's first magnet program, the Science Academy at LBJ High School, was established in 1985 with magnet directors reporting directly to the assistant superintendent for Secondary Education. The original intent was to create a program that would have sufficient autonomy to allow program

directors to develop innovative instructional programs. When the Liberal Arts program was established in Johnston High School in 1987, magnet directors began reporting to the school principal. Magnet program directors still report directly to the school principal, although area superintendents also routinely call upon them. Directors said that many times they are reporting to two people, and that they are not evaluated regularly, or by the same person from year to year.

In Kealing Junior High School, magnet students make up two-thirds of the school. In this case, the magnet director is responsible for two-thirds of the school, yet must report to the school principal. Several issues that should be left up to the magnet director's discretion, like budget decisions, teacher evaluations and when to hire teachers, must be approved by the school principal. Magnet directors and principals said their relationship is strained, and at times has led to resentment and distrust. Magnet directors are often called on to help the school principal perform duties that are completely unrelated to their jobs as magnet program directors.

Reagan High School's facilities have been significantly underused for years and operate at only 59 percent capacity. Underused facilities are costly, wasteful, and a drain on a district's resources. Reagan High School, located near the intersection of Interstate 35 and US Highway 290 in Austin's preferred growth corridor, is centrally located and accessible from surrounding Central Texas communities. The facility has both large permanent classroom capacity and ample parking.

Kealing Middle School, with a capacity of 1,176 students, has a 1999-2000 enrollment of 958, with approximately 600 magnet students. The district's magnet school at Kealing serves only 7th and 8th grade students; prospective magnet students completing elementary school must attend 6th grade at another campus before enrolling at Kealing. The Kealing magnet director and parents of magnet students agree that the Kealing magnet program needs to be open to 6th graders. Magnet directors and community members also said that middle school magnet offerings should be expanded and that magnet schools need their own campuses.

Recommendation 35:

Locate a new Regional Magnet Campus at the Reagan High School and make Kealing Middle School a magnet-only campus for grades six through eight.

The Science Academy at LBJ High School and the Liberal Arts Academy at Johnston High School should be relocated to the Reagan campus. Reagan High School would become a Regional Magnet Campus, open to students from AISD and other Central Texas school districts.

The Regional Magnet Campus should offer advanced programs in science and liberal arts, develop new magnet programs such as a fine arts academy, and establish a technology academy for students who wish to develop the skills that will make them employable in the Austin economy. The district should bring together representatives from Austin's high tech, business, and higher education communities to provide resources toward making the Reagan Regional Magnet Campus the educational crown jewel of Central Texas.

The magnet schools at LBJ and Johnston high schools currently serve 1,100 students (774 in the Science Academy and 326 in the Liberal Arts Academy). The capacity of Reagan High School means that it initially could accommodate at least 1,500 magnet students while also housing AISD central administrative staff. (TSPR recommends that AISD relocate its central office to the Reagan High School Facility. See Chapter 1, District Organization and Management.)

Creating an AISD Middle School Magnet Campus will enable the district to better meet the needs of its qualified middle school magnet students. Kealing Middle School should be a magnet-only campus for grades six through eight with expanded magnet program offerings.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	Superintendent designates an area superintendent to whom magnet directors will report.	June 2000
2.	The superintendent directs the deputy superintendents to develop a plan for converting Reagan High School into a Regional Magnet Campus, housing a Science Academy, a Liberal Arts Academy and a Technology Academy and for converting Kealing Middle School into the district's Middle School Magnet Campus.	July 2000
3.	The superintendent and the executive cabinet redraw attendance zones so that students who would currently track to Reagan High School and Kealing Middle School will track to other high schools and middle schools.	March 2001
4.	The superintendent presents the magnet campus plan and redrawn attendance zones to the board for approval.	August 2001
5.	The board approves the plan.	September 2001 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing staff and facilities. Magnet staff will follow students to the new Reagan Magnet at an estimated cost of $300,000 relocation and renovation expenses for the Science Academy and $200,000 for the Liberal Arts Academy. Transportation costs should not change significantly as students will need to be transported to two instead of three district magnet campuses.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Locate a new Regional Magnet Campus at the Reagan High School facility and make Kealing Middle School a magnet-only campus for grades six through eight.	$0	$0	($500,000)	$0	$0

FINDING

AISD does not regularly report student information separately, such as TAAS and ITBS scores or the percentage of students taking the SAT, for students enrolled in magnet programs and for students enrolled in the regular program on the same campus. If this information is available at the district office, it is not fully disseminated to parents or the community at large.

In interviews and focus groups, teachers, principals, parents and community members said that without this information, the real performance of non-magnet students is masked. TEA does not require districts to provide magnet vs. non-magnet program information, and accountability ratings do not reflect magnet program participation. Teachers, principals and parents said that schools that host magnet programs would be seriously at-risk of receiving a low-performance accountability rating if the magnet programs were not housed at these schools.

Exhibit 2-30 shows the percentage of students attending magnet schools and the percentage of students not attending magnet schools who passed the TAAS in 1996-97 and 1998-99. The data show that there is a large performance gap between students at magnet schools and students at non-magnet schools. For non-magnet students, less than 50 percent passed the mathematics test, except for Kealing Junior High School in 1998-99. **Exhibits 2-31, 2-32** and **2-33** present TAAS, math, reading and writing scores for 1998-99.

Exhibit 2-30
LBJ and Johnston High School and Kealing Junior High School
Magnet vs. Non-Magnet TAAS (Percent Passing - All Students)
1996-97, 1998-99

	Reading		Mathematics		Writing	
	Magnet	**Non-Magnet**	**Magnet**	**Non-Magnet**	**Magnet**	**Non-Magnet**
LBJ High School*						
1996-97	98%	67%	97%	34%	97%	68%
1998-99	100%	63%	98%	44%	100%	70%
Johnston High School*						
1996-97	100%	69%	93%	44%	100%	75%
1998-99	98%	62%	94%	43%	100%	73%
Kealing Junior High School*						
1996-97	95%	58%	90%	47%	91%	60%
1998-99	100%	62%	99%	59%	100%	60%

Source: AISD Information Item presented to school board on March 23, 1998, AISD data request.
* Johnston and LBJ figures include first-time 10th grade test-takers only. Kealing figures include 7th and 8th grade students.

Exhibit 2-31
LBJ and Johnston High School and Kealing Junior High School
Magnet, Non-Magnet, and All Students
Mathematics TAAS (Percent Passing)
1998-99

	All Students	**African American**	**Hispanic**	**Anglo**	**Economically Disadvantaged**
LBJ High School*					
Magnet	98%	92%	95%	100%	82%

	All Students	African American	Hispanic	Anglo	Economically Disadvantaged
Non-magnet	44%	37%	68%	**	47%
Combined	74%	47%	82%	98%	54%
Johnston High School*					
Magnet	94%	80%	94%	96%	82%
Non-magnet	43%	36%	42%	65%	37%
Combined	56%	43%	46%	88%	41%
Kealing Junior High School*					
Magnet	99%	98%	98%	99%	99%
Non-magnet	59%	54%	56%	92%	54%
Combined	84%	64%	73%	99%	64%

Source: TEA 1998-99 Accountability Campus Data Tables, AISD data request.
* Johnston and LBJ figures include first-time 10th grade test-takers only. Kealing figures
include 7th and 8th grade students. **Data not reported due to small numbers of students.

Exhibit 2-32
LBJ and Johnston High School and Kealing Junior High School
Magnet, Non-Magnet, and All students
Reading TAAS (Percent Passing)
1998-99

	All Students	African American	Hispanic	Anglo	Economically Disadvantaged
LBJ High School*					
Magnet	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Non-magnet	63%	57%	84%	**	65%
Combined	84%	65%	93%	98%	71%
Johnston High School*					
Magnet	98%	80%	100%	100%	100%

Non-magnet	62%	67%	59%	82%	57%
Combined	71%	69%	62%	96%	60%
Kealing Junior High School*					
Magnet	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Non-magnet	62%	61%	55%	92%	54%
Combined	86%	69%	74%	99%	65%

Source: TEA 1998-99 Accountability Campus Data Tables, AISD data request
* Johnston and LBJ figures include first-time 10th grade test-takers only. Kealing figures include 7th and 8th grade (except writing, which was given to 8th graders only). **Data not reported due to small numbers of students.

Exhibit 2-33
LBJ and Johnston High School and Kealing Junior High School
Magnet, Non-Magnet, and All students
Writing TAAS (Percent Passing)
1998-99

	All Students	African American	Hispanic	Anglo	Economically Disadvantaged
LBJ High School*					
Magnet	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Non-magnet	70%	69%	74%	**	68%
Combined	87%	75%	88%	98%	73%
Johnston High School*					
Magnet	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Non-magnet	73%	81%	70%	79%	68%
Combined	80%	84%	72%	95%	70%
Kealing Junior High School*					
Magnet	100%	96%	98%	100%	100%

Non-magnet	60%	64%	48%	80%	56%
Combined	85%	70%	67%	98%	65%

Source: TEA 1998-99 Accountability Campus Data Tables, AISD data request.
* Johnston and LBJ figures include first-time 10th grade test-takers only. *Kealing figures include 7th and 8th grade (except writing, which was given to 8th graders only).*
**Data not reported due to small numbers of students.

The Austin Magnet Committee Report (December 1998), said that there are concerns that the current magnet model (school-within-a-school) has a "negative impact on the delivery of effective curricula to the non-magnet students in the host schools."

The committee report states, "The current magnet model serves to mask the academic difficulties of non-magnet students." Using accountability standards for the 1998-99 school year, TAAS scores for these schools reinforce these concerns. The committee believes that disclosing the performance of non-magnet students would bring attention and possible state and federal financial resources to help improve the performance of non-magnet students at these campuses.

Recommendation 36:

Evaluate the educational and economic impact of magnet programs on host campuses.

Use comparative magnet/non-magnet test scores, course selection and other indicators to identify and focus services on students in host schools who are not succeeding academically.

To address all students' needs, school and district staff must have information that provides information on the performance of all students in a school. Teachers, campus administrators, parents and community members should have access to this information to make appropriate instructional decisions.

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To address all students' needs, school and district staff must have information that provides information on the performance of all students in a school. Teachers, campus administrators, parents and community members should have access to this information to make appropriate instructional decisions.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the appropriate departments to temporarily postpone opening a third magnet campus at Fulmore Middle School until findings and recommendations from an	May 2000

	evaluation can be assessed.	
2.	Magnet directors, campus principals and district data management staff coordinate efforts and provide comparative data for schools that host magnet programs. Data will include for each school: ITBS scores, TAAS scores, SAT participation and scores, grade point averages and dropout and attendance rates.	June 2000 Ongoing
3.	The superintendent directs the appropriate departments to identify federal and state funds that current magnet schools would receive if magnet programs were housed elsewhere.	June 2000
4.	The director of the Department of Transportation determines costs of providing transportation for students to one versus two campuses.	June 2000
5.	The assistant director of the Office of Program Evaluation develops and implements strategies to assess the benefit of hosting magnet programs on campuses with specific socio-economic characteristics.	June - November 2000
6.	Campus principals make data available to all parents in the annual school performance report.	August 2000
7.	Principals and teachers use data to address specific student performance issues and develop strategies to include in campus improvement plans.	August 2000
8.	Staff in the Office of Program Evaluation identify the positive and negative impact of AISD'S program placement policy.	December 2000
9.	The superintendent directs the appropriate departments to implement recommendations on optimal placement for magnet programs.	February 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

There is no clear evidence that the district's approach for teaching gifted and talented children is effective. Texas state law requires all school districts to identify and provide services for gifted and talented students. In 1990, the State Board of Education (SBOE) adopted the *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted and Talented Students.* This plan is a guide on how to meet the law's requirements. In 1996, the State Board of Education (SBOE) updated the plan to incorporate Texas Education Code Section

29.123 requirements. The updated plan forms the basis of program accountability for state-mandated services for gifted and talented students.

AISD's Office of Advanced Academic Services defines gifted and talented students as students who are advanced intellectually and academically. Their gifts may be apparent in one or more subjects, like English, math, science and social studies, or in their ability to learn rapidly.

In many cases, a regular or honors curriculum cannot meet the needs of gifted and talented students. According to the coordinator of Advanced Academic Services, the district does not meet the program standards recommended in the State Plan. Compliance varies from school to school. Some principals could describe the process of gifted and talented student identification and list the services provided for these students. Others, however, said there was no effort made to provide services for these students. Several principals, teachers and central administration staff said AISD's gifted and talented educational program was weak and in many instances non-existent.

Bilingual teachers and district administrators said there are no specific efforts to identify gifted bilingual education students. Campus and district staff said that even though it is recommended in the State Plan, there is no identification process for science and social studies; gifted students in those core subjects are not identified. Interviews with campus teachers involved in gifted education and with members of the Austin Association of Gifted and Talented Education indicated that, while the Office of Advanced Academic Services' responsibilities include coordinating several programs for high achieving students, the office does not have adequate resources to fulfill its responsibilities. Overall, AISD is not complying with the state plan for gifted and talented students.

State law requires teachers of gifted and talented students to receive 30 hours of instruction in teaching gifted and talented students. The format in which gifted and talented services are delivered to students is a campus decision. All teachers in the district are encouraged to receive training. Training all teachers, with the current district turnover rate, however, is a difficult task. Even if a teacher is trained, that teacher may or may not be teaching gifted children. Teachers told TSPR that most do not have enough time to provide appropriate services to gifted students. Although training may improve a teacher's instructional methods, it does not ensure that properly trained teachers will be teaching gifted students.

Program staff, parents and community association members noted that AISD does not have a district-level accountability system in place for assessing the quality of the gifted and talented program. Staff and parents said that the district is now implementing its own gifted and talented plan,

and that this plan is still in draft form. The agenda published for the Office of Program Evaluation for the 1999-2000 school year, however, does not include any plans for evaluating gifted and talented education in this district. The assistant director of the Department of Accountability said that the gifted and talented educational program has not been evaluated in at least five years.

Recommendation 37:

Implement the *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted and Talented Students*.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Office of Program Evaluation and the Office of Academic Studies evaluate the effectiveness of the district's gifted and talented education program.	August 2000 - February 2001
2.	The Office of Advanced Academic Services determines if every campus in the district is implementing the recommendations in the *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted and Talented Students.*	January 2001
3.	The Office of Advanced Academic Services develops measures to ensure that every campus follows the State Plan.	March 2001- August 2001
4.	The Office of Advanced Academic Services uses the State Plan to develop an accountability system for gifted and talented programs in AISD.	March 2001 - December 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Several district and campus-level staff, in addition to members of the Austin Area Association of Gifted and Talented Education said how the district manages its information on its gifted and talented education program does not help teachers and principals to identify gifted and talented students on their own campuses. Most high school teachers do not know who their gifted students are. One principal, for instance, said, "We don't know if anything is accurate...Sally may be identified as gifted and talented on three different campuses." Another high school principal said, "I cannot obtain a list of students on my campus that are gifted and talented; if it is available, it is extremely difficult to obtain."

The assistant director of the Office of Research and Evaluation said that AISD does not have a code in the student master file that allows administrative staff to track gifted students. Although the data may be available, it is in different files and not easily accessible. The current information system does not provide administrators with information to improve services for gifted students, nor does it help in the decision-making process.

Exhibit 2-34
Number and Percent of Gifted and Talented Students and Teachers
AISD versus Peer Districts
1997-99

	G/T Student Enrollment				G/T Teachers			
	1998		1999		1998		1999	
District	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
Austin	**5,296**	**6.9%**	**6,010**	**7.6%**	**6.7**	**0.1%**	**4.0**	**0.1%**
Northside (Bexar County)	5,239	8.7%	5,234	8.5%	69.2	1.8%	74.9	1.9%
Forth Worth	5,589	7.3%	4,617	5.9%	78.6	1.8%	92.6	2.1%
Alief	2,839	7.2%	3,160	7.7%	48.9	2%	52.5	2.1%
Pasadena	1,902	4.7%	1,964	4.8%	26.2	1.1%	23.1	1.0%
Corpus Christi	1,852	4.5%	1,752	4.3%	70.2	2.8%	33.6	1.4%

Source: 1997-99 TEA AEIS Reports.

As shown in **Exhibit 2-34**, compared to the peer districts, AISD had the second highest number of students identified as gifted, yet the number and percentage of teachers assigned to gifted programs was the lowest. This number, however, does not accurately represent the number of teachers teaching gifted students in AISD.

The interim coordinator for Advanced Academic Services said that the number of teachers reported in the AEIS report is incorrect. She said that for the 1999-2000 school year, the correct number of certified gifted and talented teachers is 1,642. This number is significantly higher than the number of teachers reported in the AEIS reports for the peer districts. Both the interim coordinator for Advanced Academic Services, and an

administrative assistant in TEA's Office of Advanced Academic Services said that the number of teachers reported in the AEIS report could vary considerably depending on the type of instructional delivery.

In AISD, gifted instruction is provided through the regular classroom, and because all teachers are encouraged to become certified, it is expected that the number of certified gifted teachers would be high. This number, however, does not provide any information on how much time regular classroom gifted and talented certified teachers allocate to gifted and talented instruction.

Recommendation 38:

Establish a system to accurately identify, track and report the numbe r of gifted students and certified gifted and talented teachers involved in teaching gifted students.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Office of Academic Studies coordinates with the district data management system staff to add a field to the student database so gifted students are identified and the information is accessible to approved campus staff.	August 2000 -February 2001
2.	Review number and percentage of teachers allocated to gifted and talented education reported to TEA and report a number that accurately reflects the number of teachers in gifted and talented education.	August 2000 -February 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

In AISD, there is no evidence how gifted and talented funds are used to meet the needs of gifted students. The coordinator of Advanced Academic Services and members of the Austin Area Gifted and Talented Education Association said that is impossible to track expenses for gifted education, in part, because the budget process does not include line-item descriptions of allocations for the gifted. Because of this problem, it is not known if the expenditures for gifted and talented education indicated in the AEIS reports are correct.

Exhibit 2-35
AISD Expenditures for Gifted and Talented Programs
AISD vs. Peer Districts
1998-99

District	Students	Budgeted G/T Expenditures	Percent of Budgeted Expenditure	Per Student Expenditure
Forth Worth	4,617	$8,274,301	3.8%	$1,792
Northside	5,234	$2,657,130	1.4%	$508
Alief	3,160	$1,646,103	1.3%	$521
Corpus Christi	1,752	$557,976	0.5%	$318
Austin	**6,010**	**$473,346**	**0.2%**	**$79**
Pasadena	1,964	$262,785	0.2%	$134

Source 1998-99 TEA AEIS Reports.

Exhibit 2-35 shows AISD's expenditures for gifted and talented education. For the 1998-99 school year, AISD ranked second to last among its peer districts on spending for gifted and talented education. Peer districts with similar numbers of identified gifted and talented students (more than 5,000) spent significantly more on gifted education. Budget allocations for gifted and talented education comprised 0.2 percent of the budgeted expenditures, also amongst the lowest compared to the peer districts. Compared to the peer districts, AISD ranked lowest in the per student expenditures for gifted education.

According to TEA's Division of Advanced Academic Services, AISD received approximately $1 million in state Gifted and Talented funds for the 1998-99; and for 1999-2000, according to TEA's Division of State Funding, the district received $1,161,118. According to the AEIS report, AISD budgeted less than half of the funds that it received for gifted and talented education.

The district has known about this reporting problem since at least 1996. To remedy this problem, the district's Comprehensive Plan (preliminary recommendations, April 19, 1996) states that "Beginning in 1996-97 and annually thereafter, the AISD administration will produce an annual report of the distribution of all funds targeted for gifted and talented education which clearly identifies how these funds were allocated for expenditure." The annual report has not been produced. Members of the Austin Area

Gifted and Talented Association have requested copies of this report, but the district has not provided the association with the report.

Recommendation 39:

Annually report the distribution of funds allocated to gifted and talented education.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Budget Director and staff in the Office of Advanced Academic Services produce an annual report showing how all funds targeted for gifted and talented education were actually spent.	May 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

AISD requires teachers to modify the regular curriculum to meet the individual needs of each gifted student. The coordinator for Advanced Academic Services said that AISD does not have a grade-level, appropriate curriculum for gifted and talented education. Several parents expressed concern over the quality of the instruction that was considered gifted and talented. Likewise, several teachers expressed concern about their ability to meet their students' needs. Members of the PTA Council said there should be a defined gifted and talented program curriculum for different subjects and for each grade. They stressed this curriculum or lack thereof should not depend on the school or the teacher.

Recommendation 40:

Develop gifted and talented curriculum guides by grade level and content.

This will require the district to extend the contracts of four gifted and talented certified teachers during the summer months for four years to complete this task.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Department of Human Resources extends the contracts of four gifted and talented certified teachers, two for the elementary grades and two for secondary level.	May 2000 - May 2002

2.	The Office of Advanced Academic Services works with these teachers to develop gifted and talented curriculum guides for every grade level and every content area.	June 2000- August 2002
3.	The Office of Advanced Academic Services distributes curriculum guides.	August 2000- August 2002
4.	The assistant director of the Office of Program Evaluation surveys teachers to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the curriculum guides.	June 2000 Ongoing
5.	The superintendent funds the summer gifted and talented curriculum development program until all guides have been completed.	June 2000 - Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

Four teachers will have their contracts extended for approximately two months or 42 working days. The average daily rate for teachers in AISD is $196.94, for a total of $33,086 in teacher salaries ($196.94 x 42 days x 4 teachers). Benefits for the extended contracts will be $4,612 (($5,133/187 days) x 42 days x 4 teachers), for a total cost of $37,698.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Develop gifted and talented curriculum guides by grade level and content.	($37,698)	($37,698)	($37,698)	($37,698)	$0

Chapter 2

F. SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) provides free, appropriate public education for all children with disabilities regardless of the severity of the handicap. This law, which also is designed to protect children and parents in educational decision-making, requires the district to develop an individualized education program (IEP) for each child with a disability.

The law also requires the district to provide students with disabilities an education in the least restrictive environment. In 1997, the federal government re-authorized IDEA. The new law states that the IEP must be more clearly aligned with those of children in general classrooms and include regular education teachers in the decision-making progress. The new law also requires including students with disabilities in state and district assessment programs and in setting and reporting performance goals.

To serve the multiple needs of all students with disabilities and to comply with IDEA's requirements, an effective special education program should implement the following practices (derived from Public Law 101-15, the 1997 amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act).

1. *Pre-referral intervention in regular education.* When a student experiences academic problems in regular education, an intervention can and should occur to solve the problems. If steps taken to solve the problem don't produce results, the problem should be referred to special education staff.
2. *Referral to special education for evaluation.* Referring a student to special education means writing an official request supported by documentation. The referral information must include an explanation of steps that have been taken in regular education to solve the student's problem before the referral.
3. *Comprehensive nondiscriminatory evaluation.* Once a student has been referred the district must provide a comprehensive nondiscriminatory evaluation, commonly referred to as an assessment, within a prescribed amount of time.
4. *Initial placement through an Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee meeting.* After the evaluation is complete, a meeting is held to discuss the results of the evaluation, decide if the student qualifies for special education services in one of 12 federal special education categories, and, if so, write a plan for the student's education.

5. *Provision of educational services and supports according to a written Individualized Education Plan.* The individualized education plan (IEP) developed by the ARD committee includes information about which classes the student will take, how much time will be spent in regular education, and related needs like speech therapy or counseling.
6. *Annual program review*. Each year after a student's initial qualification and placement, an ARD committee conducts a review to ensure the student's program is appropriate.
7. *Three-year re-evaluation*. Every three years, the student undergoes a comprehensive individual assessment. Another ARD committee meeting is held to discuss the results of the reevaluation and determine if the student still qualifies for special education in the same category.
8. *Dismissal from the special education program*. If and when a student no longer meets education eligibility criteria, the student is dismissed from special education. The ARD committee must make this decision.

In AISD, a full continuum of services is available for students with disabilities. To ensure the least restrictive environment appropriate for each student, district personnel first consider providing services in regular education with supplementary aids. Students with disabilities who spend all of their classroom hours in a regular classroom are called "mainstreamed."

As a student's needs require, additional instructional and related services are provided, including options for full-day services in special education settings. If a student's disability is so severe that satisfactory education cannot take place in a regular classroom, he or she will be served in a separate "self-contained" classroom. Appropriate curriculum modifications and services are provided to all students. Admissions, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committees, composed of parents and professional staff, determine program eligibility and participation, educational plans and placement in and dismissal from the special education program. IEPs are developed for each student with a disability.

Exhibit 2-36
Number and Percent of Special Education Students and Teachers
AISD vs. Peer Districts
1998-99

District	Special Education Student Enrollment		Special Education Teachers (FTEs)	
	1998	**1999**	**1998**	**1999**

	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Northside (Bexar County)	8,889	14.8%	9,229	15.1%	475	12.3%	461	11.6%
Austin	**9,120**	**11.9%**	**9,177**	**11.5%**	**612**	**13.3%**	**654**	**13.5%**
Fort Worth	9,045	11.8%	8,702	11.2%	268	6.2%	283	6.4%
Corpus Christi	6,021	14.7%	5,874	14.6%	270	10.9%	282	11.4%
Alief	4,487	11.4%	4,655	11.3%	264	10.7%	263	10.4%
Pasadena	2,974	7.3%	2,999	7.3%	174	7.1%	170	7.0%
State	466,527	12.0%	476,712	12.1%	24,049	9.4%	24,743	9.5%

Source: 1997-99 TEA AEIS Reports.

Exhibits 2-36 and **2-37** provide special education program enrollment information. For the 1998-99 school year, AISD has the second largest enrollment of students with disabilities of its peer districts. AISD's 11.5 percent of students enrolled in special education is average compared to its peer districts.

Exhibit 2-37
Ethnicity of AISD Students Enrolled Special Education
1998-99

		Total	Anglo	African-American	Hispanic	LEP	Economically Disadvantaged
Special Education	Number	9,177	2,884	2,227	3,971	693	5,407
	Percent	100%	31.4%	24.3%	43.3%	7.6%	58.9%
District	Number	79,496	28,412	13,825	35,067	10,732	38,987
	Percent	100%	35.7%	17.4%	44.1%	13.5%	49%

Source: 1998-99 TEA AEIS Reports.

FINDING

Texas students who are deaf or hard of hearing may receive instructional services at the Texas School for the Deaf, a residential placement facility located in Austin; at their home campus, with support from teachers with a

deaf education background or at a Regional Day School Program for the Deaf (RDSPD).

RDSPDs, created by the 1973 Legislature, are supervised by TEA's Division of Services for the Deaf. The fiscal agent for the RDSPD usually is the district where the students attend classes and is the "receiving" district. These districts receive funds from a Foundation School Fund appropriation included in TEA's appropriation, federal Individuals with Disabilities Act funds, and sometimes from local school district contributions to provide instructional services to eligible students.

State Deaf Foundation School funds are distributed for every student who receives at least 45 minutes of direct services a week based on the student population on December 1 of each year. Federal funds are channeled to the receiving districts through TEA each year based on the number of students enrolled the previous December and the number eligible for various federal programs. Neighboring districts may contribute administrative funds to the RDSPD through an interlocal agreement signed at the beginning of each school year between the fiscal agent district providing the services and the sending district.

Sending districts' payments ranged from nothing to $7,500 per student for fiscal 1999, depending on the cost and level of services required. In addition, the fiscal agent district providing the services contribute cash and in-kind support including classroom space, support services, transportation, equipment and some salaries.

If a student attends the RDSPD less than half the school day, he or she generates both Average Daily Attendance (ADA) funding and RDSPD funding. Whichever district reports the student on its PEIMS reports receives ADA funding for the child if the child is eligible. Special Education funding, however, is generated from the December federal child count, not PEIMS.

AISD serves as a RDSPD fiscal agent and provides special services to hearing-impaired students through the Austin Regional Day School Program of the Deaf. The number of eligible students has declined by ten since 1997-98, as shown in Exhibit **2-37**. In 1999-2000, AISD will serve 78 deaf students from five Central Texas School Districts (AISD, Eanes ISD, Del Valle ISD, Pflugerville ISD and Lexington ISD). Eight of the students come from neighboring districts. Since the number of students is so small, AISD does not charge an administrative fee. The home districts provide transportation for the students. The district will receive a total of $639,929 in state and federal funds, a per capita expenditure of $8,204.

Exhibit 2-38
AISD Regional Day School Program for the Deaf
Funding Information
1997-2000

	1999-2000	1998-99	1997-98
Total Student Count Ages 0- 21	78	81	88
State Deaf Funding	$578,293	$610,412	$666,011
State Funding per Child	$7,414	$7,536	$7,568
Federal Child Count Ages 3-21	70	75	77
IDEA -B Formula	$35,000	$35,806	$30,334
IDEA Capacity Building (New for 1999-2000)	$840		
IDEA - B Discretionary	$16,814	$22,807	$18,519
Federal Child Count 3-5	14	16	14
Federal Funding per Child Ages 3-21	$240	$305	$240
IDEA-B Preschool	$6,814	$9,851	$6,737
Federal Child Count Ages 0-2	8	1	1
Early Childhood Instruction (ECI) Part C	$2,168	$328	$307
Federal Early Childhood Funding Per Child	$271	$328	$307
Total State and Federal Funding	$639,929	$679,204	$721,908
State and Federal Funding per Child	$8,204	$8,385	$8,204

Source: TEA Division of Services for the Deaf.

This program serves children ages 0-21 with varying degrees of hearing impairment and communication needs. An ARD committee writes and revises each student's Individual Education Plan and reviews students enrolled in the Regional Day School annually. Teachers specializing in deaf education assist students, although many deaf students also participate in regular classrooms with the aid of interpreters. The program provides special services that include transportation, audiological services (audiograms, impedance testing, hearing aid evaluation and ear molds), counseling, interpreting services and sign language classes for family members and friends.

In addition to services provided to students enrolled full time in the Regional Day School Program, itinerant teachers provide help to hearing-impaired students enrolled in regular education programs in their home

schools or in basic special education programs. The district holds a parent program to help parents of infants or young children who are deaf or hard of hearing. **Exhibit 2-39** provides the RDSPD enrollment and staffing for 1999-2000.

COMMENDATION

AISD serves as the fiscal agent for the Regional Day School for the Deaf that serves five districts in Central Texas.

Exhibit 2-39
Enrollment and Staffing of
AISD's Regional Day School Program For the Deaf
September 1999

Campus	Students Enrolled	Teachers
Infant/Preschool	7	1*
Reilly Elementary	10	3
Brentwood Elementary	20	4
Murchison Middle School	4	1
Lamar Middle School	5	1
Anderson High School	2	1 *
Direct Service	28	2 Itinerant
TOTALS	**76**	**13**
Additional Staffing:	1 Administrator	1 Audiologist
	1 Secretary	3 Speech Therapists

Source: AISD Regional Day School Program for the Deaf.
* These teachers are also itinerant.

FINDING

AISD's special education program lacks accountability and does not meet the needs of some special education students. Although AISD reports high expenditures and low student-to-teacher ratios, special education teachers are often overburdened and lack sufficient resources to instruct their students. Both regular and special education teachers said they need more assistance in coordinating the needs of regular and special education students served in the same classroom. Interviews with teachers indicate

that they do not have enough time to effectively provide instruction, conduct ARD meetings, and keep up with all the paperwork involved in the ARD and each student's IEP. Teachers also must find their own substitutes to conduct ARD meetings. Special education was a recurring source of concern for parents and community members; in ten public forums conducted over two nights, TSPR heard repeated complaints about the quality of AISD's special education services.

In one formal complaint filed with TEA, parents of an AISD special education student alleged that they were unable to obtain appropriate evaluation and placement for their child during a period that lasted from their child's 3rd grade to the 7th grade. These complaints put the district at potential risk of legal exposure arising from lawsuits.

Recommendation 41:

Comprehensively reevaluate special education services to better meet the needs of special education students.

As a top priority, AISD should establish:

(1) pre-referral intervention teams in regular education, (2) an accountability system to track how successfully the regular education curriculum is being modified to meet the needs of special education students, and (3) improved data reporting capabilities to effectively track the number of special education student and teachers, enabling the district to appropriately allocate teachers throughout the district.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendents for Curriculum, Instruction, and Accountability and Information Systems, and the Special Education director develop a plan to restructure AISD's special education program and policies.	June - October 2000
2.	The deputy superintendents for Curriculum, Instruction, and Accountability and Information Systems, and the Special Education director present plan to superintendent, who presents it to board.	November 2000
3.	The board reviews the plan, makes necessary modifications and approves the plan.	February 2001
4.	Special Education director implements program.	August 2001 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district has a detailed, coordinated plan for early, pre-referral intervention practices, but this process at the school level is ignored or poorly implemented. According to the director of Special Education, each AISD campus has a Local Support Team (LST) with a designated coordinator. Though many teachers and schools provide services for students who are experiencing difficulties, these are not necessarily coordinated through a LST.

There is no evidence that such a practice is used. Most important, teachers do not consistently have access to remedial efforts that were provided to students in earlier years, something critical in a pre-referral system, where all efforts are documented.

If a student has already received specific services and improvement is not observed, a special education referral may be warranted. Because coordination is lacking, however, teachers may provide services that have already been provided (like tutoring), when an intervention may be called for. As a result, students may be identified for special education services too late to receive full benefits from intervention. Though special education services are provided in AISD's early childhood program, identification practices are weak.

AISD's pre-referral services are not subject to review or to any accountability or assessment system that consistently evaluates and corrects the district's LST teams. Specifically, no answers are apparent to the following questions: Are the teams used? How often? Are they effective? Do they help ensure student needs are identified and filled early in the child's education? Does it help to provide services in the least restrictive environment?

Several districts in Texas have implemented successful pre-referral systems. In 1997, Corpus Christi ISD implemented a pre-referral pilot program in eight schools that emphasizes early intervention. The program is showing positive results with both regular and at-risk students.

Though a significantly smaller district than Austin, Mount Pleasant ISD (MPISD) has made significant strides to document and track any student who is experiencing difficulties in the classroom, whether the problem is reading or behavioral problems. MPISD'S process should be examined for possible adaptation in AISD, paying particular attention to the differences in the size of the two school districts that would affect AISD's using MPISD's model.

To improve this process, MPISD established the Campus Intervention Team (CIT), designed to "...provide strategies for intervention when a need begins to arise for any student." Each CIT is made up of one Maximum Achievement Learning Lab (MALL) teacher, the school counselor, the student's classroom teacher and the principal. Once a teacher fills out a pre-referral form on any students with difficulties, the committee conducts a meeting to discuss the student's needs. A goal of this process, is to identify, document and implement intervention strategies, always considering the least restrictive alternatives first. According to principals and teachers in MSISD, in 75 to 80 percent of cases, campus modifications accomplish needed results with the least restrictive environment for the student.

Recommendation 42:

Establish a system to ensure that AISD personnel efficiently use pre-referral intervention teams at each campus.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	Each campus principal will designate a Local Support Team coordinator.	August 2000
2.	Campus principals will conduct monthly meetings with the Local Support Team to discuss the efficacy of the team and to provide continuous feedback.	August 2000
3.	The principal will inform parents about the Local Support Team procedures.	September 2000
4.	The director of Special Education will periodically evaluate the Local Review Teams to ensure they are actively involved in pre-referral activities.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Consistently, teachers and principals said there are not enough special education teachers in AISD. The district employs special education classes using targeted caseloads: 12:1 for elementary, 20:1 for middle schools and 22:1 for high schools. With the exception of the Rosedale School, a separate campus that serves any student whose disability is so severe that satisfactory education cannot take place in the regular school setting, some teachers reported that they had many more students in their caseload than

the ratio reported by the district. As with the number of bilingual teachers, the number of special education teachers reported in the AEIS report does not coincide with the student/teacher ratio reported by teachers and school staff.

Exhibit 2-40 presents budgeted expenditures for the special education program. AISD ranked the highest in both budgeted expenditures and in expenditures per student. In 1998-99, AISD spent approximately $5.4 million more than Northside ISD, yet enrolled 52 fewer students. The director of Special Education said that these expenditures include a 7.65 percent social security allocation for AISD employees, while Northside and Fort Worth do not. Accounting for this difference by subtracting 7.65 percent of $36,795,665, the district budgeted expenditures was approximately $1.6 million less, or $35,149,968. Currently, AISD spends approximately $4 million more than the peer districts. The director of Special Education said that funding variations between districts also depend on the specific needs of student in each district.

Exhibit 2-40
Expenditures for Special Education
AISD vs. Peer Districts
1998-99

District	Students	Budgeted Special Education Expenditures	Percent of Budgeted Expenditure	Per Student Expenditure
Austin	**9,177**	**$36,795,665**	**16.2%**	**$4,010**
Northside	9,229	$31,403,924	16.6%	$3,403
Forth Worth	8,702	$24,445,527	11.3%	$2,809
Pasadena	2,999	$10,194,710	8.8%	$3,400
Alief	4,655	$18,056,807	14.5%	$3,879
Corpus Christi	5,874	$15,118,589	13.0%	$2,574

Source: 1997-99 TEA AEIS Reports.

In 1998-99, there were 654 special education teachers, or 14 students for every teacher, the lowest ratio among the peer groups. Teachers interviewed, however, said that they have much higher student/teacher ratio than the ratio presented in the AEIS data reports.

Recommendation 43:

Establish a system to ensure that the correct number of special education teachers is reported to TEA.

Data reporting problems have hindered special education in the district. AISD should have adequate reporting systems in place that correctly count the number of teachers and students. This process should be coordinated with other student data collection management efforts in the district.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	Staff in the Department of Special Education, appropriate campus staff and the district PEIMS data collection coordinator assesses how the number of special education teachers is reported to TEA.	June 2000
2.	The Department of Bilingual Education and the Department of Human Resources jointly review and update number of special education teachers.	June 2000
3.	The Department of Human Resources corrects employee list.	July 2000
4.	The Department of Special Education reports the correct number of teachers served to TEA.	October 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Both regular and special education teachers reported they need more help coordinating the needs of both regular students and students with disabilities served in the same classroom. Teachers said that while they liked the process of inclusion, they were simply unable to individually meet their students' needs. There is no district-level accountability system in place for assessing how effectively the regular curriculum is modified to meet the individual needs of students.

In AISD, special education teachers' duties include instruction, writing and implementing IEPs, monitoring and reporting progress to parents every six or nine weeks (in addition to report cards), and scheduling and preparing for and attending ARD meetings. ARD meetings must be conducted at least once a year for every student in special education. Teachers report they do not have enough time to effectively provide instruction, conduct ARD meetings and keep up with all of the paper work involved in the ARD meetings and each student's individual education plan.

Many students with disabilities need intensive, sometimes one-on-one instruction and supervision. Maintaining a 12-to-one student to teacher ratio, as reported in the AEIS report, is difficult. One middle school teacher said her current caseload (students for whom she develops IEPs and conducts ARD meetings for) is 30, yet she is also responsible for providing instructional services to several other students that she serves through the inclusion program, increasing her total student ratio to almost 40. The director of Special Education said that the middle school caseloads are targeted at 1:20-22. For elementary schools, the caseload per teacher should be 12, but currently, 39 elementary schools have caseloads above 12 (as of December 1999). The director said that most students have at least two ARD meetings per year, and several students have more than two.

To conduct ARD meetings, teachers must find their own substitutes. Currently, district policy states that each campus must make arrangements to meet their specific needs. Some schools use permanent substitutes, teacher assistants or schedule ARD meetings during a teacher's conference period. This year, ARD meetings must include one regular teacher.

Participation of regular teachers in the ARD process enhances the educational plan developed for the student. This new requirement, however, has made it even more difficult for teachers to cover for each other's classes. One special education inclusion teacher said that on several occasions, she had to cover for the regular teacher and other special education teachers. When this happens, she does not have time to provide any instruction to her own students. Options for covering classes vary from campus to campus, and efforts are made to ensure that instructional time is not lost.

Recommendation 44:

Allocate additional staff to assist with ARD/IEP workload to ensure that teachers spend adequate time with students.

While teachers must attend ARD meetings, staff can be provided to assist with ARD/IEP paperwork. Allocating three ARD facilitators for every area superintendent would provide more classroom time for teachers.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Department of Special Education and The Department of Human Resources implements a one-year pilot program, providing three ARD Facilitators for each area superintendent.	June 2000
2.	The Department of Special Education evaluates the pilot's impact on	May -

	special education teachers.	July 2001
3.	The superintendent directs the Department of Human Resources to allow all special education and regular teachers to use the district's teacher substitute pool so they can attend and conduct ARD meetings without penalizing their students.	June 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

A yearly salary of $19,000 and benefits of $3,590 for an Administrative Special Education Aide staff is used to calculate 15 ARD Facilitators. For 15 positions (three per area superintendent), salary is calculated at $285,000 ($19,000 x 15 facilitators salary), and benefits at $53,850 ($3,590 benefits x 15 facilitators), for a total cost of $338,850 for 15 positions.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Allocate additional staff to assist with ARD/IEP workload to ensure that teachers spend adequate time with students.	($338,850)	($338,850)	($338,850)	($338,850)	($338,850)

Chapter 3
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

This chapter discusses Austin Independent School District's (AISD's) relations with the community, parents, business leaders and its internal and external communication efforts in the following sections:

A. Organization, Management and Program Evaluation
B. Volunteer and Business Partnership Programs
C. Internal and External Communications
D. Community Relations and Fund Raising

Community involvement is an important part of a quality education system. It enables parents, taxpayers, business and civic leaders, community organizations, public officials and others with a stake in public education to understand the challenges facing the district and become involved in activities that support student learning. Many of these activities have high visibility in the community and are often coordinated through a district office that reports directly to the superintendent.

BACKGROUND

The mission of AISD's community involvement program is to develop effective partnerships with community organizations and non-profit agencies. These partnerships should support school goals, provide resources to schools to meet students' needs and connect Austin families and individuals to educational resources available at schools. The district can accomplish its mission by providing information to the community to enlist their support and strengthen their communications with parents, taxpayers and the community to hear their ideas, concerns and perceptions about the district.

AISD's community involvement and communication function is separated into four divisions and departments. The Development and Community Partnerships Division and the Office of Communication Services & Media Services report directly to the superintendent. The Parent and Family Program and the Community Education Department are located in the Curriculum, Instruction, & Professional Development Division. The Parent and Family Program is located in the Department of School Support Services.

Exhibit 3-1 illustrates the current organization structure of community involvement and communications for AISD.

Exhibit 3-1
AISD Community Involvement and Communications
Current Organizational Structure
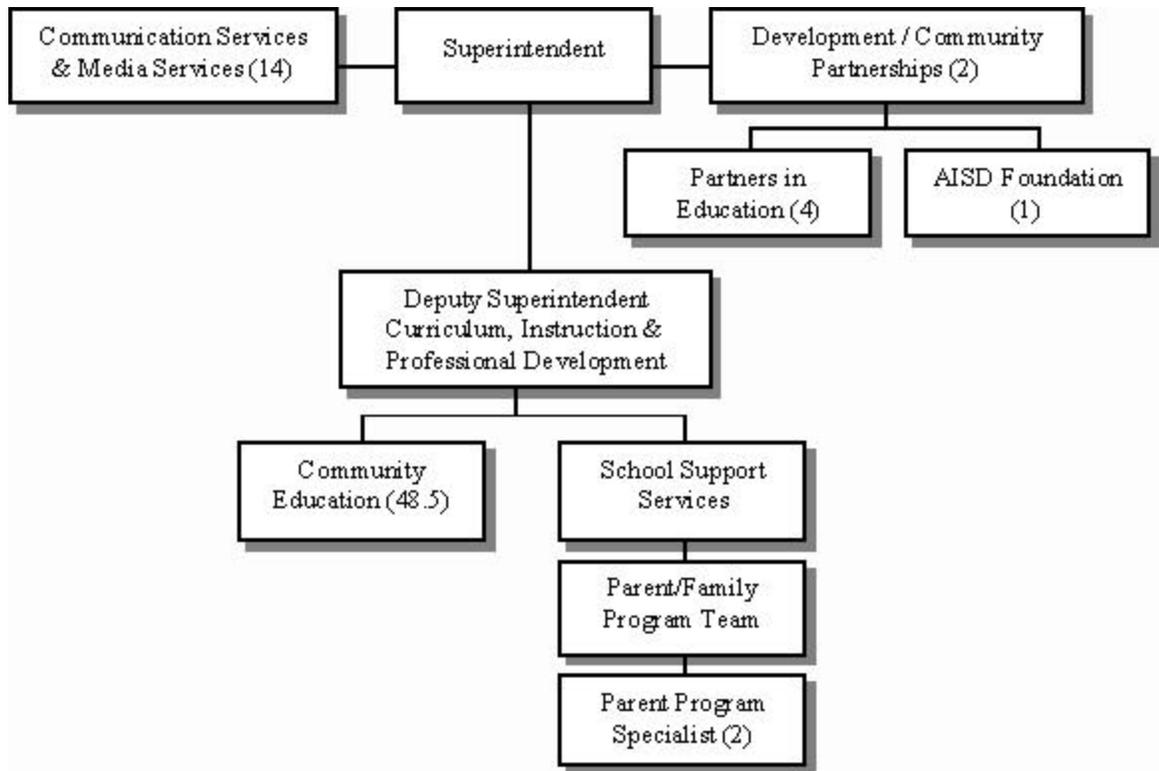
Source: AISD Directory.

Seventy-one and one-half full-time equivalent (FTE) staff manage and implement AISD's community involvement and communication function. **Exhibit 3-2** presents a summary of the type and number of staff associated with each of the organizational units responsible for community involvement and communication.

Exhibit 3-2
AISD Organizational Units Responsible
For Community Involvement and Communications

Division and Department	Unit and Program	Staff	Number of Staff
Development and Community Partnerships		Associate Superintendent; Administrative Secretary	2.00
	Partners In Education	Director; Campus Liaison Coordinator; Volunteer and	4.00

		Mentor Coordinator; Secretary	
	Austin Public Education Foundation and Development Projects	Coordinator	1.00
Parent and Family Program	School Support Services Department; Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development Division	Parent Program Specialist; Clerk	2.00
Department of Community Education		Director; Program Planner/Manager; Secretary/Receptionist, Secretary	4.00
	Community School Programs (organized into four geographic areas)	Community School Coordinator; Program Specialists; Child Care Assistants; Clerk	26.28
	Program Support	Program Supervisors; Specialists	14.25
	Budget & Accounting	Supervising Accountant; Account Technicians	4.00
Office of Communication Services & Media Services		Director	1.00
	Communication Services	Communication Specialists; Multimedia Coordinator; Web Design Specialist; Media Specialist; Campus Information Liaison; Secretary, Special Service Workers (Switchboard)	8.00
	Media Services	Production Chief; Program Schedulers; Programming Assistant; Bilingual Producer	5.00

		and Editor	

Source: AISD 1999-2000 budget.

AISD's annual budget for community involvement and communication activities is $5,838,223 of which $1,800,740 (31 percent) comes from AISD and $4,037,483 (69 percent) comes from sources such as the City of Austin, Austin Community College, state and federal grants and fees. **Exhibit 3-3** provides a breakdown of the operating budget by organizational unit.

Exhibit 3-3
1999-2000 AISD Community Involvement
and Communications Budget Information

Description	Development & Community Partnerships	Partners in Education	Communication Services & Media Services	Parent and Family Program	Community Education
Number of Staff	2.0	4.0*	14.0	2.0	48.5
Salaries	$145,357	$185,955	$631,829	$110,079	$3,426,104
Professional & Contract Services	$9,499	$6,580	$188,250	$0	$133,107
Supplies & Materials	$2,000	$6,850	$18,200	$2,873	$450,766
Other Operating Expenditures	$22,433	$46,000	$49,832	$3,962	$318,820
Capital Outlay	$600	$40,089*	$38,538	$500	$0
Total	**$179,889**	**$285,474**	**$926,649**	**$117,414**	**$4,328,797****

Source: AISD 1999-2000 Budget.
* AISD receives $40,089 for a .60 FTE from an external source for Partners in Education and $3,997,394 from an external source for Community Education. (Although not an actual capital outlay expenditure for the district, this FTE is included here for classification purposes only.)

AISD allocates more resources per student to community involvement than its peer districts. AISD's actual per student expenditures for community involvement functions in 1997-98 were $62.00, based on expenditures reported to the state's Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) **(Exhibit 3-4)**. These expenditures, taken from the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) PEIMS data files, consist of community services including recreation, civic activities, and services for nonpublic school students. The actual expenditures of AISD's peer districts ranged from a low of $6.00 in Pasadena ISD to a high of $45.00 in Corpus Christi ISD.

Exhibit 3-4
Community Involvement Budgeted Expenditures
AISD, Peer Districts, and State and Region 13 Averages
1997-98

District	Community Involvement Expenditures 1997-98 (Dollars per Student)
Alief	$25.00
Austin	**$62.00**
Corpus Christi	$45.00
Fort Worth	$28.00
Northside	$28.00
Pasadena	$ 6.00
State Average	$26.00
Region 13	$36.00

Source: Texas Association of School Boards, Bench Marks.

Chapter 3

A. ORGANIZATION, MANAGEMENT, AND PROGRAM EVALUATION

FINDING

The location of community involvement and communications programs in different divisions or departments does not contribute to the most effective coordination and communication among the programs both districtwide and on campuses. Strategic program planning and delivery is particularly important and required in schools with multiple programs that target the same students in order to avoid duplication of efforts and use resources and funds in the most efficient manner. AISD's community involvement program is located in three divisions: Division of Development and Community Partnerships; Curriculum Instruction and Professional Development; and the Department of School Support Services.

According to program staff, communication and coordination among the different programs is difficult and time consuming. Each division or department oversees different community involvement programs targeted at students, parents and other adults in the community. The programs administered by the different departments are implemented independently on the same campuses. Austin ISD does not have a community involvement strategic plan that addresses the programs implemented by the different departments and the plans and operational procedures of these departments do not address coordination among the programs.

In addition, no current inventory exists of all the community programs being administered in the division so it is unknown how many of these programs target similar students or produce similar tasks. For example in the past two years, Partners in Education expanded its program and offers tutorial services to elementary school students; services that the Community Education Department also offers.

Several of the community involvement programs; Boys and Girls Clubs of the Capital Area, Junior Achievement programs and Partners in Education all offer career exploration programs. Each organization develops its programs independently of what others offer. Coordination among these organizations creates potential duplication of the same services and does not allow for efficient use of resources.

Recommendation 52:

Inventory all community involvement programs and develop a strategic plan to maximize communication and coordination among these programs.

The strategic plan should be developed with input from program staff, funding sources (AISD, Chamber of Commerce, City of Austin), principals and teachers. The plan should inventory programs on each campus and create a set of procedures to manage them. After preparing the strategic plan, the division and the Community Education Department should train program staff on the new procedures. Principals should be informed of the procedures' content.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Director of Development/Community Partnerships with assistance from the Communication Services & Media Services director and the Deputy superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction & Professional Development prepares an inventory of community involvement programs by campus.	May 2000
2.	The Director of Development/Community Partnerships convenes meetings with program staff, funding sources, principals and teachers.	July 2000
3.	The Director of Development/Community Partnerships and the Communication Services & Media Services director and the Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum Instruction & Professional Development develop a community involvement strategic and operational plan.	July-August 2000
4.	The Director of Development/Community Partnerships submits the strategic and operational plan to the superintendent for approval.	August 2000
5.	The superintendent approves the plan.	August 2000
6.	The Director of Development/Community Partnerships trains program staff in coordination and collaboration procedures.	September 2000
7.	The Director of Development/Community Partnerships informs principals about coordination and collaboration procedures.	September 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Parent education specialists in schools with a significant percentage of Hispanic students are not always bilingual. Parent Education specialists organize parent meetings and train parents to work with and help their children. They also train school staff in strategies to develop home, school and community partnerships. Currently there are 52 parent education specialists. One-quarter of the parent education specialists (13 out of 52) are non-Spanish speaking. All 13 are in schools where 34 to 75 percent of the students are Hispanic. Five of these 13 parent education specialists are located in schools where more than 60 percent of the students are Hispanic. Few of the parent education specialists are assisted by bilingual aides or volunteers.

Recommendation 53:

Ensure parent education specialists in schools with a Hispanic population are bilingual.

School principals hire and supervise parent education specialists. The Parent and Family Program specialist should stress to school principals the importance of hiring bilingual parent education specialists in schools with Hispanic students whose parents do not speak English and encourage the principals to incorporate into the parent education specialists' job description the need to be bilingual.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	Parent and Family Program specialist recommends to principals incorporating a requirement for bilingual skills in job descriptions of parent education specialists hired by campuses with Hispanic students.	May 2000
2.	Parent program specialist works with those parent education specialists who are not bilingual to develop strategies to meet needs of non English-speaking parents.	May 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 3

B. VOLUNTEER AND BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS

The district's volunteer and business partnership programs are located in two divisions: the Development and Community Partnerships Division and the Curriculum, Instruction & Professional Development Division.

The Development and Community Partnerships Division houses the Austin Partners in Education (APIE) Program and coordinates with several other volunteer programs such as Austin Eastside Story, Boys and Girls Club, Junior Achievement of Central Texas, Keep Austin Beautiful, Texas Alliance for Minorities in Engineering (TAME), Austin Area Urban League and the Austin Mental Health Association. The Austin Partners in Education Program is managed by a director and has three staff: a campus liaison coordinator, a volunteer coordinator and a program specialist. Austin Partners in Education is a collaboration with the Austin Chamber of Commerce and is overseen by a 66-member volunteer Board of Directors, a chair, executive committee and committees.

The Curriculum, Instruction & Professional Development Division houses the Community Education Department and the Parent and Family Program. The Community Education Department is managed by a director and includes area coordinators, project supervisors, community relations staff, planning and operations staff and accounting staff. Community Education manages a number of after-school tutorial and recreational programs for students and adults.

FINDING

Nearly 64 percent of AISD residents surveyed in October-November 1999 believed the local business community "does a lot to support AISD programs" as shown in **Exhibit 3-5**.

Exhibit 3-5
Public Opinion Survey

AISD-Business Community Relationship	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The local business community in Austin does a lot to support AISD programs.	6.2%	57.3%	18.4%	18.1%	1.0%

Austin Partners in Education is a collaborative effort between AISD and the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce. It encourages cooperative business and community involvement in public schools to enhance the quality of education for Austin students. Its mission is to create and foster effective community partnerships that support and enrich student learning and success. Partners are matched with the school or AISD program of their choice and provide volunteer services, in-kind contributions and cash donations. The program is campus-based. AISD central office staff and the Chamber of Commerce facilitate the program and support the campus representatives. Schools consult their Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs), conduct needs assessments and develop Partner Plans to guide their partners' efforts.

Austin Partners in Education recruits and sustains partners, recruits and trains mentors and recruits volunteers. All mentors have to go through a mentor training program. In 1998-99, the program had between 800 and 2,000 mentors on 70 campuses, mainly in elementary schools. In 1999, it received 530 applications from community members who want to be mentors. APIE acts as a clearinghouse for volunteers.

Austin Partners in Education was established as Adopt-A-School in 1983 in partnership between the Austin Chamber of Commerce and the AISD. The program began with 12 business and community organizations adopting 25 schools. The Adopt-A-School program was expanded between 1986 and 1988 to all schools and district programs with 576 partners. The number of adopters increased nearly four-fold to 2,059 between 1984 and 1995. In 1998-99, the program included 2,118 community partnerships and provided services or resources to 123 schools and programs.

The program changed its name in 1988 to Austin Partners in Education. During 1998-99, Austin Partners in Education consisted of 363 Partners and 1,774 Friends. Partners are organizations committed to a consistent, sustained relationship with a school or district program. Friends provide direct support or service to a school or district program through one-time or occasional offerings of assistance.

In its 16-year history, Partners in Education provided more than $52 million in donations of time and financial resources to AISD schools. In 1998-99, the program generated about $7 million in contributed resources, a $90-per-student return on investment versus a cost of $5 per student. **Exhibit 3-6** reflects the 1998-99 APIE contributions.

Exhibit 3-6
1998-1999 APIE Contributions

Target Population	Inkind	Cash	Volunteers	Volunteer Hours
Elementary Schools	$1,129,282	$368,311	8,324	164,895
Middle and Junior High Schools	$132,781	$119,808	1,485	23,323
High Schools	$851,715	$171,882	4,197	34,255
Districtwide	$682,191	$154,934	1,108	17,099
Total	**$2,795,969**	**$814,935**	**15,114**	**239,572**

Source: APIE 1998-99 Contributions Report.

The program has high visibility among AISD administrators and teachers. In a survey conducted by AISD in 1998-99, all surveyed administrators and 87 percent of surveyed teachers reported they are familiar with Partners in Education as seen in **Exhibit 3-7**.

Exhibit 3-7
AISD Employee Survey
Spring 1999

Are you familiar with the Partners in Education (formerly Adopt-A-School) program?	Elementary	Middle and Junior High	High School	Weighted Total
Teachers	86.3%	88.1%	89.1%	87.2%
Campus administrators				100%

Source: Spring 1999, Employee Survey - Partners in Education.

Since 1997, Austin Partners in Education has begun to focus more on specific school needs, as defined in Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs), particularly on student performance. **Exhibit 3-8** describes programs initiated by Austin Partners in Education.

Exhibit 3-8
Austin Partners in Education Programs

Program Name	Program Descriptions
Extra Mile Program	Developed jointly with the AISD in reading and math, the program is targeted to grade 4 and 5 students for additional support, tutoring and training.
Family Learning Nights	Designed in partnership with the UT Dana Center, programs offer hands-on activities to build career awareness for both students and parents.
Choices	A middle school career awareness program developed by the U.S. West Foundation will be implemented through Partners in Education volunteers in every eighth grade classroom. The turnkey interactive program gives students a chance to see into the future and recognize the importance of personal and academic choices they make today.
Vertical Team Initiative	Five APIE board members will work with area superintendents and principals to learn more about the special achievements and challenges of each Vertical Team. The program will share best practices, promote successes and address needs through enhanced communications among the vertical teams, AISD and APIE.
Salute to Partners	A major annual community event held in the spring to recognize partners selected competitively for their outstanding efforts.

Source: Austin Partners in Education, August 1999 Special Skyliner Edition.

Austin Partners in Education has a Planning and Evaluation Committee, which is responsible for developing a strategic plan and also evaluates program effectiveness, partnership standards and quality. The program engages in ongoing program evaluation and includes all stakeholders in its evaluation efforts. It has surveyed campus partner programs and received feedback through a series of luncheons and meetings, direct mail, inserts in its monthly newsletter, *Skyliner*, and individual follow-up calls with the media.

COMMENDATION

Austin Partners in Education is a nationally recognized program that involves business and community organizations to enrich all AISD

schools with volunteer services, in-kind contributions, and financial support.

FINDING

The National Community Education Association selected AISD's Community Education Department in 1998 as the Outstanding Community Education Organization in the nation. Community Education was founded in 1973 by a group of concerned citizens in South Austin looking for ways to battle neighborhood apathy, vandalism and illiteracy around a local school. The program expanded to meet needs districtwide with the goal of "helping families improve student attendance, achievement and progress toward graduation."

At present, AISD's Community Education Department in partnership with the City of Austin, Travis County, Austin Community College, Communities-In-Schools and Austin Interfaith is providing tutorial and after-school services at 50 schools and eight public libraries. During 1997-98, Community Education provided services to 15,321 children and youth and 20,445 adults. In addition, 300,517 children, youth and adults participated in activities other than classes. Over its 25 year history, Community Education has provided access to educational services to over one million children and their families. Programs provided by Community Education are presented in **Exhibit 3-9.**

Exhibit 3-9
Community Education Programs

Community Education Programs	Program Description	Program Outcomes
Prime Time	In collaboration with the City of Austin and Austin Interfaith, the program served 9,000 children in 28 elementary and six middle schools with low-income populations in 1998-99. Program plans to serve over 14,000 in 1999-2000. Program provides free after-school classes (over 1,800 classes in 1998-99) and activities.	Participating students have better school attendance rates, are less likely to be held back in grade and less likely to drop out than students who do not participate. Ninety-four percent of students who participated expressed satisfaction with the program. Over 90 percent of the parents said the program expanded children's horizons and had a positive effect on children's attitude towards school.

		School attendance was 3 percent higher for participating than non-participating students from the same schools.
Victory Tutorial Program	In partnership with the City of Austin, Victory provides free tutoring to students in grade 1 through 12 who need assistance. Trained volunteers serve as tutors. Tutoring is provided in eight branch libraries during after-school and evening hours. Victory recruits volunteers from area colleges and universities, professional organizations, businesses and neighborhood associations.	In 1997-98, 782 students received tutoring from 510 volunteers for 8,393 hours. Tutored middle and high school students received a higher GPA than in the previous year, 76 percent passed the course in which they were tutored, and none dropped out of school.
Third Base Child Care	Program provides after-school child care to children enrolled in eight elementary schools. Services provided enhance the host school's curriculum.	During 1997-98, 870 children participated in program.
Project HELP (Homeless Education and Learning Project)	HELP seeks to remove barriers to education of homeless youth and enrich their educational experience through access to support services.	869 homeless children received services from HELP: 354 were enrolled in enrichment activities, after-school programs, summer camp, summer school, and tutoring; 406 received school supplies, 180 at-risk students were served.
Summer Enrichment	Programs designed for children in grades 1-6, offered day camps and classes at 13 schools in 1997-98.	2,444 children participated.
Southeast Austin Community Youth Development Project	In collaboration with the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services, the program focuses on services to prevent juvenile crime through positive youth development in the 78744 zip code area.	719 students in the 78744 zip code participate in summer camp activities. Participants had a 88.5 percent attendance rate. Eighty-two percent of participants were very favorable about the program

		while 100 percent of parents were satisfied with program.
Adult Basic Education	In collaboration with the Austin Community College, Austin Interfaith, Travis County and the City of Austin courses are provided to adults with a reading and math proficiency below the eighth grade level. Program also offers GED test preparation and English as a Second Language.	652 persons enrolled in Adult Basic Education and GED test preparation; 2,655 persons enrolled in English as a Second Language courses.
Adult Enrichment	Adult enrichment courses are offered during off-school hours: evenings and weekends in business, computers, health, fitness, safety, arts, and personal enrichment.	1,827 adults enrolled in courses in 1997-98.

Source: Community Education Annual Report 1997-98.

COMMENDATION

Over its 25-year history, AISD's Community Education program has worked effectively with local organizations to provide tutorial and after-school services for more than one million area children and their families and has been recognized nationally as an exceptional program.

Chapter 3

C. INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

District communications has two components: internal and external communications. Internal communication refers to communication with district employees. While external communication addresses communication with the community.

The Office of Communication Services & Media Services disseminates information through newsletters, press releases, brochures and programming on two cable channels. The office's initiatives have focused on internal communications, external communications, media relations and promotions of special events.

In 1998, the district reorganized the Office of Communication Services & Media Services. Based on a plan entitled "External Communication Plan," developed by a Communications Advisory Committee. The committee was composed of communications professionals, parents, teachers and AISD staff. The Board of Trustees adopted the plan in December 1997.

FINDING

The Office of Communication Services & Media Services prepares a variety of publications. The office outsources the publications' production and printings. Since AISD's student enrollment is 43.7 percent Hispanic, the main external publications are prepared both in English and Spanish. Examples of internal and external publications are shown in **Exhibit 3-10**.

Exhibit 3-10
Office of Communication Services & Media Services
External and Internal Publications

Internal/External Publications	Office of Communication Services Media Services Publications
Facts and 1999-2000	A one-page fact sheet with information on the Austin ISD's budget, students, facilities and human resources. Published in English and Spanish.
School Year-Round Calendar	A one page calendar reflecting school days, teacher inservice days, and holidays.
Austin Insider	Published four-times a year in English and Spanish, the District newspaper highlights student and staff

	achievement and provides pertinent information on district issues. The newspaper is distributed to every family in the AISD and to Austin's key communicators and civic and business leaders.
Back-To-School News	Published in English and Spanish each year before school starts.
Progress Report on the Austin Independent School District 1996 School Bond Program	Published in spring 1999, the report described the Austin ISD Bond Program objectives, history, progress, accomplishments and benefits to students. The report also listed the schools affected by the program, the construction phase and the expected construction completion period.
Brochures	Published brochures include: PTA Council, Leadership and Board of Trustees, New School Facts and 1999 School Bond Notice.
Postcards	The postcards produced addressed briefly topics such as technology, Partners in Education and the Texas Blue Ribbon Schools.
Austin Schools NewsBreak	A monthly newsletter, published in both English and Spanish, is distributed to principals. The newsletter contains important information on district issues and events that principals can include in their school newsletter or distribute directly to parents.
Bright Ideas: PR Tips for School Leaders	A monthly publication on how campus leaders can improve their communication skills.
The Preview	AISD Cable Channel 22 Instructional Television Program Guide

Source: Office of Communication Services & Media Services.

The Office of Communication Services & Media Services also disseminates information through the AISD Web page, radio and newspaper advertising in English and Spanish and direct mail in English and Spanish. In addition, the Office of Communication Services & Media Services produces an annual report to the Board of Trustees entitled "Creative Solutions for Communication Challenges." The annual report reviews how the office has been "telling Austin's ISD's story of academic momentum."

The Media Services Department prepares programming for cable Channels 18 and 22. Channel 18 is dedicated to professional development

programs, and Channel 22 carries instructional programs, board meetings, news, information, graduation ceremonies and sports events.

AISD employees, including principals, assistant principals, teachers and administrative and support staff, are pleased with the district's communication with parents. Sixty percent or more of AISD employees surveyed by AISD in November 1999 agreed the district communicates regularly with parents (**Exhibit 3-11**). About 70 percent of principals and assistant principals, 63 percent of teachers and 60 percent of district and administrative support staff agreed with this statement.

Exhibit 3-11
AISD Survey

The district regularly communicates with parents.	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
District administrative and support staff	10.1%	49.4%	21.3%	16.9%	2.2%
Principals and assistant principals	8.6%	60.5%	11.7%	17.9%	0.6%
Teachers	6.1%	57.3%	10.4%	16.5%	7.3%

Source: AISD Survey, November 1999.
Note: May not add up due to rounding.

COMMENDATION

The Office of Communication Services & Media Services publishes a comprehensive set of printed materials to inform district personnel, students, parents and the community about AISD's activities and accomplishments.

FINDING

The Office of Communication Services & Media Services redesigned AISD's Web site in 1998. The AISD Web page includes information such as messages, speeches, comments from the superintendent and board, schedules of middle school and high school football games, the Channel 18 Program Guide and school bus schedules. AISD's Web site also provides current news releases, board briefs, the district calendar, the District Technology Leadership Team newsletter, lunch menus, Materials Management bids and contracts, a Parents' Quick Menu Guide and Partners in Education information.

The office established a Web Advisory Committee to oversee changes and additions in content areas to ensure all of AISD's departments are adequately represented on the Web site and to develop better online technical support materials and user guidelines for school Web masters. The office also increased AISD's server access and security through encrypted passwords. The Office of Communication Services also funded Web instruction classes through Professional Development Assessment (PDA). AISD's Web home page use increased from 14 hits in November 1998 to 64,749 in September 1999.The annual total number of hits in 1999 reached more than 10 million.

COMMENDATION

The Office of Communication Services & Media Services has established a successful AISD Web site whose use has dramatically increased.

FINDING

Although AISD's Office of Communication Services & Media Services provides a considerable amount of information to employees, parents and the public, it is not as effective as it should be in establishing two-way communications. For example, a TSPR general public telephone survey of a random sample of 650 residents of AISD in fall 1999 revealed that less than half of the residents surveyed expressed satisfaction with the quality of communications and public relations between the district administration and the community. Forty-five percent of AISD residents disagreed that "communications are good between AISD district administration and the community." Thirty-six percent of those surveyed disagreed that "AISD administration does a lot to promote good public relations between the district and the community." The community, the survey revealed, has a more critical view of AISD's communications than the view expressed by AISD employees as seen in **Exhibit 3-12**.

Exhibit 3-12
Public Opinion Survey

AISD-Community Communications and Public Relations	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Communications are good between AISD district administration and the community.	2.0%	33.8%	14.5%	39.5%	5.5%
AISD administration does a	3.7%	39.8%	15.1%	29.8%	5.8%

lot to promote good public relations between the district and the community.					

Although evaluation was specifically incorporated in its External Communication Plan, the Office of Communication Services & Media Services has not evaluated the effectiveness of its internal and external publications, promotion of specific events and media relations since its reorganization in 1998. They also have not assessed the extent to which the programs it televises on Channels 22 and 18 are watched and considered informative. The size of the viewership of Channel 22 programs was last estimated in 1991. At that time it was estimated at 0.2 percent. The size of viewership of Channel 18 programs has never been fully estimated, nor has viewers' satisfaction with Channel 22 and Channel 18 programs been evaluated.

Recommendation 54:

Annually evaluate the effectiveness of internal and external publications, television programming, public relations campaigns and media relations, and use the results to modify publications and programs.

The Office of Communication Services & Media Services should conduct a systematic evaluation of its internal and external publications, cable channels, public relations campaigns and media relations. The evaluation should use both a survey and focus groups. The Office of Communication Services & Media Services should use the evaluation results to modify its publications and programs. **Exhibit 3-13** lists elements that an AISD communications evaluation should consider using.

Exhibit 3-13
Evaluation of AISD Communications

External and Internal Communication Evaluation	Components	Evaluation Design
Publications and Television Programs		

	Evaluation objectives	1. Assess each publication and program of the Office of Communication Services. 2. Determine the extent to which publications are read and television programs are viewed. 3. Evaluate the usefulness of information communicated. 4. Identify information needs not being met. 5. Evaluate AISD officials' preparedness to deal with media.
	Target population	Principals, assistant principals, teachers and parents
	Methodology	Readership and viewing survey and focus groups
Media Relations		
	Evaluation Objectives	1. Assess media perception of access to information about district. 2. Evaluate media coverage of AISD issues.
	Target population	Newspaper, radio, and television media representatives
	Methodology	Focus group

Source: Texas School Performance Review.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Office of Communication Services & Media Services director with assistance from the Office of Program Evaluation designs a survey of AISD's internal and external publications, television programming, media relations and public relation campaigns.	May 2000
2.	The Office of Communication Services & Media Services director and staff conduct survey and focus groups.	May-June 2000

3.	The Office of Program Evaluation analyzes survey and focus group data.	July 2000
4.	The Office of Communication Services & Media Services director uses evaluation results to make appropriate changes in its publications, television programming, public relation campaigns and media relations.	August-October 2000
5.	The Office of Communication Services & Media Services director with assistance from the Office of Program Evaluation conducts an annual survey.	May 2001 and thereafter annually

FISCAL IMPACT

Costs to the Office of Communication Services & Media Services will consist of reproduction of questionnaires, supplying envelopes for survey mailing and return, and getting the survey ready for mailing.

Assuming the survey will include 200 administrators, 600 teachers, 600 students and 600 parents, and use a four-page questionnaire (8,000 pages $.05 per page totaling $400) with 2,000 envelopes to mail questionnaires and 2,000 envelopes for questionnaire returns @ $.10 an envelope, the cost will be $400 (4,000 envelopes x .10) The total cost will be $800 ($400 + $400 = $800). No postage will be required due to in-house distribution; parents will receive their surveys via their children.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Annually evaluate the effectiveness of internal and external publications, television programming, public relations campaigns and media relations and use the results to modify publications and programs.	($800)	($800)	($800)	($800)	($800)

FINDING

The instructional programs shown on the AISD's cable channels are viewed or used in the classroom by a small percentage of AISD teachers.

AISD's Media Services Department manages the programming for two educational access channels: Channel 22 and Channel 18. Access is provided free of charge from Time Warner Entertainment Company. Channel 18 is used primarily for professional development programs. Channel 22, AISD's "flagship" channel, in operation since September

1982, consists of instructional programs for students on weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Each second and fourth Monday of the month, Channel 22 televises the meetings of the Board of Trustees beginning at 7:00 p.m. and ending at 10:00 p.m. These meetings are televised again the following Saturday and Monday. During evenings and weekends, Channel 22 offers general interest programs including programs produced by the Media Services Department.

During off-hours, AISD's Media Services runs the "chalkboard" screen, a bulletin board for the district. The Media Services Department publishes twice a year *The Preview*---a Channel 22 instructional programs guide. About 5,400 issues are printed per semester. Information about Channel 22 programs is also published in the *Austin American Statesman* daily and in Sunday's *Show World*. Information on Channel 18 programs is available only on AISD's Web page.

The programs offered by the Media Services Department come from three sources: Sixty-five percent come from KLRU, about 18 percent from the Media Services, and 17 percent come from other independent sources such as the U.S. Department of Education, Agency for Instructional Television, AGC/United Hearing, T-Star as well as other PBS Stations. The Media Services Department produces fewer than 20 percent of the programs shown on Channel 22 and less than 10 percent of the programs shown on Channel 18. Programs produced by the Media Services Department include school commencements, games, banquets (Teacher of the Year and Partners in Education), board meetings and public hearings.

The Media Services budget included $10,001 for temporary staff and $3,000 for consultants. The temporary staff are mainly production (camera) people that are hired on a temporary basis to operate cameras in situations where multiple camera operators are required. The consultants are equipment installation and training specialists. In addition, $10,500 was budgeted by Media Services for general and other supplies, as well as $47,000 for fees and dues above and beyond the fees already paid to KLRU.

The district has used KLRU as its major source of educational and instructional programming because KLRU telecasts six hours of programs per day for classroom use. While the same programs are available on KLRU and AISD's Channels 22 and 18, KLRU broadcasts the instructional programs between 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m., while AISD broadcasts these programs during the day (8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.).

During 1998-99, AISD paid $107,878 in membership fees to KLRU Educational Services. AISD, along with a consortium of other school districts in the local area, pays KLRU $1.50 per Average Daily

Attendance annually to broadcast KLRU educational programs on the district's cable channels. This membership fee also allows AISD's Learning Resource Center (LRC) to record and duplicate programs. In 1998-99, LRC recorded more than 1,000 hours of KLRU programs (from KLRU cable Channel 9) and duplicated more than 800 videotapes in response to teacher and administrator requests. In addition to KLRU membership fees (which are paid by AISD and are not part of the Media Services' budget), the Media Services Department paid more than $35,000 in fees for licensing, duplication rights and purchase of cassettes and teacher support materials **(Exhibit 3-14)**.

Exhibit 3-14
Fees Paid to Media Sources

Source	Purchases	Fees Paid
PBS Home Video	2 titles	$45
PBS ALSS	4 titles - cable license, life of tape	$300
PBS ALSS	144 titles - cable license for one year	$600
Annenberg and CPB Project Videos	144 titles - 3/4" videocassettes	$8,900
Agency for Instructional Television	85 titles - three year cable license with tapes	$13,387
AGC and United Learning	61 titles - three year cable license with tapes	$10,675
Fairfax Network	75 titles - cable license for life of tape	$2,000

Source: Media Services Memo, January 5, 2000.

In 1998-99, the Media Services Department sold about 400 videotapes. Most of them were of high school commencement exercises. The duplication of most of the videotapes was outsourced to Austin Digital Media. The Media Services Department generated a net income of $5,052 from the videotape sales.

The size of total viewership of AISD's cable channels is unknown. Some information is available on the viewership of AISD's instructional and professional development programs. According to a 1998-99 survey conducted by AISD's Department of Management Information, Office of Program Evaluation, one-third of the teachers who responded to the survey incorporate videotapes and television broadcasts into their classroom instruction once or more a month.

Teachers obtain the instructional videotapes they use in class from a variety of sources: Channels 22, 18 and 9 (KLRU), commercial outlets, and other sources or channels. Overall, less than 10 percent of teachers use Channel 22 and 18 instructional programs in their classrooms and only about 2 percent of the teachers view instructional programs when they are actually televised. The teachers who show instructional programs in their classroom tend to use videotapes. However, only 2.4 to 4.6 percent of the teachers surveyed reported that they used videotapes of Channel 22 and 18 programs. A larger percentage of teachers used KLRU Channel 9 videotapes, which they had taped (10.7 percent) or videotapes of KLRU programs they received from the LRC (25.4 percent), videotapes they rented or purchased from a commercial outlet (19.9 percent), or videotapes from another channel (6.7 percent) or source (6.1 percent). **Exhibit 3-15** shows in detail the AISD employee survey.

Exhibit 3-15
AISD Employee Survey
Spring 1999

I use videotape (tape played on the VCR in my classroom) and/or TV from the following sources:	Elementary	Middle and Junior High	High School	Total Teachers
Videotape recorded from AISD cable Channel 22 (regardless of who recorded it)	2.3%	4.3%	0%	2.4%
Videotape recorded from AISD cable Channel 18 (regardless of who recorded it)	5.5%	1.4%	4.9%	4.6%
Videotape recorded from KLRU cable Channel 9 (regardless of who recorded it)	11.1%	8.7%	12.2%	10.7%
Videotape recorded from another channel (regardless of who recorded it)	4.6%	7.2%	17.1%	6.7%
Videotape from the school library or Learning Resource Center and Media Services	29.5%	20.3%	12.2%	25.4%
Videotape rented or purchased from a commercial outlet	19.8%	17.4%	24.4%	19.9%
Videotape from another source not listed above	7.4%	2.9%	4.9%	6.1%

TV, cable Channel 22	0.9%	1.4%	0%	0.9%
TV, cable Channel 18	1.4%	1.4%	0%	1.2%
TV, KLRU cable Channel 9	3.7%	4.3%	0%	3.4%

Source: Spring 1999, Employee Survey - Media Production.

Professional development programs televised on Channel 18 have a larger viewership. Based on a small sample of AISD teachers and administrators, about one-quarter of the teachers and 25.5 percent of administrators who were asked, reported they viewed one or more of the professional development programs or live teleconferences on AISD's Channel 18 during the 1998-99 school year. **Exhibit 3-16** shows in detail the AISD employee survey on Channel 18 usage.

Exhibit 3-16
AISD Employee Survey
Spring 1999

I have viewed one or more of the professional development programs or live teleconferences (for example, T-STAR from TEA) on cable Channel 18 during this school year.	Yes	No	Not Sure
Elementary school teachers (N=115)	23.5%	67.0%	9.6%
Middle and Junior high teachers (N=33)	30.3%	66.7%	3.0%
High school teachers (N=20)	20.0%	70.0%	10.0%
Campus administrators (N=6)	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%
Central office administrators (N= 47)	25.5%	74.5%	0.0%

Source: Spring 1999, Employee Survey - Media Production.

Recommendation 55:

Restructure and consolidate AISD programming into one cable channel.

AISD should eliminate all instructional programs from its cable channels that are available through KLRU. AISD's cable channels should not show KLRU programs because these programs can be videotaped directly from KLRU, or show videotapes that can be purchased from the Learning Resource Center. The Media Services Department should broadcast only those non-KLRU programs (purchased or obtained at no charge) that are

viewed by a significant number of teachers for classroom instruction. The Media Services Department also should identify which of its professional development programs and the information, news and other programs it produces or televises have a significant viewership. The Media Services Department should consolidate the programs that have a significant viewership into a single channel and determine the number of hours a day it should operate.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Media Services Department production chief identifies the non-KLRU programs it should continue to broadcast, the number of hours of broadcasting, and how to organize these programs in one channel.	June-July 2000
2.	The Office of Communication Services and Media Services director submits the plan to the superintendent.	August 2000
3.	The superintendent approves the plan and submits it to the board for approval.	September 2000
4.	Upon the board's approval, the Media Services Department production chief begins to implement the plan.	October 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

Eliminating one channel and KLRU programs and reducing the number of purchased non-KLRU programs could produce savings of $40,000 annually. While the number of staff operating one channel would not change, a 50 percent reduction in fees paid for non-KLRU programs ($23,500), in temporary staff and consultants ($6,500), and in supplies ($5,250) would generate savings of $34,750.

In addition, the Media Services Department would not publish a program guide because its guide has been devoted to instructional television programs. The cost of publishing the guide has been $5,250 annually, which would now be saved. The district could still publicize the schedule of its cable channel in the *Austin American Statesman* daily and in *Show World* on Sundays, saving $5,250 in reproduction costs.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Restructure and consolidate AISD programming into one cable channel.	$40,000	$40,000	$40,000	$40,000	$40,000

FINDING

Public input forums and focus groups with parents and community groups revealed the district has a credibility problem. According to community members, the problem is the result of the board's and district's seeking public input to develop plans but then ignoring community input or never implementing the plans. For example, the board sought public input to develop a Comprehensive Plan, which was intended to serve as a district strategic plan. The district's previous strategic plan was developed for the period of 1992-97.

The board completed the Comprehensive Plan in 1997, but the board never approved the plan. In addition, community members said the board and district did not inform the community about what has been done with the input they provided or with the plan.

Since August 1999, AISD's new superintendent has met with a wide range of representatives of business, education and community groups and addressed issues such as dropouts, data integrity and food service but it is uncertain how long these efforts will continue.

Recommendation 56:

Institute quarterly meetings of the superintendent and central office staff with parents and community members to discuss educational issues and obtain public input.

The superintendent and senior central office staff members should talk face to face with parents and members of the community through quarterly public forums. The objectives of the forums would be (1) to report to the community on progress and accomplishments; (2) inform the community on how the administration is addressing or plans to address pertinent issues and (3) identify new needs and issues. The public forums should be scheduled in school facilities located throughout the district. The forums should be publicized in the *Insider*, on AISD's cable channels, in school newsletters, as well as through public service announcements (PSAs) on local television stations.

Needs and issues identified in the forums should be explicitly and formally addressed in publications such as the *Insider* and in the superintendent's update to the board.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of the Office of Communication Services & Media Services with input from the superintendent develops the schedule and format of public forums.	May 2000

2.	The Office of Communication Services & Media Services publicizes the forums in external publications, AISD's cable channel, and local television.	Quarterly
3.	The Office of Communication Services & Media Services in coordination with the Office of the Superintendent convenes forums.	Quarterly
4.	The superintendent reports to the community on the district's actions and accomplishments and obtains community input.	Continuous

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 3

D. COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND FUND-RAISING

School districts develop good relations with parents and the community by reaching out to parents and by providing information and activities of interest to parents and to the community at large.

FINDING

AISD welcomes and supports parent involvement in school. As shown in **Exhibit 3-11**, 60 percent or more of AISD employees surveyed in November 1999 agreed that the district communicates regularly with parents.

The district, through its parent education specialists, also trains school staff in the development of home, school and community partnerships. More than half of the school professionals and about 60 percent of the campus administrators surveyed by AISD in the spring of 1999 reported they participated in 1998-99 in such training. The parent education specialists program has been commended in focus groups for the important role it fills. Forty percent of school professionals and over 50 percent of administrators surveyed about parent involvement, reported that parental involvement on their campus has increased in 1998-99 relative to previous years.

Exhibit 3-17
AISD Employee Survey
Parent Involvement

There is more parental involvement on my campus this year than in previous years.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know
Other professionals	8.8%	31.9%	15.4%	19.8%	5.5%	18.7%
Campus administrators	18.4%	32.7%	22.4%	10.2%	2.0%	14.3%

Source: Spring 1999, Employee Survey - School Support Services.

AISD residents and parents echoed satisfaction with district-parent communication. Nearly three-quarters of AISD residents who participated in a telephone survey agreed that AISD gives parents opportunities to play an active role in public schools. More than 60 percent said they feel welcome when they visit schools. More than 85 percent of AISD residents whose children attend AISD schools said that they feel welcome when they visit their child's school. Nearly 77 percent of parents whose children attend AISD schools reported that they participate in school activities and organizations **(Exhibit 3-18)**.

Exhibit 3-18
Public Opinion Survey of AISD Residents

Parent Involvement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
AISD parents are given opportunities to play an active role in public schools.	13.5%	58.9%	9.8%	10.8%	2.5%
AISD parents feel welcome when they visit a school (all survey respondents).	8.5%	52.9%	18.8%	10.0%	1.2%
AISD parents feel welcome when they visit a school (parents whose children attend AISD schools).	15.3%	69.9%	4.2%	8.5%	2.1%
AISD parents participate in school activities and organizations (all survey respondents).	4.9%	50.3%	16.3%	19.4%	1.8%
AISD parents participate in school activities and organizations (parents whose children attend AISD schools).	9.1%	67.5%	6.5%	14.3%	2.6%

Source: Public Opinion Survey of AISD Residents, October-November 1999.
Note: May not add up to 100% due to survey excluding no response category.

COMMENDATION

AISD communicates with parents, uses parent education specialists and welcomes parent involvement in school.

FINDING

Although AISD has recruited more than 15,000 volunteers through its Partners in Education program, volunteers are not equitably distributed across its 102 campuses; many campuses do not have a sufficient number of volunteers. Results from a November 1999 TSPR survey of AISD employees showed that school personnel echo this concern. The majority of AISD employees-54 percent of administrative and support staff, 77 percent of principals and assistant principals, and 65 percent of teachers-disagreed their schools have a sufficient number of volunteers to help students and school programs **(Exhibit 3-19)**.

Exhibit 3-19
AISD Survey
Community Involvement

Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
District administrative and support staff	3.4%	21.3%	20.2%	39.3%	14.6%
Principals and assistant principals	2.5%	11.7%	7.4%	55.6%	21.6%
Teachers	2.4%	23.2%	7.9%	45.1%	19.5%

Source: AISD Survey, November 1999.
Note: May not add up due to rounding.

Furthermore, 81 percent of the teachers and nearly all principals surveyed earlier in 1999, as part of AISD's Office of Program Evaluation's annual employee survey, reported that they would use volunteers, if available **(Exhibit 3-20)**.

Exhibit 3-20
AISD Employee Survey
Spring 1999

Would you use volunteers if available?	Elementary	Middle and Junior High	High School	Weighted Total

Teachers	85.6%	83.3%	63.6%	81.0%
Campus administrators				97.0%

Source: Spring 1999, Employee Survey - Partners in Education.

AISD's efforts to involve the community received positive feedback from 42 to 52 percent of AISD residents who participated in the telephone survey conducted by TSPR. However, between 20 and 27 percent of AISD residents expressed concern about both community members' involvement and the administration's efforts to involve them.

More than 45 percent of AISD residents did not think that the community is proud of public education in AISD **(Exhibit 3-21)**. More than one-quarter disagreed that community members take an active part in the education of children in the district. More than 20 percent disagreed that the superintendent and staff work to involve community members in campus activities. More than 15 percent reported they do not feel welcome when they attend AISD school board meetings.

Exhibit 3-21
Public Opinion Survey

Community Involvement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Community members take an active part in the education of children at AISD.	4.6%	45.5%	16.2%	25.5%	2.0%
Community members feel welcome when they attend AISD school board meetings to express their views.	2.9%	39.5%	27.4%	14.0%	3.4%
The superintendent and staff work to involve the community in school activities.	2.8%	46.9%	20.9%	19.5%	1.8%
The school principals work to involve the community in campus activities.	4.6%	48.3%	18.8%	18.0%	2.0%
The community is proud of the public school education	2.6%	34.8%	12.6%	37.2%	8.6%

in AISD.					

Source: Public Opinion Survey of AISD Residents, October-November 1999.
Note: May not add up to 100% due to survey excluding no response category.

Recommendation 57:

Aggressively recruit school volunteers for campuses with low volunteer involvement.

AISD's Development and Community Partnerships Division director, with input from the Partners in Education volunteer coordinator and the Community Education Department director should prepare an inventory of volunteers by school. The division should identify the schools with low volunteer involvement and make these schools a priority in volunteer recruitment and in training staff in community involvement strategies. The division should train the staff and administrators of schools with low volunteer involvement in volunteer recruitment and use strategies to help them develop volunteer recruitment and retention plans.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Development and Community Partnerships Division director assigns a staff member to review availability of volunteers by school.	May 2000
2.	The director works with Austin Partners in Education (APIE) volunteer coordinator and Community Education director preparing an inventory of volunteers by school.	May 2000
3.	The director identifies schools with low volunteer involvement and reviews their volunteer recruitment and use strategies.	May 2000
4.	The director trains staff and administrators at these schools in recruiting and using volunteers.	June 2000
5.	The principal at each school with low volunteer involvement prepares volunteer involvement plans.	July 2000
6.	The principal at each school with low volunteer involvement implements plans.	August 2000
7.	The principal at each school with low volunteer involvement reports to division semi-annually.	January 2000, June 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

AISD's Public Education Foundation, established in 1992, has been inactive since 1994. In 1994, the AISD Foundation coordinator resigned to take a university position. The person subsequently appointed by the superintendent to act as the liaison with the foundation board was not experienced in dealing with foundations. In addition, the superintendent's and district's efforts to pass the school construction bond and change schools' boundaries made the foundation a low priority issue.

AISD's Public Education Foundation was established in December of 1992 to "facilitate student academic skill and personal development, recognize and encourage staff excellence, and expand community involvement from individuals, business, and civic organizations." The foundation planned to achieve these goals by offering grants to schools with innovative practices or initiatives. By December 1993, about one year after it was established, the AISD Public Education Foundation raised nearly $50,000. About half of these funds were used to pay for consultants who helped set up the foundation. Other funds went toward teacher development and recognition, leaving the foundation with about $10,000.

In November 1999, AISD hired a coordinator to develop fund-raising targets and fund-raising strategies under the guidance of the foundation's board. Members of the board visited with the superintendent to discuss reactivating the board and selecting new or additional board members. The board and coordinator are re-considering the foundation's direction. The intent is to use the AISD Public Education Foundation to directly affect the schools through professional development programs such as the High Performance Learning Communities (developed by the University of Pittsburgh) or through innovative programs.

School districts and individual schools use foundations, both non-profit and tax exempt, to help meet current and future public education needs through private sector dollars and to promote positive community relations. For example, the Northside Education Foundation, a foundation in a peer district, had 1999 assets of $571,570 and is aiming for a $1 million endowment. The foundation, which aims "to foster community involvement in innovative educational programs by generating and disbursing funds and other resources to provide enrichment for Northside students," distributed $161,275 through 206 grants in 1999. These grants included 193 Innovative Teaching Grants of up to $1,000 each and 27 Business Career High School scholarships.

Pasadena ISD, another peer district, benefits from the Pasadena Chamber Education Foundation. The foundation, founded in 1998 and operated by the Pasadena Chamber of Commerce, provided $23,000 in grants to Pasadena ISD teachers for innovative instructional programs in 1998-99.

Recommendation 58:

Develop a comprehensive plan for the AISD Public Education Foundation that addresses the generation of funds, sets fund targets and specific uses for the funds.

The AISD Public Education Foundation board with the assistance of the AISD coordinator should research effective district and school foundations (such as Travis Foundation, the Northside Education Foundation and the Pasadena Chamber Education Foundation) in Texas and nationally. Through interviews with AISD district and school administrators and staff, the board should identify existing needs that are not being met through district funds. The foundation board should develop a strategic plan based on the input provided by AISD administrators and staff. The strategic plan should identify potential sources of funds, set fund targets, address tactics to increase awareness of the foundation among district employees and community members and describe ways in which funds will be distributed.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	AISD's Public Education Foundation board, with assistance from AISD's coordinator, research effective school district foundations.	May 2000
2.	The Foundation board obtains input from AISD district, school administrators and staff on current unmet needs.	June 2000
3.	The Foundation board develops a strategic plan for the foundation.	July 2000
4.	The Coordinator begins implementation of the plan.	August 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4
PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews AISD's personnel management functions in six sections:

A. Organization and Management
B. Performance Appraisal System
C. Recruitment, Staffing and Retention
D. Compensation Administration
E. Employee Relations
F. Professional Development

Staffing typically is a school district's largest single expenditure and personnel management consequently should be a high priority. An effective human resources department develops human resources policies and procedures manuals; maintains personnel records; develops and updates job descriptions; recruits, selects, hires and retains employees; develops comprehensive training programs and requirements; ensures that standardized performance evaluations are conducted for all employees; ensures that promotions, transfers and dismissals are conducted in accordance with state law and board policies; tracks employee statistics such as absenteeism, turnover, terminations and grievances; develops employee relations programs; and ensures that all managers are trained on the correct procedures for documenting steps in a progressive discipline process.

BACKGROUND

Exhibit 4-1 compares AISD's staffing levels to those of its peer districts. AISD has a student-to-staff ratio of 7:1 and a student to teacher ratio of 16:1, in line with peer-district averages.

Exhibit 4-1
Administrative/Professional Personnel
AISD versus Peer Districts
1998-1999

District	Stud. Enroll.	Total Staff	Stud. To Total Staff Ratio	Prof. Staff	Stud. to Prof. Staff Ratio	Central Admin.	Stud. To Central Admin. Staff Ratio	School Admin.	Stud. to School Admin. Staff Ratio	Prof. Supp.	Stud. to Prof. Supp. Staff Ratio	Teacher	Stud. to Teacher Ratio
Austin	**79,496**	**11,650**	**7:1**	**5,825**	**14:1**	**50**	**1,590:1**	**248**	**321:1**	**676**	**118:1**	**4,851**	**16:1**
Fort Worth	77,956	11,035	7:1	5,516	14:1	42	1,856:1	287	272:1	772	101:1	4,418	18:1
Northside (Bexar County)	61,308	9,650	6:1	4,825	13:1	30	2,044:1	174	352:1	637	96:1	3,984	15:1
Pasadena	41,240	5,729	7:1	2,864	14:1	9	4,582:1	118	349:1	332	124:1	2,406	17:1
Alief	41,056	6,049	7:1	3,024	14:1	30	1,369:1	109	377:1	354	116:1	2,532	16:1
Corpus Christi	40,290	5,990	7:1	2,995	13:1	35	1,151:1	133	303:1	350	115:1	2,477	16:1
Average w/o Austin	52,370	7,691	7:1	3,845	14:1	29	1,806:1	164	331:1	489	107:1	3,163	17:1

Source: AEIS 1998-99.

Chapter 4

A. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

Effective human resources management is essential to maximize the district's return on this large investment. AISD spends 84 percent of its total operating budget on payroll.

AISD's Human Resources Development Department recruits and hires all of AISD's nearly 12,000 employees; administers wage and salary/compensation programs; manages all employee records; tracks employee leave and absence records; provides comprehensive employee relations services, including contract dispute resolution, terminations and grievance procedures; provides substitute services for all district campuses; and provides policy development and consulting services on human resources issues.

AISD's Human Resources' mission statement is "The Department of Human Resources provides, promotes, and enhances the hiring and retention of a quality work-force to ensure the success of all students in the Austin Independent School District."

Exhibit 4-2 summarizes the 1999-2000 Human Resources' program budget.

Exhibit 4-2
Human Resources 1999-2000 Program Budget

Category	1999-2000 Budget	% of Budget
HR Staff (Salary + Benefits)	$1,720,391	13.3%
Additional campus positions (Salary + Benefits)	$5,402,945	41.9%
Other Payroll Costs	$70,000	.5%
Signing Bonuses	$664,750	5.2%
Contracted Services	$48,600	.4%
General Supplies	$28,000	.2%
Travel & Other Expenses	$325,000	2.5%
Capital Outlay	$48,000	.4%
Consultants - Deaf Services	$35,000	.3%

Substitutes - Instructional	$4,408,627	34.2%
Substitutes - Other Professional	$54,325	.4%
Classified Substitutes	$91,766	.7%
Total	**$12,897,404**	**100%**

Source: AISD 1999-00 Program Effectiveness Profile.

Exhibit 4-3 illustrates the current organization structure of AISD's Human Resources department.

Exhibit 4-3
AISD Human Resources Department
Current Organization
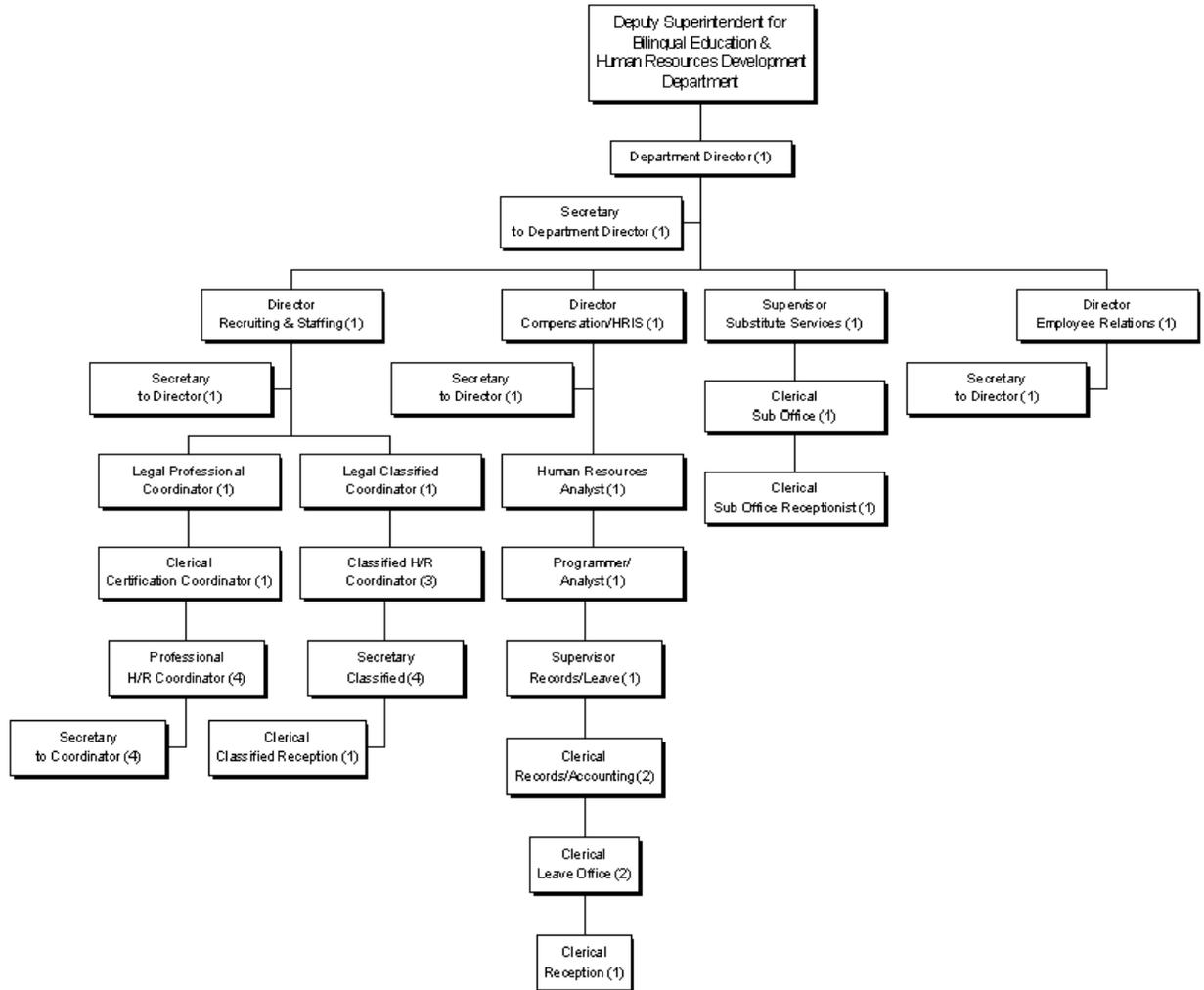
Source: AISD Director, Employee Relations.

Exhibit 4-4 compares AISD's Human Resources staffing levels and employee-to-Human Resources staff ratios with those of its peer districts.

Exhibit 4-4
Human Resources Staff
Peer District Comparison

	Pasadena	Northside (Bexar County)	Alief	Corpus Christi	Fort Worth	Average without Austin	Austin
# of HR Employees	22	28	18	22	43	27	**39**
Employee--to--HR Ratio	260:1	345:1	336:1	272:1	257:1	285:1	**299:1**

Source: Austin, Pasadena, Northside (Bexar County), Alief, Corpus Christi and Fort Worth School Districts' Human Resources Department.

AISD's ratio of human resources staff to employees is slightly higher than the peer district average. However, the general trend in industry calls for one human resources staff member for every 100 employees; school districts tend to lag behind this trend.

The Human Resources department director is responsible for overseeing the district's personnel functions. Five employees report directly to the director, including the directors of Recruiting and Staffing, Compensation/Human Resources Information System (HRIS), and Employee Relations, as well as the lead classified coordinator and the supervisor of Substitute Services. The director of Recruiting and Staffing is responsible for professional recruitment efforts within the district designed to ensure adequate staffing levels in the administrative and professional areas; monitoring of the certification process for profe ssional staff; and the approval of employee transfers.

The director of Compensation/HRIS is responsible for compensation program development and administration, records management, leave and absence tracking, human resource information and automation and administrative oversight of employee performance appraisal documents and systems and procedures manuals.

The director of Employee Relations monitors the employee grievance process for all professional and administrative employees, various contract and employment issues, and a broad array of workplace issues.

The lead classified coordinator is responsible for all recruitment efforts within the district for all classified employees (bus drivers, food service, and maintenance workers) and must ensure adequate staffing levels in the classified area and for monitoring the grievance process for all classified employees as well as various employment issues.

The supervisor of Substitute Services is responsible for recruitment, staffing and retention efforts associated with the thousands of substitute teachers and clerical workers needed each year.

District employees and applicants are served through three separate human resources offices, all of which fall under the authority of the department director of Human Resources. One office concentrates on providing human resources services to professional and administrative employees; another provides services to classified employees while the third provides substitute services.

Two key human resources functions are not managed through the Human Resources Department. The employee benefits function is managed and monitored by the Finance Department while most staff training is developed and tracked through the Professional Development Academy. The Professional Development Academy is the central training area within the district for all employees.

Exhibit 4-5 lists the Human Resources' 1999-2000 deliverables.

Exhibit 4-5
AISD Human Resources 1999-2000 Departmental Deliverables

Deliverable	Purpose	Target Implementation Date
Design and implement a conflict resolution system	Reduce the time necessary to resolve disputes and increase the number of conflicts resolved satisfactorily for all persons involved	March 2000
Select and implement an automated applicant screening system	Improve the application process for the clientele of the Human Resources Department with an automated software program	March 2000

Enhance the reality of "team" in the Human Resources Department	• Develop a "team" approach in the department • Increase the department's ability to complete all tasks effectively and efficiently • Build and model new "culture" of customer service	December 1999 - May 2000 (Phased approach)
Finalize the existing internal equity compensation initiatives regarding administrators, helping teachers/P8 employees, and upper-level classified employees	Provide for better salary equity within each general pay classification	December 1999
Assess, document, and refine Human Resources systems and procedures	Provide for better consistency and clarity in serving customers	March 2000
Institute Human Resources related personal/professional development offerings through the Professional Development Academy	Provide human resources training in the following areas: • Leave • Sexual harassment • Americans with Disability Act • Common Bonds • Stress Management • Anger	February 2000 - March 2000

	Management	
Fill the 50 current vacancies that existed on October 25, 1999	Fully staff all schools with the highest quality personnel available	December 1999
Ensure no repeat of last summer's recruitment challenges	Have all vacancies filled by 8/1/2000	March 2000 (target implementation for Winocular system)
Institute focused initiatives to fill the 46 vacancies that existed on October 21, 1999 in the following areas: Account for Learning (AFL) schools, bilingual education, special education and math	Fully staff the high needs areas with the highest quality personnel available	December 1999
Recruit a larger pool of substitutes	Reduce the shortage situation in filling daily assignments	January 2000
Retain a larger pool of substitutes	- Improve quality of substitutes by increasing longevity - Improve quality of substitutes by increasing time spent in the classroom - Encourage and assist schools in finding permanent substitutes	January 2000
Hire a new permanent, long-term Human Resources director	Continue the revitalization of the Human Resource Department and the focus on service.	February 2000

	accountability, and integrity	

Source: AISD interim director, Human Resources.

FINDING

The Human Resources department has had six directors since 1994, including the current interim director. AISD's personnel policies are, on average, 11 years old. For example, policy number DEA-R describes the salary stipend for bilingual teachers; this policy was adopted in 1985 and states that bilingual teachers should receive an annual $1,500 salary supplement. In fact, the district pays a $1,000 salary supplement to bilingual teachers, a practice conflicting with the district's policy.

The board must approve all new policies and changes to existing policies before they can be adopted. Although Human Resources updated 35 percent (19) of the district's personnel policies during 1998-99, the board approved only one in six months. The remaining 18 still are awaiting board approval. The superintendent has initiated the integrated review of all of the district's current policies and anticipates completion of this process by April 1, 2000. A comprehensive overhaul of personnel policies can ensure the district complies with recent changes in state education law and regulations and can reduce the district's exposure to risk and litigation.

Recommendation 59:

Review and revise all outdated personnel policies.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Employee Relations develops procedures to review and update all personnel policies.	June 2000
2.	The director of Human Resources appoints Human Resources staff members to update the policies and then presents them to board.	Beginning July 2000 and Ongoing
3.	The board approves the policies.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

B. PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM

Major reasons for evaluating employees include improving performance or identifying potential problems; providing direction for professional growth; and justifying administrative decisions about employees.

AISD has four separate performance appraisal tools **(Exhibit 4-6)**.

Exhibit 4-6
AISD Performance Appraisal Tools
1999-2000

Tool	Audience	Rating Scale	Description
Classified Employee System	All Classified Employees	1-5	Short, one-page tool focusing on generic performance criteria. Supervisors are given sample guidelines to assist them in evaluating different types of employees.
Administrative Appraisal System	All administrative employees, including campus and non-campus administrators	Four Categories: • No Evidence • Little Evidence • Substantial Evidence • High Evidence	Tool has several components including a Professional Improvement Plan, Goal Section, Student Performance Measurement, and a General Criteria section with descriptors. The appraisal is initiated by the individual through a self-appraisal and reviewed and modified by the supervisor.
Non-Teaching Professional Appraisal	Non-teaching professionals such as athletic	1-5	Employee is rated on six different generic categories. The

System	trainers, counselors, librarians, psychologists, etc.		supervisor is provided guidelines for these categories based on job title. A professional growth plan is included in the tool.
Teacher Appraisal System	All teachers	Four Categories: • Distinguished • Proficient • Emerging • Unsatisfactory	Teacher is rated on four categories called domains, each with a detailed description for each rating within the domain. Tool includes an optional performance development plan. Teachers are evaluated based on formal observation, spontaneous walk-through observations, and goals set for the year.

Source: AISD Human Resources

Beginning in 1997-98, all Texas school districts were given two options to appraise teachers: a teacher appraisal system recommended by the Texas commissioner of Education or a local appraisal system. The commissioner's recommended system, the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS), was developed in accordance with Section 21.351 of the Texas Education Code (TEC). School districts may choose to develop their own teacher appraisal system as long as it follows TEC 21.352 and is approved by their board of trustees. AISD chose to develop their own teacher appraisal system, which was approved by the board on April 27, 1998.

Both the state-approved PDAS and AISD's system contain similar criteria for measuring performance, although the criteria are classified differently. Both systems allow teachers to work with administrators in setting professional goals for the upcoming school year and create action items to accomplish these goals **(Exhibit 4-7)**.

Exhibit 4-7
Summary of PDAS and AISD's Teacher Appraisal Tool
1999-2000

Domain	PDAS	AISD Teacher Appraisal System
I	Active, successful student participation in the learning process	Learner-Centered Knowledge This domain measures whether content taught is closely aligned with AISD's curriculum, instructional approaches are goal/competency driven, and whether or not most students are successful in learning.
II	Learner-centered instruction	Learner-Centered Instruction and Student Performance This domain measures whether instruction is planned and implemented to provide students with the tools for learning, whether strategies are used to create an atmosphere of openness and trust, and whether students are able to connect learning to their own lives.
III	Evaluation and feedback on student progress	Learner-Centered Classroom management and organization This domain measures how well a teacher manages his/her students in the classroom as well as how well the teacher evaluates students' understanding of a concept and modifies instructional strategies based on student needs.
IV	Management of student discipline, instructional strategies, time and materials	Learner-Centered Communication This domain measures how effectively teachers communicate with colleagues, students, and students' families and responds to their concerns in a timely, constructive and confidential manner.
V	Professional communication	Learner-Centered Professional Development This domain measures the extent to which a teacher creates and follows his/her professional development plan. This plan should include activities based on the needs, characteristics and goals of the students. It also measures the extent to which the teacher engages in activities which are aligned with their Campus Improvement Plan.
VI	Professional Development	Equity in Excellence for All This domain measures the extent to which the teacher incorporates cross-cultural/diversity experiences

		into his/her classroom and shows respect and sensitivity to all students regardless of cultural heritage.
VII	Compliance with policies, operating procedures and requirements	Compliance with policies, operating procedures, and requirements This domain measures the extent to which the teacher complies with all policies, operating procedures, and legal requirements.
VIII	Improvement of academic performance of all students on the campus	None

Source: TEA and AISD Human Resources.

The major difference between the two systems is PDAS contains a separate section for measuring student performance. The AISD teacher appraisal system combines "learner-centered" instruction and student performance.

FINDING

AISD has no automated system to track the completion of employee performance appraisals. Without such a system, supervisors cannot easily track performance appraisal due dates. Human Resources is responsible for distributing performance appraisal forms and monitoring their return, but this is a manual function. Principals have a set period of time to comply before the superintendent is notified of noncompliance; the superintendent, however, makes little effort to follow up on late appraisals. The district does not have any formal policy holding supervisors accountable for completing performance appraisals for their employees.

TSPR randomly reviewed 67 AISD employee files and found that only 37 percent of them contained current performance appraisals.

The Texas Education Code, Section 21.351(c), requires each school district to appraise each administrator annually. Section 21.351(d) states that an administrator may not be paid with district funds if he or she has not been evaluated in the preceding 15 months.

Recommendation 60:

Hold all supervisors accountable for ensuring that all performance appraisals are completed in a timely manner.

The district should adopt a personnel policy that would be supported by the superintendent and should provide consequences for noncompliance. In addition, Human Resources should develop a better process to track the completion of employee performance appraisals. The district should make every attempt to comply with state law with regard to timely administrator appraisals.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Human Resources develops procedures for conducting performance appraisals. The procedures clearly state deadlines for submitting appraisals to Human Resources.	June 2000
2.	The director of Human Resources works with the superintendent to develop a policy holding appraisers accountable.	July 2000
3.	The superintendent presents the policy to the board for approval.	August 2000
4.	The board and superintendent implement the policy.	September 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

AISD reassigns campus administrators to different positions each school year with little documentation explaining why such reassignments are made. Since 1996, 46 campus administrators have been reassigned, many of them multiple times. Several principals have been assigned to five different schools in the past five years. Many district employees believe that these individuals are inadequate performers who are simply moved each year rather than let go.

The review team examined personnel files for each employee who was reassigned since 1996 to determine if any performance issues were present based on their performance ratings. An overwhelming majority of these reassigned individuals had performance appraisals that showed no evidence of inadequacies. However, other indications in several files suggested that performance problems did in fact exist, such as an individual who previously held a three-year contract and received subsequent one-year renewals without any apparent performance problem.

However, the director of Employee Relations said this was not a common practice unless the district was trying to "send a message" to the affected employee. The district is not using performance appraisals effectively in the case of low performing employees who are repeatedly reassigned. The files contained no clear documentation explaining why the reassignments were made.

Before December 1999, decisions concerning employee reassignments did not involve the Human Resources Department. Area superintendents simply recommended reassignments to the superintendent; if approved, the reassignments were implemented through Human Resources. Recently, the department has been given a larger role in the reassignment process, including file documentation review, counseling where appropriate and an assessment of overall district needs and impacts.

AISD's *Section D: Personnel Policies-DK-Assignment and Schedules*, adopted in 1984, originally was intended to allow principals to transfer teachers involuntarily due to decreases in enrollment or a surplus of teachers. Over time, the policy has evolved into what is known informally in AISD as the "reserve list" policy. Many employees feel that individuals placed on the list are inadequate in their jobs, even though district policy states that teachers on a performance improvement plan are not eligible to be transferred to other campuses.

The performance improvement plan is part of AISD's teacher evaluation system. This plan documents areas for improvement and allows supervisors and teachers to develop an action plan aimed at improving performance in the identified area. Other than the performance improvement plan stipulation, there are no other criteria for placing teachers on the reserve list. AISD's policy also gives reserve list employees preference for vacant positions throughout AISD.

This policy adversely affects AISD's recruitment process in two ways. First, school administrators are reluctant to notify Human Resources of their vacancies, in order to avoid the placement of a "reserve list" teacher due to the overall perception of the reserve list. Second, Human Resources must postpone any offers to outside applicants until all reserve list teachers have been placed. By delaying such outside recruitment efforts, the district often loses qualified candidates to other districts.

As of February 2000, the district revised its current procedures regarding the reserve list. AISD now requires principals to select reserve force teachers based on seniority and their certification. In addition, AISD will not allow teachers to be placed on the reserve force list for two consecutive years unless a written justification and approval are obtained

through Human Resources. However, AISD's formal policy on reassignments has not been updated.

Alief ISD has adopted a transfer policy that gives voluntary transfers first priority and allows involuntary transfers by seniority only. In other words, principals are not allowed to transfer teachers based on performance but rather on seniority only. The campus principal identifies the teacher on his or her campus with the least seniority in the district. This staff member can be reassigned unless it causes a vacancy or a void in a certification/endorsement area, such as math or science. In this case, the next-to-last person hired should be reassigned. If two or more teachers are equal in seniority, the date on which the teachers signed their contracts is used to determine who should be reassigned.

Recommendation 61:

Hold all supervisors accountable for documenting poor performance, and monitor improvement plans for employees.

Area superintendents should manage poor performers without simply reassigning them elsewhere in the district. This practice should be discontinued and Human Resources should be involved in all involuntary transfer requests to ensure that the transfer is a result of a legitimate need at the campus or department level. Specific reasons should be documented on the improvement plan that explain why an employee is being reassigned.

The district should clarify its policy on involuntary reassignments and force administrators to address performance problems through counseling and progressive discipline. The reserve list policy is perceived throughout the district as a mechanism for shuffling inadequate teachers to other campuses within the district. The district should force principals to document and address performance issues and place employees on development plans instead of transferring perceived problems to other areas in the district. The involuntary transfer policy should be updated and presented to the board.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Employee Relations develops policies and procedures outlining all the acceptable reasons for reassigning administrators and teachers involuntarily, documenting poor performance and monitoring improvement plans for district employees.	June 2000
2.	The superintendent approves the policies and procedures and	July 2000

	presents them to the board for approval.	
3.	The deputy superintendent for Bilingual Education and Human Resources Development and the director of Human Services implements the new policies and procedures.	August 2000
4.	The director of Employee Relations provides training sessions on the new policies and procedures to all employees.	September - October 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources. More effective management of marginal performers might produce savings for AISD, either through improved productivity or terminations, but these savings cannot be estimated.

FINDING

AISD uses four different performance appraisal forms. Each has different rating scales and evaluates employees using different methods. Maintaining these separate systems is cumbersome for the district and inhibits its ability to evaluate employees consistently based on general standards and district goals.

The current performance appraisal system for nonteaching professional employees has been used since 1987. This system was designed to measure professionals in the areas of planning, implementing/managing his/her area with respect to policies and procedures and managing staff, productivity/outcomes, personal/interpersonal skills, professionalism, communication (both verbal and nonverbal) and job-specific skills. The performance appraisal form, however, does not contain an area to rate employees on job-specific skills. In other words, there is no section that outlines what the actual duties of the position are and how well the employee is doing those. The nonteaching Professional Personnel Appraisal Handbook provides specific examples as to what each generic standard means for various groups of employees. These were written to provide supervisors and managers with a better understanding of how to rate employees using these generic standards.

The current administrative appraisal system was first used in 1997. The system was designed to evaluate administrators in the following roles/areas: learner, facilitator of learning, interpreter of knowledge, decision-maker, fiscal manager, innovator, adapter, motivator, communicator, evaluator, caring professional, district mission/goals and collaborator. The system was designed to provide administrators with quarterly and annual feedback from supervisors. However, a random

review of employee files suggests that these performance appraisals are not being used.

The classified performance appraisal system was designed to evaluate classified employees based on their quantity and quality of work, knowledge of their jobs and equipment, use of materials and equipment, cooperation, dependability, communication, resourcefulness, safety and security and supervisory/executive ability, if applicable. Guidelines are written for each job to assist supervisors in evaluating their employees. The system allows supervisors to rate employees using a scale from 1 to 5; a total score is tabulated at the end of the form. The form also allows the supervisor to document areas of strengths and recommended improvements.

An ideal system would allow each employee to be evaluated on the same set of generic competencies such as teamwork, communication, service orientation and interpersonal skills. A separate section on the form could allow supervisors to identify job-specific criteria. These criteria would be developed with employees at the beginning of each evaluation cycle to accurately evaluate their specific positions. A sample of such an appraisal form is shown in **Exhibit 4-8**.

Exhibit 4-8
Sample Performance Appraisal

ABC District
Annual Performance Appraisal

Performance Ratings

Consistently Exceeds Expectations	4
Occasionally Exceeds Expectations	3
Meets Expectations	2
Occasionally Does Not Meet Expectations	1
Consistently Does Not Meet Expectations	0

Employee Name	
Department	
Title	

Date of Hire	
Appraisal Date	

Overall Performance Rating	

p1

Exhibit 4-8
Sample Performance Appraisal, Continued

General Performance Standards

District ABC believes that all employees should demonstrate common
behaviors regardless of position and department.

Standard	Definition	Weighting	X Rating
Customer Service	Handles difficult customers and other difficult situations in a cooperative, polite, courteous and helpful manner; Responds quickly to changing circumstances and customer's needs; Exhibits patience with others when trying to solve their problems.		
Departmental Examples			
Dependability	Reports to work on-time, seldom calls in unexpectedly Good attendance record; Follows through in assignments as scheduled; Is extremely reliable and supportive of department's goals.		
Departmental Examples			
Communication	Expresses ideas and exchanges information clearly and persuasively; Communicates effectively with all levels of the organization; Listens carefully to coworkers and others; Presents information and directions clearly, effectively and factually.		
Departmental Examples			
Teamwork	Works well with all team members, providing assistance/information as needed; Contributes to the department's goals by providing support/cooperation to all staff; Assists team members as needed.		
Departmental Examples			
Work Product	Produces high-quality and accurate work; Meets deadlines, as necessary; Demonstrates good knowledge of job and required duties.		
Departmental Examples			
Decision Making	Resolves routine problems independently; Gathers all facts before making a decision; Recommends a possible solution when bringing problems to a supervisor.		
Departmental Examples			
Adaptability	Thinks outside the box; Willing to learn new duties, approaches, or routines; Looks for ways to streamline office procedures; Is open to change in office policy and procedures.		
Departmental Examples			

Exhibit 4-8
Sample Performance Appraisal, Continued

General Performance Standards

District ABC believes that all employees should demonstrate common behaviors regardless of position and department.

Standard	Measurements	Weight	X	Rating
1				
Comments				
2				
Comments				
3				
Comments				
4				
Comments				
5				
Comments				

p3

Exhibit 4-8
Sample Performance Appraisal, Continued

Summary

Supervisor's Comments

Employee's Comments

Action Plan

Goal #1	Steps	Date	Resources Needed
	1		
	2		
	3		
	4		
	5		
Goal #2	Steps	Date	Resources Needed
	1		
	2		
	3		
	4		
	5		
Goal #3	Steps	Date	Resources Needed
	1		
	2		
	3		
	4		
	5		

p4

Source: Deloitte & Touche.

Recommendation 62:

Develop a single performance appraisal for all of AISD's nonteaching employees.

The district should consolidate the three nonteaching performance appraisals into one. The new appraisal process should reflect common competencies the district values. Each employee should be evaluated on the same set of generic competencies, such as teamwork, communication, service orientation and interpersonal skills. In addition, the appraisal form should feature a separate section allowing supervisors to rate employees on job-specific criteria. Supervisors should develop these job-specific criteria with employee input at the beginning of each evaluation cycle. Although this would require a good deal of initial work by supervisors to create job-specific standards, it also would force supervisors to become more involved in the evaluation and development of their employees.

Supervisors must be educated on the appraisal process and must be made accountable for the management of poor performers through the district's employee relations policies and procedures. A new performance appraisal process that places more ownership on the supervisors is a necessary step in managing employee performance.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Bilingual Education and Human Resources Development assigns a multi-disciplinary task force of administrators, department directors and other district employees to develop a new nonteaching performance appraisal system.	June 2000
2.	The task force collects best-practices data from other districts and private industry.	June 2000 - July 2000
3.	The task force designs the new performance appraisal system and form.	August 2000-September 2000
4.	The task force seeks board approval.	October 2000
5.	The task force develops a training course for all district supervisors and employees.	December 2000
6.	The task force trains all district supervisors and employees.	January 2001
7.	The director of Human Resources implements the appraisal system.	February 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

C. RECRUITMENT, STAFFING AND RETENTION

Districts must develop aggressive recruitment strategies to attract and retain qualified teachers and staff. To accomplish this goal, districts must ensure that their recruitment efforts are focused on appropriate targets and that their compensation and work environments are competitive with peer districts.

AISD's Human Resources Department is responsible for filling all vacancies throughout the district. The department recruits and staffs all teacher positions as well as all classified workers (such as accountants and bus drivers). In addition, the department oversees the district's contract with the Texas Department of Public Safety for criminal background checks on all potential employees.

Four professional coordinators within Human Resources are responsible for filling teacher vacancies. Each coordinator is responsible for teacher vacancies within one and one quarter of AISD's five geographic areas. The classified coordinators, by contrast, are each responsible for filling specific positions for the entire district.

AISD's recruitment and retention strategies include:

- *Stipends* - The district pays an annual $1,000 stipend for hard-to-fill positions including certified bilingual, special education, and math teachers.
- *Sign-on Bonuses* - The district pays $1,500 sign-on bonuses to math, special education, bilingual, and Latin teachers.
- *Alternative Certification* - Alternative certification programs attract teachers into the profession from nontraditional sources, such as individuals from the business world and retirees with experience in accounting and computers. Alternative certification programs are used on an as-needed basis each year.
- *District Permits* - AISD issues eight special teaching permits that allow individuals without teaching backgrounds to fill specific vacant positions. Such permits are allowed by the Texas Education Code.
- *AISD Job Fair* - AISD sponsored its first-ever job fair in early June 1999 to attract potential teachers and other employees from throughout the state.
- *Participation in job fairs* - AISD participated in 23 job fairs during the spring and fall of 1999. At these fairs, principals as well as other staff members interview prospective candidates for current

and anticipated vacancies. Due to Human Resources' lack of automated recordkeeping, however, it has proven difficult to gauge the success of these fairs.

- *National Advertising* - The district places ads in local newspapers and professional journals to solicit applications and expand its pool of prospective job candidates.

Most school districts use staffing formulas to project the number of teachers, administrators and other positions they need to operate the district. These formulas are critical in maintaining control of staffing levels and staffing equity across schools within the district. Accurate student projections and competitive staffing formulas, compared with other similar-sized districts, allow districts to control staffing costs while delivering quality educational services.

AISD representatives meet each year (usually in early December) to discuss and modify staffing formulas to prepare for the upcoming school year. This team consists of the deputy superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, various school administrators and area superintendents and the Human Resources directors. **Exhibit 4-9** summarizes AISD's recent teaching staffing formulas.

Exhibit 4-9
Staffing Formula History
Austin ISD
1995-2000

Year	Summary
Prior to 1995-1996	Schools were staffed based on 100 percent of the projected student population. High schools and middle schools rarely experienced any staffing changes in the fall after the initial, formula-driven allocation. The budget allowed for about 25 to 30 unfilled teacher positions to be filled when necessary.
1995-1996	New staffing allocation measures reduced official student projections to 97 percent of the actual projection. In other words, AISD planned for 97 percent of the anticipated student enrollment for the next year. At the end of 1994-95, this caused schools to receive a reduced number of planned teacher positions for the 1995-96 school year. This, in turn, displaced about 350 teachers who had to be moved to a different school as part of the "reserve force" process during the summer of 1995. The "reserve list" refers to AISD's process in which teachers are reassigned to different campuses based on adjustments to student enrollment.

1996-1997	The director of Student Services made adjustments to the official student projection. Elementary schools were staffed at 98 percent to 100 percent of the projection (rather than 97 percent), based on historical student enrollment trends at each school. High school class sizes were targeted for 31-32 per teacher. Middle school/junior high class sizes were targeted at 28.
1997-1998	Most student projection and teacher allocation formulas for 1996-97 were carried forward into 1997-98, which resulted in no changes in the staffing formulas from the previous year.
1998-1999	Most student projection and teacher allocation formulas for 1997-98 were carried forward into 1998-1999. Beginning in this year, 140 unfilled teacher positions were filled at the beginning of the school year to meet educational needs and reduce large classes.
1999-2000	The high school and middle school teacher allocation formulas for 1998-99 were carried forward unchanged from the previous year into 1999-2000. The 140 unfilled teacher positions were filled at or near the beginning of the school year to meet educational needs and reduce large classes. The staffing formula for special education teachers also was reduced to lower the per teacher caseload.

Source: AISD director of Recruiting, Hiring and Staffing.

The current teaching formulas target class size. Targeting class size is the preferred staffing formula methodology used by the peer districts. Target class sizes for AISD and other peer districts are shown in **Exhibit 4-10.**

Exhibit 4-10
Target Classroom Size
AISD vs. Peer Districts
1999-2000

Grade Level	Northside (Bexar County)	Alief	Fort Worth	Pasadena	Corpus Christi	Average without Austin	Austin
Pre-K	22	18	No formula	22	22	21	**18**
K-4	22	22	No formula	22	22	22	**22**
5th and 6th	26[1]	25	No	26	28	26	**25**

			formula				
Middle School/ Junior High	23	18	No formula	27	28	24	**28**
High School	25	20	No formula	27	28	25	**32**

Source: Austin, Pasadena, Northside, Alief, Corpus Christi and Fort Worth ISD's Human Resources Departments. [1]Northside considers 6th grade as a part of middle school; its number is for 5th grade only.

AISD's teacher staffing formulas are in line with the peer districts except for high schools; AISD's targeted class size for high school classes is slightly higher than the peer district average. Sixty percent of the teachers who responded to the TSPR survey were critical of the district's ability to project future staffing needs. More than 50 percent of the teachers did not think that the district has an effective employee recruitment program.

Sec.21.049 of the Texas Education Code allows districts' Board of Trustees to propose rules to provide for educator certification programs as an alternative to traditional educator preparatory programs. This regulation was designed to provide an additional source of qualified educators. In response to this regulation, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has developed an Alternative Certification Program (ACP) to allow college graduates not trained as educators to become certified as teachers through other means. AISD took advantage of the ACP by hiring 263 individuals in 1998-99 that either lacked teaching certificates or had teaching certificates for classes or areas other than the ones they were hired to teach. **Exhibit 4-11** compares AISD's use of teachers on ACP status with the peer districts.

Exhibit 4-11
Alternative Certification Program for Teachers
AISD versus Peer Districts
1998-1999

Category	Corpus Christi	Fort Worth	Northside (Bexar County)	Pasadena	Alief	Average without Austin	Austin
Emergency (for certified)	97	244	14	27	24	81.2	**109**

Emergency (for uncertified)	0	69	19	60	104	50.4	**80**
Non-renewable Permits	11	42	48	6	32	27.8	**41**
Temporary Class Room Assignment Permits	1	51	3	12	6	14.6	**28**
School District Permit	0	0	0	0	0	0	**5**
Temporary Exemption	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**

Source: AEIS,1998-99.

Exhibit 4-12 compares AISD teachers' degrees with those of the peer districts.

Exhibit 4-12
Teacher Education Summary
AISD versus Peer Districts
1998-1999

Degree Held	Alief	Pasadena	Northside (Bexar County)	Fort Worth	Corpus Christi	Average w/o Austin	Austin
No Degree	0.7%	2.2%	0.0%	0.5%	1.1%	0.9%	**0.1%**
Bachelors	76.6%	74.0%	63.2%	73.7%	54.6%	68.4%	**72.5%**
Masters	22.4%	23.2%	36.5%	25.3%	43.8%	30.2%	**26.9%**
Doctorate	0.3%	0.6%	0.3%	0.5%	0.5%	0.4%	**0.5%**
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Source: AEIS, 1998-99.

FINDING

In 1997, AISD implemented an automated substitute caller system. Teachers who will be absent can call the system and enter a code. The system then automatically calls qualified candidates from a database of substitutes until a replacement is found. Once a candidate accepts the assignment, the process is complete. If the system is unable to fill a request, the principal is notified and must make arrangements to cover the vacant position.

This automated system has proven to be highly effective in maintaining an established pool of qualified applicants to fill substitute assignments. On average, the district fills about 92 percent of all substitute requests daily-approximately 480 positions.

COMMENDATION

AISD's automated substitute-teacher calling system facilitates its contacts with substitutes and has proven effective in ensuring the availability of qualified substitute teachers.

FINDING

AISD actively recruits at college and university campuses with significant minority enrollments, and holds regular planning sessions on how to recruit minority professionals. However, AISD has no formal recruitment strategy or process to attract minority teachers to the district.

TEA maintains statistics on student and staff race and ethnicity through the state's Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) (**Exhibit 4-13**).

Exhibit 4-13
Ethnic Summary of AISD Students and Teachers

	African American		Hispanic		Other		Total Minority		Anglo		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
Students	13,825	17.4%	35,067	44.1%	2,192	2.8%	51,084	64.3%	28,412	35.7%	79,496
Teachers	396	7.7%	1,054	20.4%	66	1.3%	1,516	29.3%	3,660	70.7%	5,176

Source: 1998-99 PEIMS data and Human Resources Employee Roster.

As these numbers illustrate, nearly two-thirds of AISD's students are minorities, but less than one-third of its teachers are minorities. Almost 36

percent of the district's student population is Anglo, but 71 percent of its teachers are Anglo.

The demand for minority educators is high in Texas, with its growing Hispanic population and pressing need for bilingual teachers, counselors and teachers' aides.

While AISD does attend numerous recruiting events at colleges and universities across Texas and the southern U.S., the district does not evaluate its successes at these recruiting events. The district does not track how many job applications it receives, how many teachers are hired as a result of a job fair or how successful each fair is at meeting the district's immediate needs. During 1998-99, AISD spent about $12,781 on outside recruiting events. **Exhibit 4-14** lists the recruiting events AISD attended.

Exhibit 4-14
AISD Recruiting Events
1998-99

Recruiting Event	Location
National Association of Bilingual Educators	Denver, CO
Diversity Career Fair	Houston, TX
Trinity University	San Antonio, TX
Concordia University	Austin, TX
Paine College	Augusta, GA
Nashville Area	Nashville, TN
Texas A&M Bilingual Conference	Kingsville, TX
Baylor University	Waco, TX
Southwestern University	Georgetown, TX
St. Edward's University	Austin, TX
University of Texas Presentation	Austin, TX
Sam Houston State University	Huntsville, TX
Southwest Texas State University Job Fair	San Marcos, TX
Texas A&M International University	Laredo, TX
University of Texas Interviews	Austin, TX
Mid-America Tour	Illinois
Texas Christian University	Fort Worth, TX

University of Mary Hardin-Baylor	Belton, TX
University of North Texas	Denton, TX
University of Arkansas	Pine Bluff, AR
Texas Woman's University	Denton, TX
Tri-University Teacher Fair	Abilene, TX
St. Mary's University	San Antonio, TX
Prairie View A&M University	Prairie View, TX
University of Texas at Pan America	Edinburg, TX
University of Texas at Brownsville	Brownsville, TX
West Texas A&M University-Canyon	Canyon, TX
New Mexico State University	Las Cruces, NM
Texas Tech University	Lubbock, TX
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi & Kingsville	Corpus Christi, TX & Kingsville, TX
University of Texas at El Paso	El Paso, TX
University of New Mexico	Albuquerque, NM
University of Texas - Fair	Austin, TX
Texas A&M University - Commerce	Commerce, TX
Texas A&M University	College Station, TX
Bluebonnet State Fair	Austin, TX

Source: AISD's Human Resources Department.

Because AISD, like other Texas districts, must conduct its recruiting efforts with limited resources, a formal recruitment strategy and process is essential to maximize the benefits of these efforts.

Exhibit 4-15 illustrates the number of new AISD teachers hired over the last four years.

Exhibit 4-15
Summary of AISD New Teacher Hires
1996-2000

Ethnicity	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00
Anglo	500	568	542	646
African American	29	45	35	40
Hispanic	116	130	140	170
Other	6	17	11	21
Total # of New Hires	**651**	**760**	**728**	**877**

Source: AISD Human Resources Department.

Based on these results, the district's recruitment efforts have not yielded intended results.

Recommendation 63:

Develop a formal recruiting process and strategy to track the district's success at using recruiting events to hire minorities.

AISD should establish a mechanism to track its recruiting efforts and outcomes. The district should identify the types of recruiting it will conduct, the expected outcomes and the mechanisms to be used to track and evaluate actual outcomes. For example, the district should develop and maintain a database including each recruiting event, the number of contacts made, the number of employees hired as a result of the event, and its cost. This would allow AISD to focus its recruiting efforts on those schools and events that produce the greatest number of hires and discontinue recruiting at events that produce very few hires. This would allow the district to spend its recruitment funds efficiently.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the director for Human Resources to develop a formal recruitment policy with specific initiatives.	June 2000
2.	The director of Human Resources along with the director of Recruiting and Staffing work collaboratively to develop the policy.	July - August 2000

3.	The director of Human Resources implements the policy.	September 2000
4.	The director of Recruiting and Staffing monitors the progress of the recruitment plan.	September 2000 - Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

D. COMPENSATION ADMINISTRATION

The Human Resources Department uses data from various published surveys to assess the competitiveness of AISD's employee pay. In addition, the department also participates in surveys conducted by other area school districts.

AISD has three separate salary structures for its three categories of employees: professional, administrative and classified. Each structure is updated annually to ensure competitiveness with other area districts.

Unlike most Texas school districts, AISD participates in Social Security, the federal retirement benefit. As a result, AISD employees must contribute 7.65 percent of their base salary to Social Security. Although this produces a long-term benefit to employees, most professional employees would not have to make these contributions if they were employed by another school district. This places the district at a competitive disadvantage because, to compete with other districts, AISD must pay its professional employees at least 7.65 percent more than other districts simply to match their salaries.

As noted above, AISD provides sign-on bonuses for hard-to-fill teaching positions such as bilingual educators, special educators and math and science teachers. In addition, the district provides stipends to teachers who lead in extracurricular activities.

In 1999, the district developed a new salary structure for campus administrators. The new program provided salary adjustments for administrators based on years of administrative experience, both within and outside the district.

Exhibits 4-16 and **4-17** compares AISD's average salaries by classification with those of its peer districts.

Exhibit 4-16
Average Actual Salaries by Employee Category
AISD versus Peer Districts
1998-99

District	Teachers	Professional Support	School Administration	Central Administration
Austin	**$35,256**	**$44,494**	**$54,218**	**$66,473**

Fort Worth	$36,528	$45,021	$55,356	$77,194
Northside (Bexar County)	$35,075	$41,939	$54,680	$69,208
Pasadena	$35,311	$44,938	$56,342	$92,632
Alief	$35,720	$43,943	$56,193	$74,404
Corpus Christi	$35,661	$44,237	$52,573	$69,391
Average w/o Austin	**$35,659**	**$44,016**	**$55,029**	**$76,566**

Source: AEIS, 1998-99.

AISD's average salaries by employee category seem in line with those of its peer districts. The district has used published survey data for public education to maintain relatively competitive salary levels.

Exhibit 4-17
Teacher Salaries by Years of Experience
AISD versus Peer Districts
1998-99

Years Of Experience	Alief	Pasadena	Northside (Bexar County)	Fort Worth	Corpus Christi	Average without AISD	Austin
Beginning	$27,436	$25,961	$25,242	$30,438	$25,893	$26,994	**$26,728**
1-5 Years	$31,078	$29,152	$27,498	$30,655	$27,891	$29,255	**$29,553**
6-10 Years	$34,682	$32,024	$31,006	$33,062	$30,973	$32,349	**$32,581**
11-20 Years	$40,790	$38,263	$38,171	$39,381	$38,506	$39,022	**$37,968**
Over 20 Years	$48,537	$45,256	$46,155	$47,801	$44,513	$46,452	**$45,117**

Source: AEIS, 1998-99.

AISD's teacher salaries also are competitive with those in its peer districts.

FINDING

AISD pays employees' travel expenses in three different ways. The district pays a monthly stipend to those employees whose job responsibilities require them to travel to various locations/campuses within the district. In

1999-2000, the district spent $723,086 on these travel stipends, which are paid to 787 employees every year. These stipends are included in monthly pay and taxed as regular salary dollars. These employees are not required to turn in travel logs or receipts, and it is possible that some of these employees are receiving the stipends without actually incurring any travel expenses during the year.

Employees that do not receive the travel stipend are reimbursed for their mileage at a rate of 28 cents per mile. These employees are required to turn in mileage logs to receive reimbursement. In 1998-99, the district spent $73,340 on these mileage reimbursements.

The district also reimburses employees for travel outside the district to attend conferences, seminars and other work-related meetings. AISD has written procedures for travel arrangements and limits travel expenditures by requiring employees to book travel through a designated travel agent. In addition, per diem rates limit expenses. These guidelines address air travel, hotel arrangements, rental cars, parking, meals and other miscellaneous expenses. In 1998-99, the district spent $1,838,380 on these travel-related expenses (including the cost of seminar/workshop registrations).

Traditionally, travel stipends are provided to employees to offset the cost of business-related travel expenditures. Most organizations require employees to provide receipts for all expenses incurred. Some school districts pay travel stipends to area superintendents and superintendents while others do not pay travel stipends to any district employee.

Recommendation 64:

Alter the formal travel stipend policy to limit it to the superintendent and area superintendents.

Travel stipends should be awarded to the superintendent and area superintendents to ensure better accountability and control of travel funds. All other employees should be required to submit receipts for in-district travel mileage and business-related travel expenditures. A policy should be developed that sets strict guidelines for what types of in-district travel will be reimbursed and at what rate.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Human Resources collaborates with representatives from Payroll to draft a policy outlining eligibility for travel stipends and sets guidelines for reimbursements to other employees.	June 2000

2.	The director of Human Resources presents this policy to the board for approval.	August 2000
3.	Human Resources and Payroll jointly implement the policy.	September 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

AISD has no formal compensation philosophy or policy. A compensation philosophy establishes guidelines within an organization that drives the design and implementation of all compensation and benefits programs. These philosophies generally establish where to target salaries and who the organization wishes to compare themselves to with regard to compensation. All decisions regarding compensation programs should be made using the formal compensation philosophy and strategy that the district establishes. Such philosophies provide a framework for the design of compensation programs; they can be compared to a strategic plan for employee pay. For example, a school district should be able to clearly identify where it wants to position teachers' salaries in relation to the market.

A sample compensation philosophy could be: "AISD will target all professional salaries between the market average and the 75th percentile of the market among all Texas school districts." In addition, a formal compensation philosophy should include what types of resources will be used to make salary comparisons, such as a published salary survey, and which similarly-sized peer districts AISD should compare itself to.

Recommendation 65:

Develop a formal compensation philosophy.

This philosophy statement would provide a blueprint for all AISD compensation programs. The district should examine its compensation programs to determine its effectiveness, and decide where in the market to position itself with respect to salary and benefits. AISD should identify the appropriate compensation philosophy and complete an annual study using published survey data and peer district data to determine whether its compensation strategies are competitive and effective in retaining qualified employees with respect to the employment market.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent appoints a committee to develop a formal compensation philosophy for the district. Human Resources leads this group.	June 2000
2.	The committee develops a philosophy outlining the district's competitive position for each employee group.	July 2000 - August 2000
3.	The director of Human Resources presents the philosophy to the board for approval.	September 2000
4.	The director of Compensation/Human Resources Information Systems (HRIS) uses the philosophy to develop all employee pay structures and programs.	Beginning October 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

AISD typically gives annual wage and salary increases to all employees in a class, regardless of individual performance. In such a system, employees are neither rewarded for good performance nor discouraged from performing poorly. Seventy-five percent of the teachers who responded to the TSPR survey think that the district neither rewards competence and experience nor spells out qualifications for promotion. Seventy percent of these teachers did not think that district salaries are competitive.

However, employees receiving the best performance ratings received larger increases than those receiving above-average ratings; employees with average (satisfactory) performance ratings are not eligible for a merit increase, although they may still receive a cost-of-living increase if the entire pay structure is adjusted. Unsatisfactory performers do not receive a pay increase or only those percentage increases awarded to all employees for cost-of-living adjustments.

At Spring ISD, the board sets aside two amounts within its budget for salary increases: one for employees on a regular pay schedule and another for those in a performance-based pay plan. All administrators above assistant principal are required to participate in the performance-based pay plan. The district's administrative performance evaluation system provides a basis for the performance-based plan and is used to determine salary rewards.

Administrative work plans completed by each Spring ISD administrator indicate what administrators will do in a given year to help achieve district and school objectives. The work plans are developed to reflect relevance

to district objectives, internal consistency, feasibility and consistency with job description functions and district policies and procedures. In addition, at least one objective must relate to the individual's professional development. Each administrator and his or her supervisor set these objectives together. Once the objectives and performance criteria are set and confirmed by each employee's supervisor, the administrative performance appraisal process monitors progress toward the objectives. Using the personnel evaluation system, supervisors measure how well administrators succeeded in accomplishing their objectives.

Principals consider each teacher's performance independently when recommending salary increases for teachers who are under the performance-based pay system. To be eligible for the maximum increase, teachers must have an outstanding evaluation and have completed 12 hours of approved staff training. Middle-range increases are given to those exceeding expectations with 12 hours of staff development. Bottom-range increases are given to those with no eligibility requirement; however, the individual may need a professional growth plan. The eligibility requirement refers to those teachers who are meeting job expectations. Spring ISD's pay-for-performance plan has received widespread praise from both inside and outside the district.

Pasadena ISD has another innovative approach to tie pay to performance. Pasadena implemented a performance-pay plan during 1998-99. Awards are paid out as lump sums and do not affect the individual's base pay. The plan is designed to reward a campus team for attaining TEA's Recognized or Exemplary status; the system is reviewed annually to determine whether the program is improving overall performance within the district. The district allocates funds to the program annually based on the district's TEA ratings.

Although the funds are allocated to each successful campus based on the number of classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrative positions they employ, the principal decides how to distribute the funds. Each campus establishes a performance-pay steering committee charged with distributing the funds fairly. The following scale is used in allocating funds to Recognized or Exemplary campuses:

Recognized

> $600 per teacher
> 75 per paraprofessional
> $500 per administrative employee

Exemplary

$780 per teacher
98 per paraprofessional
$650 per administrative employee

In addition, a Recognized or Exemplary campus can earn additional funding based on the following scale, if its economically disadvantaged student population is:

From

1 to 20%: $2,000

21 to 40%: $3,000

41 to 60%: $4,000

61 to 80%: $5,000

81 to 100%: $6,000

These funds may be used only for performance pay for personnel assigned to the campus during the year upon which the award is based. They may not be used for instructional supplies, equipment, materials or any other purpose.

Principals at Pasadena ISD are eligible for a different program that pays a lump-sum bonus to principals at campuses that receive a Recognized ($1,000) or Exemplary ($1,500) rating. In addition, principals can receive an additional amount based on their campus' percentage of economically disadvantaged students. These additional amounts are as follows:

From

1 to 20% : $200

21 to 40% : $300

41 to 60% : $400

61 to 80% : $500

81 to 100% : $600

In November 1999, Pasadena ISD awarded 25 campuses for achieving Recognized or Exemplary status, and has received high praise within the district and plans to continue the program.

Recommendation 66:

Establish a pay-for-performance system for AISD employees.

This system should be implemented concurrently with the new performance appraisal system.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Compensation/HRIS works with the superintendent and the board to change district policy to allow for performance-based increases for eligible employees.	January 2001 - May 2001
2.	Employees and supervisors arrive at goals to serve as the basis for their evaluations.	June 2001 - August 2001
3.	The director of Compensation/HRIS works with the board and superintendent to decide the percentage increases allowable for employees receiving various performance ratings.	June 2001 - August 2001
4.	The superintendent and board determine the total amount of money that may be spent on performance increases during the 2001-02 school year.	September 2001
5.	Based on the total amount allocated to their department(s), directors determine the percentage increase to be applied to each eligible employee's salary for the 2000-01 school year.	May 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources. The district should use the money budgeted for its annual increases and distribute those dollars to employees who are meeting or exceeding expectations on their performance appraisals.

FINDING

AISD has not established a regular schedule for reviewing job descriptions or a method for determining which job descriptions are current. AISD hired an outside consulting firm to update all district job descriptions in 1996. The department said that it updates individual job descriptions whenever a position becomes vacant. If a position remains filled for several years, but the position's responsibilities change, this updating method would not capture the changes. Furthermore, many of the job descriptions are generic at best. For example, Food Services uses generic job descriptions for its director and assistant director positions that do not describe their actual duties and responsibilities.

Recommendation 67:

Update all job descriptions every three years.

Human Resources should establish a policy stating that each department and school must review and update its job descriptions on a three-year cycle, with one-third of the job descriptions to be reviewed each year. The job description template should include a field indicating when the job description was last reviewed. This would allow the district to confirm that it has reviewed all job descriptions even if the person holding the position has not changed.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Compensation/HRIS assigns a staff member to modify the existing template to include a review date.	June 2000
2.	The director of Compensation/HRIS develops procedures to review one-third of all job descriptions annually.	June 2000
3.	The director of Compensation/HRIS, along with assigned Human Resources staff members, begins to update one-third of the job descriptions annually.	September 2000 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

F. EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

AISD manages its employee relations functions through two different offices. Professional and administrative employees receive employee relations support through the director of Employee Relations. Classified employees receive this support through the coordinator for Classified Employees. All employee relations issues are resolved in accordance with Section D of the district's policy manual.

Human Resources documents procedures used to handle all grievances. The director of Employee Relations conducts annual training sessions for all supervisors to educate them on employee grievance procedures and the contractual process, which can be used by administrators and area superintendents for non-renewal of contracts for poorly performing employees. In addition, the process has provisions outlining how to terminate contracts with employees in the middle of a three-year term based on performance issues.

All grievances and contract difficulty disputes for professional and administrative employees are tracked within a secure database located within the Employee Relations area of Human Resources. This database is used to produce various reports and document trends. The Classified Office has no similar tracking system.

Several employee organizations represent AISD's workers, including Education Austin, the Austin Association of Texas Professional Educators, the Texas Classroom Teachers Association and the Austin Association of Public School Administrators. The district amended its policy concerning cooperation with these groups on May 24, 1999. The revised policy allows professional and classified employees to elect a "consultation agent" for each employee group. The district is required to notify employees of the election of the consultation agent through announcements posted throughout the various work areas. An election administrator appointed by the board president is responsible for ensuring the integrity of the election, setting voter eligibility and election dates, and investigating any potential violation of election rules.

The consultation agent obtains and analyzes input from employees and other recognized organizations (other union/teacher organizations) and provides feedback regarding the issues back to the affected employees and employee groups concerning the status of issues. The consultation agent also is required to conduct quarterly meetings with employees to exchange information on topics related to the consultation process. The

superintendent must meet with the elected consultation agent once a
month unless the consulting team agrees to meet more or less frequently.
The consulting team consists of the consultation agent's designee which
consists of two to five members, and the superintendent's designee, which
represents administration.

The consultation agent may bring to the board's attention any issues
related to policies, working conditions and other general concerns that
affect the quality of educational and professional services. The board
retains the complete authority to make decisions regarding those concerns.
According to policy, if agreements between the consultation agent and the
consulting team cannot be reached, the superintendent must notify the
board president in writing. The board then will appoint a three-member
subcommittee to resolve the issue in up to three meetings during a three-
week period. If no resolution can be reached, the issue is taken to the
superintendent and the full board. The board has the authority to make the
final decision.

FINDING

AISD offers employment contracts to noncertified administrative and
professional employees. Most of AISD's central administrative employees,
as well as its teachers and school administrators, are employed on three-
year contracts.

Texas is an "at-will" state, meaning that its employers have the right to
hire and terminate employees with or without notice. In school districts,
TEA requires contracts for professions requiring a valid certificate or
permit; noncertified personnel are not required to contract for
employment.

Contracts make it difficult to terminate individuals who do not perform
their job responsibilities adequately. Generally, in cases in which an
employee under contract is terminated, his or her salary must be paid
through the end of the contract term.

Recommendation 68:

**Discontinue the practice of awarding contracts to employees who are
not required by state or federal law to hold certificates or permits.**

The district should provide only those employment contracts required by
law. By limiting employment contracts to certified personnel, the district
would lessen its exposure to the risk and expense of litigation. Eliminating
contracts for noncertified positions would provide the district with greater

flexibility in staffing decisions. In addition, this recommendation should reduce the time spent by Human Resources in administering contracts.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board changes district policy to state that only those employees who are required to hold valid certificates or permits will be employed on contract.	July 2000
2.	The director of Human Resources holds an informational session with all central administrative personnel affected by the policy change to explain the impact the change will have on their employment relationship with the district.	August 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The Human Resources Department's employee relations functions are understaffed. As noted above, one director performs all employee relations activities for professional employees while one coordinator does so for the classified employees. The director of Employee Relations spends 100 percent of her time managing and educating professional staff on employee relations issues. The coordinator of the Classified Section spends only a portion of his time on employee relations issues. The other portion of the coordinator's time is spent on recruiting classified employees. Both employees have a difficult time effectively managing all of the employee relations issues within the district.

According to the *1998 Saratoga Institute Human Resource Financial Report*, the average number of employees to human resources staff among all types of organizations is 100. The report further breaks down each function of human resources. For an organization of AISD's size (5,000 to 10,000 employees), the report states that the ideal percentage of human resources staff assigned to employee relations is 18 percent. According to this formula, AISD's Human Resources Department could be almost three times larger (91 employees) and have an Employee Relations staff of 16.

Recommendation 69:

Reorganize all employee relations activities under the director of Employee Relations and add one employee to assist the director with the additional workload.

Adding a full-time Employee Relations representative would allow the director of Employee Relations to concentrate on developing policies, training programs and handling litigious employee cases for the entire district. The director's role as policy-maker should be focused on efforts that prevent employee grievances from escalating into formal grievances. The Employee Relations representative could free the director from handling the myriad routine employee relations issues such as responding to questions from supervisors.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Employee Relations drafts a job description of the new Employee Relations representative.	July 2000
2.	The job description is approved by the director of Human Resources.	August 2000
3.	The new position is approved by the superintendent.	September 2000
4.	The director of Employee Relations works with the director of Recruiting and Staffing/Hiring to post the position.	October 2000
5.	The director of Employee Relations selects a candidate and the new employee begins.	December 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation would have an annual cost of $47,580, based on an average salary of $42,000 plus benefits of $5,580. This fiscal impact assumes that the new employee would be paid for nine months in 2000-01.

Recommendation	2000-01	2000-02	2001-03	2002-04	2003-05
Reorganize all employee relations activities under the director of Employee Relations and add one employee to assist the director with the additional workload.	($35,685)	($47,580)	($47,580)	($47,580)	($47,580)

Chapter 4

F. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Texas law requires school districts to offer their personnel professional and in-service training. The state allows school districts to reduce the number of school days offered to students to allow more time for staff training.

AISD's Professional Development Academy (Academy), which is separate from Human Resources, conducts the majority of the district's professional educator training. Each year, the Academy publishes a catalog of course offerings for the year-more than 300 in 1999-00. These courses are offered at multiple times and locations. Most are targeted at educators, with only 10 percent of current course offerings aimed at other employees.

All training provided through the Academy is tracked through a database. Employees may request a transcript of completed coursework to meet TEA certification renewal guidelines. In addition, employees may register online through the district's Web site.

Training is conducted by central office staff as well as by master teachers. Additional trainers from outside the district are hired to supplement training offerings in specific areas. For example, experts in gifted and talented education lead seminars for teachers and parents.

The Academy plays an integral part in providing support to experienced teachers who wish to obtain national certification through the National Board Certification Process. At this writing, 21 AISD teachers are applying for national certification.

Additional employee training is provided at the campus and department levels. The Academy provides basic support to these training efforts by scheduling classrooms as needed. The superintendent hired an outside consultant to work on the district's professional development program.

FINDING

AISD has a very positive relationship with the local chapter of the American Society for Training and Development, an organization that is made up of training professionals whose mission is to provide leadership to individuals, organizations and society to achieve work-related competence, performance and fulfillment in the area of workplace learning and performance. The organization has adopted and supports AISD at no cost to the district and has developed a series of training offerings for

supervisors in the areas of communication, coaching and employee discipline. These courses are provided to the district at no cost.

COMMENDATION

AISD takes full advantage of the comprehensive selection of coursework offered by the Austin Chapter of the American Society for Training and Development.

FINDING

Curriculum specialists, supervisors and teachers who have had special training in cognitive coaching do most of the training at the Academy. The Academy also offers training for principals and supervisors. Most professional development for teachers occurs on inservice days at the campus level. In contrast, most Academy classes are offered in summer and after school hours. Course schedules are published and provided to each teacher. The district has an electronic registration system, which, like other technical systems, needs to be upgraded to improve the capability of making transcripts.

In interviews, teachers said they liked professional development offered at campuses better than what is offered at the Academy, such as those offered on reading, literacy and mathematics. However, several math teachers had good things to say about professional development offered by the Academy.

Although the district takes full advantage of outside training opportunities, many staff had a less than favorable opinion of the training offered in-house. While the new teacher training and principal training appear to be solid, only about one-third of the teachers responding to the TSPR survey felt the district's staff development program was effective; less than half of the teachers felt the district's new employee orientation program was effective and timely.

Recommendation 70:

Conduct periodic surveys of district staff to determine the effectiveness of staff development offerings and adjust courses to improve service.

The results of the surveys should be used by the Academy and the campuses to determine the professional development needs of the teachers and principals.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development directs the Professional Development Academy staff to develop a survey to be administered to district staff to gauge the effectiveness of staff development course offerings.	August 2000
2.	The Professional Development Academy staff work with the Network Systems and Support Operations manager to design and administer the survey on AISD's intranet.	August 2000
3.	The Professional Development Academy gathers and summarizes the survey results and presents them to the deputy superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development and the area superintendents.	October 2000
4.	The Professional Development Academy holds focus groups with teachers and principals to gain additional input on staff development offerings.	November 2000
5.	The Professional Development Academy posts the survey results on the intranet.	November 2000
6.	Based on the survey and focus group results, the Professional Development Academy reexamines its course load to fit district employee needs. The campuses and departments also use the information to tailor staff development courses.	December 2000 - February 2001
7.	The Professional Development Academy begins offering new staff development offerings reflecting the survey feedback.	March 2001 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 5
FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter of the report addresses the Austin Independent School District's (AISD) facilities use and management function in six sections:

A. Facilities Planning and Design
B. Construction Management
C. Plant Maintenance
D. Custodial Services
E. Energy Management
F. Yellow Pages Test of Maintenance and Custodial Services

A comprehensive facilities, maintenance, housekeeping and energy management program should effectively coordinate all physical resources in the district. The objective of this program is to provide a safe and clean environment for students and to integrate facilities planning with other aspects of school planning. Moreover, facilities personnel should be involved in design and construction activities and be knowledgeable about operations and maintenance activities. Finally, facilities departments should operate under clearly defined policies and procedures that can be adapted to changes in the district's resources and needs.

BACKGROUND

AISD's Construction Management Department is responsible for facility planning, construction, renovation, maintenance, vehicle services, real estate services and housekeeping. AISD's facilities, land and other assets represent a taxpayer investment of almost $1 billion. The district has 102 campuses and 22 other facilities accounting for 11.5 million square feet of building space and 1,820 acres of land. The average age of the district's buildings is 35 years. The oldest building in the district---Pease Elementary School---was built in 1881; the newest building---Américo Paredes Middle School---opened in January 2000. In 2001, after construction of new schools funded by the 1996 bond issue is completed, the average age of AISD's buildings will decline to 30 years.

In 1996, the district undertook a $369.5 million construction project to build 11 new schools, improve 96 existing schools, and conduct 78 other miscellaneous projects. As of October 1999, 76 of the 185 projects were not completed. Since 1996, the bond program budget has been increased to $424.4 million due to $40 million in additional projects and $14.9 million in added expenses.

Exhibit 5-1 presents a summary of the AISD Construction Management Department's budget for 1998-99 and 1999-2000.

Exhibit 5-1
Construction Management Department Budget Summary
1998-99 and 1999-2000

	1998-99	1999-2000	Percent of 1999-2000 Total	Percent change
Personnel/ Benefits	$20,792,050	$21,166,954	59.0%	1.8%
Contracted Services	3,307,064	2,838,064	7.9%	-14.2%
Maintenance Expenses	970,045	994,545	2.8%	2.5%
Custodial Expenses	395,570	414,469	1.2%	4.8%
Overtime	559,596	550,347	1.5%	-1.7%
Capital Outlay	433,967	433,967	1.2%	0.0%
Campus Utilities	7,732,211	8,554,441	23.8%	10.6%
Non-campus Utilities	902,730	902,730	2.5%	0.0%
Other Expenses	20,000	20,000	0.1%	0.0%
Total	**$35,113,233**	**$35,875,517**	**100.0%**	**2.2%**

Source: AISD Budget Office.

Exhibit 5-2 shows plant, maintenance and operations costs, debt service and long-term debt per student for AISD and selected peer districts.

Exhibit 5-2
Plant, Maintenance and Operations Costs, Debt Service and Long-term Debt Per Student
AISD, Peer Districts, Region and State Average
1996-97 through 1998-99

District	Plant, Maintenance and Operations Expenditures Per Student ($)			Debt Service Per Student ($)		
	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Alief	$474	$486	$492	$0	$0	$0
Northside (Bexar County)	490	483	505	14	4	0

Corpus Christi	488	516	509	5	3	12
Austin	**449**	**486**	**519**	**34**	**56**	**77**
Pasadena	675	631	643	14	4	2
Fort Worth	652	666	659	20	18	18

Source: AISD Budget Office.

Construction Management has 890.5 full-time equivalent employees
(FTEs), 884.5 of which are funded through the operating budget and six
through the 1996 bond program. **Exhibit 5-3** presents Construction
Management's organizational structure.

Exhibit 5-3

Construction Management Department's Organization
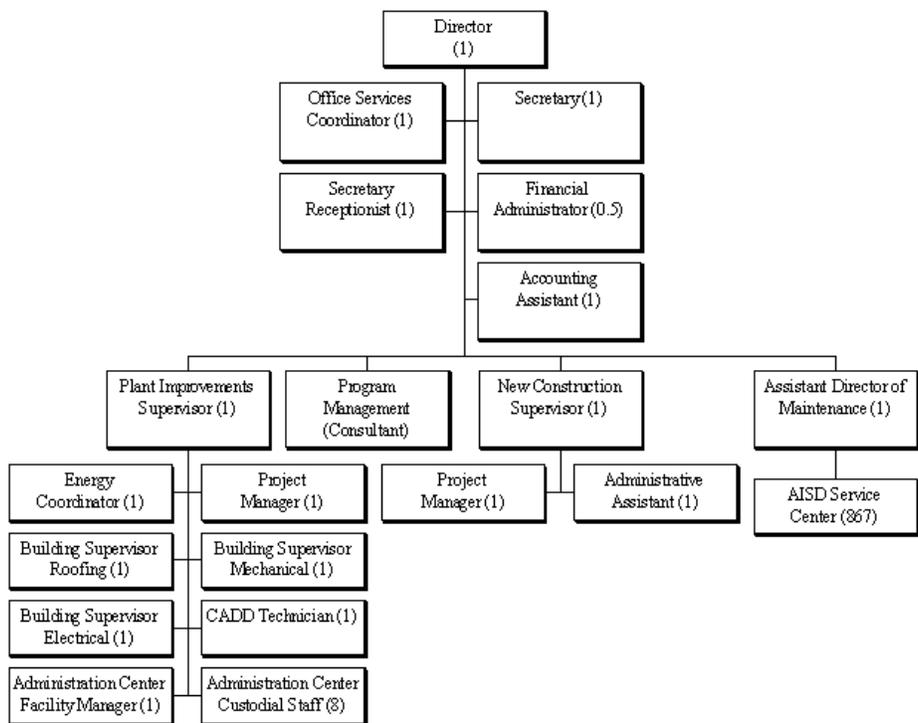
Source: AISD, Construction Management.

Exhibit 5-4 shows the number of AISD's facilities management FTEs by
position for 1998-99 and 1999-2000.

Exhibit 5-4
AISD's Facilities Management Employees by Position
1998-99 and 1999-00

Position	1998-99	1999-00	Percent Change
Supervisors	14	14	0.0%
Skill Craft (Maintenance) workers	163	163	0.0%
Custodial Staff	619	643	3.9%
Office Support Staff	15.5	14.5	-6.5%
Groundskeepers	56	56	0.0%
Total	**867.5**	**890.5**	**2.7%**

Source: AISD Budget for 1999-2000 and Construction Management Department.

Chapter 5

A. FACILITIES PLANNING AND DESIGN (PART 1)

Facilities planning and design must ensure that all facilities built or maintained by the district create an environment for productive instruction. Long-range facilities planning is one of the most critical aspects of facilities management. The district must continuously project changes in student enrollment and assess the state of its existing facilities.

AISD's Planning Services Department's responsibilities include:

- Planning and coordination of the rezoning process;
- Planning and coordination of portable unit relocations; and
- Land acquisition for future schools.

An accurate understanding of enrollment trends is vital to facilities planning, since student enrollment is the single most important factor in determining the number of schools and classrooms the district needs. **Exhibit 5-5** shows AISD enrollment from 1995-96 to 1999-2000.

Exhibit 5-5
Five-Year Enrollment Trend,
1995-96 through 1999-2000
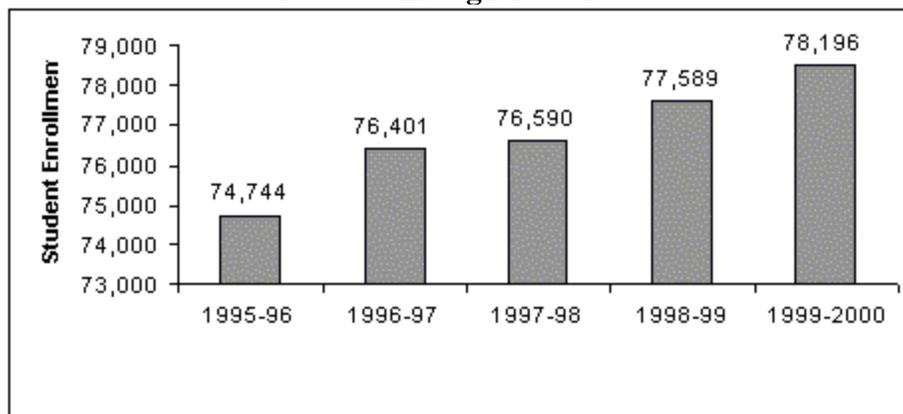
Source: AISD, Office of Student Services; Construction Management, Planning Services.
Note: The 78,196 enrollment number includes 728 students housed at special programs and campuses and certain statistical adjustments between campuses. For facility planning purposes throughout this chapter, a student enrollment figure of 77,468 is used to represent students at regular campuses during 1999-2000.

During this five-year period, AISD's student population grew at an average annual rate of 1.1 percent.

Upon completion of the 1996 bond program, AISD will have added one high school (Akins, July 2000), and two elementary schools (Cowan and McBee, July 2000). In addition, Paredes Middle School opened January 2000. Another elementary school, Pickle Elementary, is scheduled to open in 2001. **Exhibit 5-6** shows AISD's projected permanent capacity and use in November 2000.

Exhibit 5-6
AISD Permanent Facility Capacity and Use Rate Upon Substantial Completion
of the 1996 Bond Program in November 2000

School Level	Number of Classrooms in 2000-01	*Permanent Capacity in 2000-01	Current Student Enrollment	**Projected Student Enrollment in 2000-01	Excess Permanent Facility Capacity in 2000-01 (in students)	Projected Permanent Facility Use Rate
Elementary	2,082	45,804	42,543	43,011	2,793	93.9%
Middle	833	19,992	15,300	15,468	4,524	77.4%
High	1,031	24,744	19,625	19,841	4,903	80.2%
Total	**3,946**	**90,540**	**77,468**	**78,320**	**12,220**	**86.5%**

Source: AISD Department of Planning Services and TSPR.
*Permanent capacity is based on 24 students per secondary classroom and 22 students per elementary classroom. **Student enrollment is projected by assuming a 1.1 percent annual growth rate, the historical average growth rate for the last five years.

In 2000-01, upon substantial completion of the 1996 bond program, AISD's permanent facility use rate will be 86.5 percent **(Exhibit 5-6)**. Moreover, the district will have an excess permanent facility capacity that could support an additional 12,220 students.

FINDING

Well-planned building "prototypes" or standardized models ensure that construction and renovation projects are cost-effective. In 1996, AISD's Construction Management Department developed building prototypes for elementary, middle, junior-high and high schools with specific interior and

exterior features. The district uses these prototypes in all new construction and renovation. The prototypes are based on concepts described in educational specifications created and updated by the district's Administrative Working Committee for Educational Specifications.

Prototypical design furthers the following goals:

- Incorporate educational specifications
- Provide functional equity across the district
- Increase cost-effectiveness
- Reduce project delivery time.

Initially, Construction Management favored standardized models for the prototypes. After further analysis of site conditions, the department came to prefer a "kit-of-parts" model, which combines fixed components (such as classroom clusters and cafeteria/gym areas) and variable components (i.e. media/library centers, corridor configurations and multi-story options).

Exhibit 5-7 shows a prototype design manual for AISD's elementary schools.

Exhibit 5-7
A Prototype Design Manual for AISD's Elementary Schools

Collection of Data	Processing (Analysis)	Results
Research the Science and History Prototype Design	Examples of Prototype Design	Purpose of Prototype Benefits of Prototype Prototypical Concepts
Review of AISD Educational Specs, Design Guidelines and Systems Manual	Priorities of Educational Specs: Programs (admin, instructional, support) and Facilities (budget, equipment) Spatial Relations and Adjacencies	Working knowledge of Educational Specs Application of Educational Specs to prototypical design Criteria for rating prototypical concepts
Meetings with AISD Staff, Educational Specs Committee Members, Construction Management Team	Consultation with each group in conjunction with prototypical design process	Weight of criteria for rating prototypical concepts Immediate feedback on design development
Tours of AISD Elementary Schools	Current state of Elementary School design Site review of spatial	Application of Educational Specs to existing schools Which spatial relations and

	relations and adjacencies	adjacencies work well and which do not work well
Study of Rutherford Elementary School Site Study of Oak Springs Elementary School Site	Testing prototypical design Testing the Kit-of-Design Concept Application of Educational Specs under Bond Program	Prototypical goals accomplished Testing the prototypical concept and components on specific sites Fine-tuning concept and components of future AISD Elementary Schools

Source: AISD's Prototype Design Manual for Elementary Schools, January 1998.

Exhibit 5-8 illustrates sample elements of AISD's prototype for middle schools.

Exhibit 5-8
Sample Elements of AISD's Middle School Prototypes

System Configuration Examples	Description
Pinwheel	• Single story • Conducive to long sites • Adaptable to moderately sloping sites • Gymnasium and Cafeteria grouped together for community functions • Library/Media Center becomes focal point at intersection of Classroom Clusters • Administration centrally located
Partial Two Level Linear	• Higher degree of two-level stacking crates a more compact footprint • Conducive to long sites • Linear Student "Street" connecting all functions • Library/Media Center has an exterior exposure • Administration centrally located

Source: AISD's 1996 Middle School Prototypes.

AISD plans on updating prototypes before the beginning of every new bond program. The use of prototypes already has generated some savings

for the district in design fees. In addition, the practice should result in significant savings in design fees and maintenance costs in the future.

COMMENDATION

AISD uses building prototypes to ensure quality and control school construction costs.

FINDING

The facilities at three AISD high schools, Reagan, Travis and L.B.J., are significantly underused. **Exhibit 5-9** shows AISD's high school facility use rates as of October 1999. Total facility use rates, including both permanent and portable space, of Reagan, Travis and L.B.J. High Schools are 59 percent, 73 percent and 73 percent respectively. Only two high schools, Bowie and Crockett, exceed the permanent classroom use rate of 100 percent.

Exhibit 5-9
AISD High School Facility Use
October 1999

	Number of permanent classrooms	Permanent classroom capacity	Portable classroom capacity	Total classroom capacity	Current student enrollment	Permanent classroom use rate	Total classroom use rate
Anderson	92	2,208	0	2,208	1,804	82%	82%
Austin	92	2,208	240	2,448	2,167	98%	89%
Bowie	119	2,856	192	3,048	3,045	107%	100%
Crockett	103	2,472	312	2,784	2,529	102%	91%
Johnston	87	2,088	312	2,400	1,826	88%	76%
L.B.J.	89	2,136	72	2,208	1,619	76%	73%
Lanier	81	1,944	336	2,280	1,855	95%	81%
McCallum	71	1,704	48	1,752	1,666	98%	95%
Reagan	97	2,328	72	2,400	1,405	60%	59%
Travis	91	2,184	168	2,352	1,709	78%	73%
Total	**922**	**22,128**	**1,752**	**23,880**	**19,625**	**89%**	**82%**
Akins	*109*	*2,616*	*0*	*2,616*	--	--	--
(Projected Total)	**1,031**	**24,744**	**1,752**	**26,496**	**19,841**	**80%**	**75%**

Total AISD high school facility use is 82 percent. Akins High School will be completed in July 2000 and will significantly lower the facility use rate. The high school student population is projected to be 19,841 in 2000-01 and permanent classroom capacity will be 24,744. Adding in the portable capacity of 1,752 results in a total facility use rate of 75 percent.

Exhibit 5-10 shows AISD middle and junior high school facility use as of October 1999. Total AISD middle and junior high school facility use, including both permanent and portable space, is 62 percent. Three middle and junior high schools, Bailey, Bedichek and Murchison, have permanent classroom use rates that approximate or exceed 100 percent.

Exhibit 5-10
AISD Middle School Facility Use
October 1999

	Number of permanent classrooms	Permanent classroom capacity	Portable classroom capacity	Total classroom capacity	Current student enrollment	Permanent classroom use rate	Total classroom use rate
Bailey	55	1,320	720	2,040	1,529	116%	75%
Bedichek	49	1,176	432	1,608	1,136	97%	71%
Burnet	52	1,248	672	1,920	1,126	90%	59%
Covington	58	1,392	144	1,536	752	54%	49%
Dobie	40	960	432	1,392	874	91%	63%
Fulmore	45	1,080	168	1,248	764	71%	61%
Kealing	49	1,176	0	1,176	958	82%	82%
Lamar	43	1,032	720	1,752	915	89%	52%
Martin	41	984	120	1,104	495	50%	45%
Mendez	58	1,392	336	1,728	1,313	94%	76%
Murchison	52	1,248	456	1,704	1,236	99%	73%
O. Henry	43	1,032	672	1,704	681	66%	40%
Pearce	48	1,152	624	1,776	958	83%	54%
Porter	43	1,032	552	1,584	829	80%	52%
Small	61	1,464	0	1,464	929	64%	64%
Webb	35	840	192	1,032	805	96%	78%

Total	**772**	**18,528**	**6,240**	**24,768**	**15,300**	**83%**	**62%**
Paredes	61	1,464	0	1,464	0	--	--
(Projected Total)	**833**	**19,992**	**6,240**	**26,232**	**15,468**	**77%**	**59%**

Source: AISD Planning Services Department.

By 2000-01, the middle and junior high school student population is projected to be 15,468 and permanent classroom capacity will be 19,992. Adding the portable capacity of 6,240 will result in a total facility use rate of 59 percent.

Exhibit 5-11 shows AISD's elementary school facility use rate as of October 1999. Total elementary facility use rate, including both portable and permanent space, is 80 percent. Many elementary campuses need portables to sustain their current student enrollment.

Exhibit 5-11
AISD Elementary School Facility Use
October 1999

	Number of permanent classrooms	Permanent classroom capacity	Portable classroom capacity	Total classroom capacity	Current student enrollment	Permanent classroom use rate	Total classroom use rate
Allan	37	814	0	814	464	57%	57%
Allison	27	594	132	726	480	81%	66%
Andrews	28	616	242	858	654	106%	76%
Baranoff	32	704	0	704	647	92%	92%
Barrington	30	660	264	924	660	100%	71%
Barton Hills	10	220	154	374	402	183%	108%
Becker	26	572	22	594	307	54%	52%
Blackshear	29	638	154	792	449	70%	57%
Blanton	36	792	264	1056	824	104%	78%
Boone	35	770	110	880	728	95%	83%
Brentwood	30	660	66	726	503	76%	69%
Brooke	23	506	132	638	412	81%	65%
Brown	23	506	154	660	606	120%	92%

Bryker Woods	10	220	110	330	394	179%	119%
Campbell	28	616	88	704	655	106%	93%
Casey	40	880	0	880	565	64%	64%
Casis	34	748	198	946	725	97%	77%
Cook	31	682	264	946	1,022	150%	108%
Cunningham	30	660	154	814	638	97%	78%
Davis	36	792	132	924	638	81%	69%
Dawson	29	638	176	814	464	73%	57%
Doss	25	550	110	660	666	121%	101%
Galindo	30	660	44	704	749	113%	106%
Govalle	31	682	88	770	630	92%	82%
Graham	26	572	154	726	619	108%	85%
Gullett	21	462	110	572	455	98%	79%
Harris	31	682	330	1012	970	142%	96%
Hart	32	704	22	726	652	93%	90%
Highland Park	30	660	88	748	660	100%	88%
Hill	32	704	88	792	772	110%	98%
Houston	30	660	308	968	915	139%	95%
Jordan	28	616	88	704	725	118%	103%
Joslin	21	462	154	616	401	87%	65%
Kiker	28	616	418	1034	1,058	172%	102%
Kocurek	35	770	132	902	741	96%	82%
Langford	32	704	264	968	819	116%	85%
Lee	21	462	22	484	371	80%	77%
Linder	28	616	154	770	621	101%	81%
Maplewood	17	374	110	484	370	99%	76%
Mathews	20	440	44	484	372	84%	77%
Menchaca	30	660	66	726	426	64%	59%
Metz	28	616	88	704	662	108%	94%

Mills	40	880	0	880	697	79%	79%
Norman	18	396	176	572	512	129%	90%
Oak Hill	39	858	198	1056	812	95%	77%
Oak Springs	20	440	66	506	409	93%	81%
Odom	30	660	176	836	751	114%	90%
Ortega	21	462	110	572	365	79%	64%
Palm	28	616	154	770	628	102%	82%
Patton	36	792	154	946	832	105%	88%
Pease	15	330	0	330	238	72%	72%
Pecan Springs	28	616	132	748	560	91%	75%
Pillow	25	550	88	638	481	88%	75%
Pleasant Hill	28	616	110	726	561	91%	77%
Reilly	17	374	88	462	309	83%	67%
Ridgetop	11	242	110	352	259	107%	74%
Rodriguez	32	704	110	814	691	98%	85%
St. Elmo	24	528	132	660	431	82%	65%
Sanchez	32	704	66	770	503	71%	65%
Sims	20	440	22	462	299	68%	65%
Summitt	35	770	0	770	631	82%	82%
Sunset Valley	34	748	66	814	584	78%	72%
Travis Heights	31	682	66	748	568	83%	76%
Walnut Creek	41	902	264	1166	969	107%	83%
Widen	35	770	198	968	733	95%	76%
Williams	31	682	264	946	709	104%	75%
Winn	30	660	110	770	586	89%	76%
Woolridge	30	660	308	968	1,062	161%	110%
Wooten	23	506	176	682	632	125%	93%

Zavala	31	682	176	858	419	61%	49%
Zilker	21	462	132	594	421	91%	71%
Total	**1,986**	**43,692**	**9,350**	**53,042**	**42,543**	**97%**	**80%**
NC McBee	*32*	*704*	*0*	*704*	*0*	*--*	*--*
NE Pickle	*32*	*704*	*0*	*704*	*0*	*--*	*--*
S Cowan	*32*	*704*	*0*	*704*	*0*	*--*	*--*
(Projected Totals)	**2,082**	**45,804**	**9,350**	**55,154**	**43,011**	**94%**	**78%**

Source: AISD Planning Services Department.

McBee and Cowan Elementary Schools will be completed in July 2000; Pickle Elementary School will be completed July 2001. By 2000-01, the elementary school student population is projected to be 43,011 and permanent classroom capacity is projected to be 45,804. Adding the portable capacity of 9,350 results in a total facility use rate of 78 percent.

After the 1996 bond program is complete, the district's program management company will turn over all the data related to the program to AISD Construction Management. This means that the district will inherit volumes of valuable information about its facilities that can be used to quickly move future construction projects forward. This information would be even more valuable to AISD if the district knew what needs were satisfied by the 1996 program and what needs remain to be satisfied by future bond issues. This type of information typically is gathered through a post-program needs assessment. While the district is planning the transfer of unfinished projects, project documentation and other records from the program management company to AISD, it has not initiated a post-bond program needs assessment.

Chapter 5

A. FACILITIES PLANNING AND DESIGN (PART 2)

Recommendation 71:

Reassess current and future building plans and reallocate dollars to areas where facilities are needed to address enrollment and capacity needs.

AISD should adopt a planned approach that includes a balanced combination of facility closings, shifts of grade levels to underused facilities and attendance zone changes to maximize district resources.

Exhibits 5-12 shows some of AISD's schools that are significantly underused.

Exhibit 5-12
Facility Use Rates for Selected Campuses
October 1999

Campus	Permanent Classroom Use Rate	Total Classroom Use Rates with Portables
Reagan High School	60%	59%
O. Henry Middle School	66%	40%
Covington Middle School	54%	49%
Lamar Middle School	89%	52%
Martin Middle School	50%	45%
Pearce Middle School	83%	54%
Porter Middle School	80%	52%
Allan Elementary School	57%	57%
Becker Elementary School	54%	52%
Blackshear Elementary School	70%	57%
Dawson Elementary School	73%	57%
Zavala Elementary School	61%	49%

AISD should thoroughly evaluate its current facility capacity and future space needs. If portable facilities continue to be used, they should also be considered when determining the district's total facility capacity available for instruction.

A construction management firm should conduct this assessment, summarizing what needs have been satisfied by the program and what needs remain to be satisfied by future programs. This assessment would allow Construction Management personnel to become familiar with methodologies and documents inherited from the program management company. In conjunction with the needs assessment, the vendor should conduct a study of the district's current facility capacity and future space needs.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Construction Management and deputy superintendent for Finance and Support Services obtain approval from the superintendent to issue requests for proposals (RFPs) to identify the cost of conducting a study for determining the district's current facility capacity and future space needs and to conduct a post-bond needs assessment.	August 2000
2.	The director of Construction Management presents the analysis of the proposals to the superintendent and the board.	October 2000
3.	The superintendent approves the proposal.	October 2000
4.	The board approves the proposed vendor.	October 2000
5.	The vendor conducts the current facility capacity and future space needs study and post-bond needs assessments.	November 2000- August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

A study by an outside vendor to evaluate the district's current facility capacity and future space needs and conduct a post-bond needs assessment would cost AISD between $500,000 and $750,000, according to one program management company. Significant savings in personnel and facility-related expenses could be achieved through mothballing under-used facilities until they are needed, but the final savings will depend on the district's approach.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Reassess current and future building plans and reallocate dollars to areas where facilities are needed to address enrollment and capacity needs.	($750,000)	$0	$0	$0	$0

FINDING

At the secondary level, most AISD classrooms are typically unused one out of seven hours allotted for classroom instruction each day. Although the district has enough classroom space at most schools (an average 72 percent total facility use rate at the secondary levels indicates that approximately 28 percent of district's total facilities are underused), school principals continue to request additional portable classrooms. AISD's practice is to minimize the number of "floating" teachers, secondary school teachers who are required to move from one classroom to another each period in the school day. In other words, most secondary teachers in AISD are assigned a permanent classroom and that classroom stands vacant during their lunch and planning periods each day.

As a result, only about 5 percent of AISD secondary-level teachers are "floating." The district believes that this approach helps teachers create a more successful learning environment and allows them to keep all their supplies and reference materials in one room. Nonetheless, this approach is costly, because every permanently assigned classroom remains vacant for at least one out of seven hours each day and because AISD continues to purchase new portables to support this practice.

Recommendation 72:

Improve management of permanent classroom space by formalizing and implementing a strategy for more efficient use.

AISD should reexamine the benefits and costs of providing secondary school teachers with a permanently assigned classroom.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Construction Management, the deputy superintendent for Finance/CFO and the deputy superintendent	August 2000

	of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development form a task force to evaluate the district's philosophy for facility use.	
2.	The task force evaluates all costs and benefits of providing secondary teachers with a permanent classroom.	August - October 2000
3.	The task force documents its findings, recommendations and implementation strategies and presents them to the board.	October 2000
4.	The board approves the task force's decision.	November 2000
5.	The task force implements the recommendations.	November - December 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

AISD has the highest number of portables per student in its peer group. In 1998-99, the district had 617 portable units, each of which has a capacity for two classrooms, or 44 to 48 students. Some of these portables are designated for non-instructional district activities. AISD portables provide instructional space to about a third of the student population, given its 1999-2000 student enrollment of more than 77,000. In its facility use calculations, AISD does not include the space provided by its 600 portables (with capacity for some 27,100 students).

Exhibit 5-13 compares AISD to its peer districts on the basis of number of students per portable.

Exhibit 5-13
Portable Classrooms in AISD and Peer Districts
1999-2000

District	Number of Students	Number of Portables	Portable-to-Student Ratio
Austin	**77,468**	**600**	**1:129**
Fort Worth	77,997	458	1:170
Corpus Christi	40,293	234	1:172
Northside (Bexar County)	61,458	271	1:227

Pasadena	41,298	174	1:237
Alief	41,116	42	1:979
Peer Average	**52,432**	**236**	**1:222**

Source: AEIS; AISD and peer district survey.

AISD has the highest number of portables per student, exceeding the peer average by 42 percent.

Between 1996 and 1999, AISD acquired additional portables to support the 1996 bond program as well as for a variety of other classroom needs. While AISD says that many of its portables house students displaced by the bond program, in 1995-96-before the program started-the district already had 528 portables. Moreover, the cost of maintaining portables is high. According to the director of the Service Center, maintenance costs of a portable unit are about 15 percent higher and custodial costs are 26 percent higher per square foot than those of a permanent school building.

Every year, AISD relocates a number of portables to accommodate changes in enrollment across the district's campuses. **Exhibit 5-14** shows the district's portable acquisitions and relocations from 1995-96 to 1998-99.

Exhibit 5-14
Acquisition of New Portables and Relocation of Existing Portables
1995-96 to 1998-99

Year	Number of portables in the beg. of the year	Number of acquired portables	Cost of new portables	Number of relocated portables	Percent of existing portables relocated	Cost of relocation	Total annual cost of portable acquisitions and relocations	Number of portables in the end of the year
1995-96	528	15	$712,643	8	1.5%	$180,436	$893,079	543
1996-97	543	22	1,294,292	32	5.9%	567,009	1,861,301	565
1997-98	565	22	950,765	85	15.0%	1,100,698	2,051,463	587
1998-99	587	30	1,864,307	37	6.3%	554,932	2,419,239	617
Total		**89**	**$4,822,007**	**162**		**$2,403,075**	**$7,225,082**	
Average cost of a new portable								$54,180
Average cost of a relocation								$14,834

Average percent of portables relocated	7.3%

Source: AISD Construction Management Department.

After AISD completes the bond program in 2000-01, the district will have permanent classroom capacity for about 90,540 students **(Exhibit 5-6)**. When the portables are accounted for that currently have capacity for 17,342 students, the district's space in 2002 should accommodate approximately 107,882 students.

Exhibit 5-15
Student Enrollment Projections Based on the Five-Year Historical Growth Rate
2000-01 to 2006-07

Year	Student Enrollment	Year	Student Enrollment
Current	77,468	2003-04	80,933
2000-01	78,320	2004-05	81,824
2001-02	79,182	2005-06	82,724
2002-03	80,053	2006-07	83,634
Historical 5-year growth rate	**1.1%**		

Source: TSPR.

Exhibit 5-15 shows AISD's student enrollment projections for 2000-01 to 2006-07, based on the five-year historical student enrollment growth rate.

Assuming AISD's student population continues to grow at the historical rate of 1.1 percent, the district's enrollment in 2006-07 will be approximately 83,634. In theory, assuming an even and well-distributed annual enrollment growth of 1.1 percent and no change in the number of portable units, AISD's permanent and portable facilities would not be fully used until the 2028-29 school year.

The use of some portables can be explained where schools lack the infrastructure for such elective programs as music or art. But in the absence of clearly defined policies, AISD is incurring an extraordinary expense.

AISD has no formal strategy for the use of its portables. The district has outlined a process for portable management, but this process has not been

approved by the board and has not led to the most efficient use of portable space. Planning Services manages the portable units and determines the district's need for portable relocations and additional portables. However, Planning Services does not have the authority to move portables from one campus to another. This decision must be made jointly by a representative of Planning Services, the school principal and the area superintendent. As a result, after permanent classrooms are added to a campus and its need for portable classrooms ends, the school principal frequently finds another use for the units.

Recommendation 73:

Improve the district's management of portable space by formalizing and implementing a strategy for its use, and sell surplus portable units.

The board should establish a portable use policy, and the director of Planning Services should control all portable purchases and relocations in accordance with that policy. In addition, AISD should set up a decision-making body to consider requests for exceptions to district policy. This body should consist of AISD specialists in both instruction and facilities. This would allow AISD to manage its portable space more effectively and would reduce the number of portables in use by the district. Surplus portable buildings can then be sold.

If AISD were to adjust its portable-to-student ratio to the peer average, the district would need only 349 portable buildings (77,468 students divided by 222 peer average portables = 349). This would allow the district to sell 251 of its 600 portable units and would save the district significant maintenance and custodial costs while generating one-time revenues from the sale of excess buildings.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Construction Management, together with the deputy superintendent for Finance/CFO and the director of Planning Services, develops a strategy for portable management, identifies portables to be sold, and designs an implementation plan for the sale.	August - September 2000
2.	The superintendent approves the portable management strategy and the implementation plan.	September 2000
3.	The director of Construction Management implements the strategy and the plan, and begins selling its excess portables.	October - December 2000 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

Each year, AISD spends in excess of $1 million on new portable buildings and more than $600,000 on existing portable relocations **(Exhibit 5-14)**. If the district can make better use of existing portables, new purchases can be eliminated. This recommendation would reduce the number of portable relocations needed by 25 percent and freeze purchases of new portables, saving the district $1,355,694 annually ($150,192 annually from a 25 percent reduction in the district's average annual portable relocation cost of $600,769, plus $1,205,502 annually from freezing purchases of new portables.

Further, this recommendation would result in the sale of 251 portable units over a two-year period beginning in 2001-02. Assuming that AISD can sell 125 portables in 2001-02 and 126 portables in 2002-03, the district would raise $6,275,000 annually ($25,000 average unit value of AISD existing portables x 251 portables).

The cost of maintaining a square foot of AISD space is $1.98, based on an annual maintenance and custodial cost of $22.8 million shown in **Exhibits 5-22** and **5-34**. In 2001-02, the district would have 125 fewer portables to maintain as the result of selling excess portables with approximately 1,949 square feet per portable, representing 243,625 square feet of space to maintain and clean. In 2002-03, the district would have 126 fewer portables to maintain and clean, or 245,574 fewer square feet. Savings in maintenance and custodial costs in 2001-02 could reach $482,377 (243,625 x $1.98 = $482,377); savings could reach $968,614 annually thereafter (489,199 x $1.98 = $968,614).

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Reduce relocation costs by 25 percent and freeze new portable purchases.	$1,355,694	$1,355,694	$1,355,694	$1,355,694	$1,355,694
Sell portables	$0	$3,125,000	$3,150,000	$0	$0
Reduce maintenance and custodial costs.	$0	$482,377	$968,614	$968,614	$968,614
Net Savings	**$1,355,694**	**$4,963,071**	**$5,474,308**	**$2,324,308**	**$2,324,308**

FINDING

Although AISD is implementing a $424 million bond program, the district lacks a comprehensive facilities master plan. Some essential components of such a plan include:

- Identification of the current and future needs of district facilities and educational programs;
- Analysis of the condition of existing schools;
- Student growth projections and community expansion plans;
- Cost and capital requirements analysis; and
- Facilities program management and design guidelines.

Most school districts maintain and regularly update educational specifications that define space and other requirements for various types of district facilities, such as libraries, computer labs and gyms. The best practice for a school district bond program is to update educational specifications between six to 12 months before the program's planning stage begins.

Furthermore, the outcome of the planning stage is issuance of the "Redbook," a document describing the scope and costs of the bond program in general and those of each project specifically. The Redbook effectively is a contract between the school district and its taxpayers and is intended to hold the district accountable for completing the projects it lists. Since educational specifications directly affect construction costs, a school district undergoing a bond program must update its educational specifications before issuing a Redbook; otherwise, the costs specified in the Redbook will change, and the district may not be able to build at the costs listed in the document. The lack of a facilities master plan has led AISD into several costly mistakes during the implementation of the 1996 bond program.

In April 1996, AISD issued a Redbook describing the scope and cost of every project to be accomplished during the 1996 bond program. In January 1997, however, the district made changes to its educational specifications that raised the costs of some construction projects. Since the Redbook was created using the old educational specifications, its costs differed from the true construction costs. As a result, members of the public who are using the Redbook to track the program's progress may come to believe that AISD spends more than necessary.

A facilities master plan should be used to set the district's strategy for future land acquisitions. Strategic planning for these acquisitions has resulted in significant savings for other districts. For example, AISD wishes to build a new North Activity Center as well as Field Sports Facilities. Due to the rapidly growing real estate market, however, AISD has not been able to acquire tracts for these facilities. This inability to

acquire land in a timely manner greatly increases the risk of project delays. By planning ahead and purchasing land at today's prices, the district might realize some savings in the future.

Exhibit 5-16 shows the facilities planning process recommended by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and AISD's status on each component of the process.

Exhibit 5-16
Facilities Planning Process Recommended by TEA
1998

Program Element	Mission	Responsibilities	Deliverables	AISD's Status
Planning	Needs Assessment	Identify current and future needs	Demographics, facilities survey, boundary, funding, education program, market, staff capability, transportation analysis	Partially completed (need to complete market, staff capability, and transportation analysis)
	Scope	Outline required building areas; develop schedules and costs	Programming, cost estimating, scheduling, cost analysis	Completed
	Strategy	Identify structure	Facilities project list, master schedule, budget plan, organizational plan, marketing plan	Completed
	Public Approval	Implement public relations campaign	Public and media relations	Incomplete
Approach	Management plan	Detail roles, responsibilities and procedures	Program management plan and systems	Completed
	Program Strategy	Review and refine details	Detailed delivery strategy	Completed

	Program Guidelines		Educational specifications, design guidelines, computer-aided design standards.	Completed

Source: Texas Education Agency.

Recommendation 74:

Create a comprehensive facilities master plan, and annually monitor the district's progress toward implementation.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Construction Management uses the TEA model to assess AISD's status in facility planning.	August - September 2000
2.	The director of Construction Management meets with the director of Planning Services, director of New Construction, director of Plant Improvements and director of the Services Center in order to assign responsibilities for completing the district's facilities planning.	September 2000
3.	The director of Construction Management, together with the director of Planning Services, the deputy superintendent of Finance and Support Services, and the deputy superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development, designs a method for obtaining community involvement in the facilities planning process.	September 2000
4.	The director of Construction Management compiles components of the facilities master plan and develops a formal facilities master plan document.	September - October 2000
5.	The director of Construction Management presents the facilities master plan to the board for review.	October 2000
6.	The board approves the facilities master plan.	November 2000
7.	The director of Construction Management annually monitors progress of implementing the facilities master plan.	November 2000 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The review team examined the 1999 Travis County Appraisal District's Exempt Property Report to identify AISD's properties and their appraised values. AISD holds at least 10 miscellaneous properties that are not intended for school district use and have an appraised value of more than $6.3 million **(Exhibit 5-17)**.

Exhibit 5-17
AISD Miscellaneous Property
January 2000

Location	Size (Acres)	1999 TCAD Valuation ($)	Remarks
110 E. Ninth St. #0206031017	0.212	$1,507,603	Building and land are leased to the Austin Club; lease expires 9/31/2029.
Bluff Springs (Old Lockhart Hwy.) #0448080126	2.04	32,772	The Old Black School site acquired with the Pleasant Hill annexation.
Burnet Middle School Tract (Doris Drive) #0241070628	1.23	134,000	Property separated from the school site after the construction of Hathaway Street
Decker Lake (Loyola Lane) #0218310503	12.5	43,425	Originally purchased for future elementary school site.
Loyola Lane #0218270201	30.676	668,124	Originally purchased as a site for future/replacement middle school; located too close to the existing school.
6313 Waynesburg Cove #0219260229	0.2246	4,800	Residential lot conveyed in 1972 to AISD by developer to provide western access to 33 Loyola tract.
Norman Elementary School Tract #0209230468	8.922	133,830	In 1994, the Ropes/Challenge Course was constructed on this site.
Webb Elementary School Tract (Roland Johnson Drive) #0230130518	0.75	45,000	Currently leased to St. Francis school for playground.

Old Austin High School #0210001001	3.47	3,629,952	The main building, including the Annex, leased to the Austin Community College through August 31, 2020.
Old Austin High School Gymnasium #0210000308	0.73	116,000	The gymnasium is located on West Avenue and 131/2th Street.
Total	**60.7**	**$6,315,506**	

Source: Travis County Appraisal District 1999 Certified Values, January 2000; AISD Planning Services.

In 1993, TSPR recommended that the district sell all miscellaneous properties not designated for future district use. Since 1993, AISD has sold six properties with a total value of more than $2.8 million. However, the district has no formal or board approved documented strategy for selling its miscellaneous properties, and although the district says it has two properties that may be designated for future district use, it does not say what the intended use is.

The Austin Community College (ACC), the lessee of the old Austin High School campus at 12th and Rio Grande Streets, has asked AISD to transfer ownership of the property to ACC and has proposed to buy the gymnasium on West Avenue at its appraisal value.

Recommendation 75:

Identify properties that AISD has no plans for, develop a formal strategy to sell these properties and sell miscellaneous properties.

AISD should develop a formal strategy and a plan for selling its properties not intended for district use. For those properties that are currently leased to ACC, AISD may wish to consider some sort of barter arrangement whereby both parties can benefit. For example, ACC might provide career and technology or advanced courses to AISD students in exchange for permanent rights to those facilities.

While this report recommends the sale of all properties not currently under lease, the district also must carefully examine all non-educational leases to determine if the sale of these properties would be in the best interest of the community.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the director of Construction Management to assemble a list of all AISD miscellaneous properties, and their appraised values, and present it to the board.	August 2000
2.	The superintendent directs the director of Construction Management to design and document a strategy for selling all miscellaneous properties.	August 2000
3.	The superintendent begins negotiations with ACC to determine the most appropriate disposition of properties currently leased to the college.	August 2000
4.	The board review the recommendations and approves the strategy.	September 2000
5.	The director of Construction Management sells the properties, continues negotiations with ACC.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation would result in the sale of six miscellaneous district properties. Based upon appraised values, the district should realize revenues of at least $999,121 in year 2001-02 if it sells the properties shown in **Exhibit 5-17,** excluding the 110 Ninth Street, St. Francis playground and Old Austin High School (these properties are currently under lease for several more years, and are excluded from this fiscal impact) and the Ropes/Challenge Course.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Identify properties that AISD has no plans for, develop a strategy to sell these properties and sell miscellaneous properties.	$0	$999,121	$0	$0	$0

Chapter 5

B. CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT

Historically, the New Construction Division of the Construction Management Department has overseen AISD's facilities construction efforts. However, for the 1996 bond program, a private company, BLGY/Sverdrup, was responsible for coordinating and completing all current construction projects. Six other companies - The Barr Company, The Nyfeler Organization, Estilo Communications, Duke Garwood, Haynes Eaglein Waters and Adisa Public Relations-serve as consultants to BLGY/Sverdrup in a number of areas.

Construction Management receives weekly communications with the program management firm. Moreover, the director of Construction Management is also the bond program co-manager.

FINDING

The original budget of the 1996 bond program was $369.5 million. However, $54.9 million since has been added to the budget to accommodate additional projects and higher costs. The initial scope of the program included 185 total projects, including 11 new schools, 96 renovated sites and 78 other projects.

Exhibit 5-18 describes the original budget of the bond program in a greater detail.

Exhibit 5-18
Original 1996 Bond Program Budget

Proposition	Scope	Amount
Proposition 1 (Renovations)		
	Renovations (96 sites)	$78.6 million
	General Facility Upgrades (8 sites)	$20.0 million
	Functional Equity (22 sites)	$15.1 million
	Additional funding (scope to budget)	$6.8 million
	Total Proposition 1	**$120.5 million**
Proposition 2 (New Classrooms and Classroom Additions)		
	Elementary Schools (8)	$58.9 million
	Middle Schools (2)	$32.4 million
	High Schools (1)	$32.8 million

	Classrooms (156)	$53.0 million
	Total Proposition 2	**$177.1 million**
Proposition 3 (Technology, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Access, Site Acquisition)		
	Safety and Security Equipment	$3.1 million
	Technology Infrastructure	$35.9 million
	Construction and equipping of districtwide facilities	$23.7 million
	ADA Access	$3.7 million
	Land Acquisition	$5.5 million
	Total Proposition 3	**$71.9 million**
Total Bond Program		**$369.5 million**

Source: Program Management Office.

Originally, AISD planned to begin construction of school additions and renovations in the beginning of 1997 and complete the task by November 2000. Construction of the new schools was scheduled to begin in fall 1997 and finish in fall 2000. Moreover, the technology upgrade project was projected to last from the beginning of 1997 until August 1998. **Exhibit 5-19** shows the original timeline on the 1996 bond program.

Exhibit 5-19
Original 1996 Bond Program Timelines

Events	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Redbook issued (February 1996)	▓				
Bonds passed (April 1996)	▓				
Program management selected (June 1996)	▓				
Additions (November 1996 - November 2000)	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Renovations (November 1996 - November 2000)	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
New schools (September 1997 – September 2000)		▓	▓	▓	▓
Technology (March 1997 - August 1998)		▓	▓		
Program completion (November 2000)					▓

Source: Program Management Office.

The citizens of Austin passed the bond issue in April 1996. In November 1996, AISD selected a project management team. The district projected 2 percent of the anticipated construction cost for architectural work ($4.6 million) and approximately 5.2 percent of anticipated costs for mechanical/electrical projects ($3.3 million) for a total program

management budget of $7.9 million. These figures were based on actual costs from two prior bond issues. In addition, while AISD was completing planning activities, it initiated the $20.2 million initial and third wave projects in December 1996.

Although AISD planned to begin implementing the bond program in January 1997, construction did not start until summer 1998. During the first 18 months of the program, the project management team developed a workplan, conducted a functional equity and scope verification analysis (analysis that confirms and finalizes the scope and cost of the program on a project-by-project basis), and completed project designs-necessary elements of any construction project. These elements, however, were not planned for in the schedule created by AISD. As a result, the district postponed the beginning of construction and left only two and a half years for implementing the entire program, instead of the four years originally planned for.

On November 7, 1997 and May 29, 1998, the program budget was modified to accommodate increased scope and higher costs. The original budget was increased to $54.9 million. About $40 million of this increase was attributable to additional projects, including technology and electrical upgrades, added space, code enhancements, and additional portable buildings. The need for additional space was triggered by the district's January 1997 changes to its educational specifications (see above). The remaining $14.9 million, or 3.4 percent of the total program budget, was attributed to price increases in the construction market.

In 1996, AISD set its program contingency fund for the construction project-funds intended to finance unforeseen cost increases in the course of the program-at $10 million or 3.7 percent. A generally accepted contingencies guideline for programs of this size and type is 8 to 10 percent.

Moreover, AISD's bond program management team did not have direct access to the board for the first two years of the program. In 1998, the team had its first working meeting with the board to report on the program's progress. Three board members and several representatives of the bond management team formed the Board of Trustees' Bond Committee, which met on a monthly basis to inform the board about important issues associated with the program. Unfortunately, the committee met for only four months before being dissolved, due to the board members' busy schedules.

Exhibit 5-20 summarizes the best practices for a bond program implementation.

Exhibit 5-20
Best Practices For a Construction Project Implementation

Project Phase	Best Practices

All	Program management should continuously communicate with the board and all other district stakeholders about the progress of the program via voice mail, newsletters, radio announcements and other methods of communication. Public relations specialists should coordinate all communications with stakeholders.
Educational Specifications Development and Project Planning	Eighteen to 24 months before the beginning of construction, the district should conduct a facilities study that inventories all district space.
	A committee of various stakeholders, such as residents, administrators, parents and teachers should conduct a needs assessment.
	The district should employ an outside project cost estimator to accurately incorporate construction cost inflation into financial projections.
	The project contingency fund should be set at 8 to 10 percent.
Bidding	Agreements with contractors should define contractors' responsibilities in a great detail.
Substantial Completion	The district should conduct a post-occupancy analysis, at every new and renovated building. This analysis provides the program management with information for improving projects that remain to be completed.
Closure	The district should conduct a post-bond program needs assessment to identify facility needs that will have to be satisfied by future bond programs.

Source: Blue Valley School District, Kansas.

Recommendation 76:
Define, document and formalize the process for planning and implementing a construction program.
This process should be used to plan and implement future programs. When planning and implementing future bond programs, AISD should ensure that:

- All educational specifications are updated prior to the issuance of the Redbook;
- A facilities audit that inventories all district space is conducted 18 to 24 months before the program's beginning;

- Any use of an outside program management company is accounted for in the program budget;
- Inflation of construction costs is accounted for in financial projections;
- Needs assessment, workplan development and functional equity and scope verification analysis are allowed for in the program timeline;
- A contingency budget is set at 8 to 10 percent;
- Realistic outcomes of the bond program, as well as program progress, are clearly and regularly communicated to the public;
- The board ensures that it communicates directly and frequently with the public and the program managers. The Bond Committee is an effective example of such communication mechanisms;
- A post-construction needs assessment is conducted that summarizes the program and identifies what district needs have been satisfied and what needs remain to be satisfied during future bond programs; and
- A post-occupancy analysis of occupants' opinions is conducted for each new and renovated building.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Construction Management, director of New Construction, deputy superintendent for Finance and Support Services, deputy superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development and deputy superintendent for Accountability and Information Systems form a task force to define and document a process for planning and implementing a bond program.	August - October 2000
2.	The task force submits its recommendations to the board.	October 2000
3.	The board approves the task force's recommendations.	October 2000
4.	The task force implements the recommended process.	November 2000 and Ongoing Thereafter

FISCAL IMPACT
This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 5

C. PLANT MAINTENANCE

Efficient and effective maintenance operations in a school district require well-defined structures and processes, including:

- Adequate information to plan and manage daily maintenance operations;
- A good work-order system that helps maintenance workers respond quickly to repair requests;
- A preventive maintenance system that ensures that maintenance workers regularly service equipment to minimize equipment down-time; and
- A mechanism to monitor maintenance service levels and obtain periodic feedback about functions that need improvement.

AISD's Service Center is responsible for daily and preventive maintenance of the district's facilities. The center's mission is to provide quality maintenance to all AISD facilities and to service all vehicles and equipment used in the maintenance process. The center is staffed with five supervisors, 162 skill craft workers, 48 groundskeepers, five housekeeping specialists, two custodians, one energy management specialist and eight office support employees. In addition, eight athletic groundskeepers and 636 custodians (636 FTEs), including 18 substitutes, are allocated to district campuses and report to campus principals. These 875 employees service 124 facilities, nearly 11.5 million square feet of building space, 1,820 acres of land, 258 service vehicles and 45 pieces of heavy equipment.

Exhibit 5-21 shows the organizational structure of the Service Center.

Exhibit 5-21
AISD Service Center's Organization
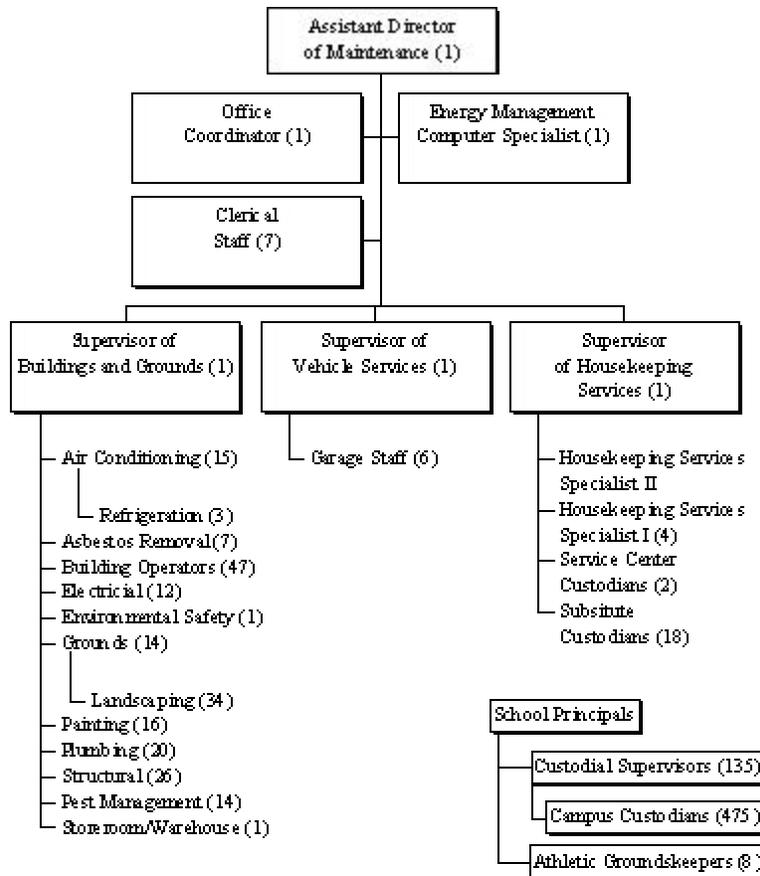
Source: AISD Service Center.

Exhibit 5-22 shows the Service Center's budget summary for 1998-99 and 1999-2000.

Exhibit 5-22
Service Center Maintenance Budget
1998-99 and 1999-2000

	1998-99	1999-2000	Percent of Total (1999-2000)	Percent Change
Personnel/ Benefits	$6,587,782	$6,587,782	86.0%	0.0%
Contracted Services	212,000	212,000	2.8%	0.0%
Maintenance supplies	711,000	711,000	9.3%	0.0%
Capital Outlay	27,496	27,496	0.4%	0.0%
Overtime	110,910	93,202	1.2%	-16.0%

Other expenses	20,000	20,000	0.3%	0.0%
Total	**$7,669,188**	**$7,651,480**	**100.0%**	**-0.2%**

Source: AISD Budget Office.
Note: The budget does not include housekeeping or vehicle services

The Service Center completes about 77,500 work order requests each year.
Exhibit 5-23 shows the functions performed by this division and the
number of work orders completed annually by each.

Exhibit 5-23
Services Provided by AISD Service Center, FTEs and Work Orders
by Function
October 1999

Functions	Description	FTE's	Number of work orders completed annually
Air Conditioning	Maintenance and repair of heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment	15	3,428
Asbestos	Maintenance and removal of asbestos-containing materials	7	360
Electronics	Repair of televisions, VCRs, video cameras, overhead projectors, clock and bell systems, scoreboards, public address systems, audio equipment, CATV systems and laser disc players	7	4,550
Building operators	Basic maintenance of the district's buildings	47	26,000
Structural	Maintenance and repair of the building infrastructure and its components	22	6,650
Electrical	Maintenance, repair and installation of electrical systems and components	12	2,160
Environmental/ safety	Technical expertise on environmental management issues	1	120

Grounds (8 athletic groundskeepers are not included)	Maintenance of all ground areas and associated components	48	5,711
Integrated Pest Management	Pest management services	3	2,300
Locks and hardware	Maintenance of all lock and door hardware	4	3,619
Painting	Painting services for all district buildings	16	1,175
Plumbing	Maintenance and repair of all district plumbing systems	20	8,500
Refrigeration	Maintenance and repair of all refrigeration equipment and appliances	3	1,915
Storeroom	Provision of expendable materials and supplies for all Service Center departments	1	10,440
Welding	Maintenance and fabrication welding services	2	600
Vehicle services	Maintenance of all district vehicles, excluding buses	7	0
Total*		**215**	**77,528**

Source: AISD Service Center Information Packet.
*Does not include storeroom transactions and vehicle maintenance.

Exhibit 5-24 compares AISD's maintenance staffing and average number of work orders completed per worker with those of other districts. AISD's maintenance workers appear to be far more efficient than those of the peer districts.

Exhibit 5-24
Maintenance Staffing and Average Number of Work Orders
Completed by a Maintenance Worker Annually
AISD and Peer Districts
October 1999

District	Number of Maintenance Workers	Students Per Maintenance Worker	Total Number of Work Orders	Average Number of Work Orders Completed by a

			Completed Annually	Maintenance Worker
Alief	79	520	12,000	152
Austin	**163**	**488**	**61,377**	**377**
Pasadena	97	426	17,868	184
Corpus Christi	98	411	N/A	N/A
Fort Worth	220	355	8,551	39
Northside (Bexar County)	161	382	47,641	296

Source: AISD Service Center and peer district survey.

Exhibit 5-25 shows backlog orders for each of the trades as of September 30, 1999, as well as the approximate number of days needed to fill these backlog orders.

Exhibit 5-25
Summary of Backlog Orders by Trade and Approximate Number of Days to Fill These Orders
September 30, 1999

Trade	Number of Backlog Orders	Number of Orders Completed Annually	Approximate Number of Days to Fill Outstanding Orders
Air Conditioning	501	3,428	53
Asbestos Removal	363	360	368
Building Operators	418	26,000	6
Electrical	202	2,160	34
Electronics	217	4,550	17
Environmental Safety	56	120	170
Grounds	161	5,711	10

Locksmith	450	3,619	45
Painting	455	1,175	141
Integrated Pest Management	690	2,300	110
Plumbing	705	8,500	30
Refrigeration	70	1,915	13
Structural	533	6650	29
Total		**66,488**	**1,026**

Source: AISD Service Center.

The Service Center has a significant backlog of asbestos removal, environmental safety and Integrated Pest Management orders **(Exhibit 5-25)**. These backlogs are due to the Service Center's involvement in the 1996 bond program construction when employees are pulled off their assigned responsibilities to work on construction management work orders so that new construction and renovation projects can meet deadlines. Since the closing of Hill Elementary due to air quality issues, some re-prioritization has occurred. AISD's campuses have been notified of potential delays in filling non-urgent work orders in these maintenance areas.

Exhibit 5-26 compares the number of AISD's backlog orders to those of the peer districts. AISD has the largest number of backlog orders among its peers.

Exhibit 5-26
Backlog Orders in AISD and Peer Districts
October 1999

District	Total Number of Backlog Orders	Average Number of Backlog Orders Per Maintenance Worker
Austin	**4,821**	**30**
Northside (Bexar County)	4,697	29
Fort Worth	4,585	21
Pasadena	1,484	15

Alief	300	4
Corpus Christi	N/A	N/A

Source: AISD Service Center and peer district survey.

Although the majority of its maintenance projects are completed in-house, AISD outsources a number of projects in asbestos abatement, environmental services, groundskeeping, plumbing, structural, vehicle services and housekeeping **(Exhibit 5-27)**.

Exhibit 5-27
Services Contracted Out and Annual Expenditures by Type of Service
October 1999

Department	Type of Service	Vendor(s)	Annual Expenditures
Asbestos	Asbestos abatement services	Olmos Abatement Inc.	$438,000
Asbestos	Asbestos project design and final clearance	GEO	57,000
Asbestos	Asbestos abatement consulting	Environmental Resources	22,200
Asbestos	Hazardous waste dumpster service	Texas Disposal System	8,000
Asbestos	Lab services	Omni	6,500
Environmental	Disposal of hazardous waste	Xclean	11,000
Environmental	Indoor air quality kit and analysis	Tri/Environment	2,000
Environmental	Recycling and transporting oil, oil filters, antifreeze and spent solvent	Procycle	2,000
Grounds	Signs	Vulcan, Compu	6,000
Plumbing	Disposal of trap waste	Enviro Waste	500
Structural	Overhead door	Anchor, Ventana	2,500
Vehicle Services	Front end/drive train maintenance and repair	Atlas Spring Service	2,000

Vehicle Services	Radiator work and replacement	Mr. Cool Radiator	2,500
Vehicle Services	Replacement of windshields	Harmon	1,500
Vehicle Services	Transmission rebuilding	First Class, AAMCO, National	7,000
Vehicle Services	Transmission exchange	Bill's Transmission	2,000
Vehicle Services	Underground storage system testing	Universal U.S.T	500
Vehicle Services	Wrecker service	Kokels Wrecker Service	2,000
Housekeeping	Rug cleaning	H.A. Guerrero	85,000
Housekeeping	Refuse collection service	Longhorn Disp.	200,000
Housekeeping	Treated dust mop service	Unifirst	57,000
Miscellaneous	Appliance service	AAA Appliance	2,500
Miscellaneous	Elevator maintenance	E.M.R.	20,000
Total			**$937,700**

Source: AISD Service Center

FINDING

The Service Center uses a custom-designed automated work-order system. The Service Center Work Order (SCWO) program allows work-order requests to be generated at each school site. In some schools, all work-order requests must be approved by the principal; in others, multiple individuals can place requests without the principal's approval. Once the work-order request is completed, the Service Center work-order coordinator reviews the requests and assigns a priority to each. **Exhibit 5-28** describes the system of priorities used for maintenance-related jobs.

Exhibit 5-28
AISD's Work Order Prioritization System

Priority	Completion Timeline
1	Emergency, life threatening: a maintenance crew is dispatched immediately

2	The job is to be completed the next day
3	The job is to be completed in 3 days
4	The job is to be completed in 5 days
5	Open date; the job will be completed by service center as time allows or job will be completed by Plant Improvement Department

Source: AISD Service Center.

The work-order coordinator prints out the work-order request and forwards hard copies to the foremen of the appropriate departments. Foremen, in turn, review the work orders and validate their priority by placing a phone call to the appropriate campus when necessary. Next, the work orders are distributed to the appropriate craftsmen. After a work order is completed, craftsmen enter the materials and worker hours used and the completion date, as well as other comments.

The district implemented the SCWO program in 1984. **Exhibit 5-29** shows the capabilities of an exemplary maintenance management program and compares these capabilities to SCWO's.

Exhibit 5-29
Capabilities of an Exemplary Maintenance Management Program
Compared to SCWO's Capabilities

Required Functions	Exemplary program	SCWO
Generating work orders	Yes	Yes
Preventive maintenance scheduling	Yes	**No**
Scheduling of all maintenance jobs	Yes	**No**
Adjusting inventory stock	Yes	Yes
Tracking labor and material costs	Yes	Yes
Generating on-line reports	Yes	**No**
Cost analysis	Yes	Yes
Establishing inventory reorder levels	Yes	Yes

Source: Association of School Business Officials.

As seen in the **Exhibit 5-29**, SCWO lacks several functions that can be crucial to the success of a district's maintenance services.

First, SCWO does not automatically schedule preventive maintenance tasks. Before 1998-99, AISD did not have a comprehensive preventive maintenance program and trades foremen were responsible for preventive maintenance within their area of specialty. In that year, the director of the Service Center manually created a schedule for preventive maintenance jobs to be completed by building operators. However, manual scheduling is time-consuming.

Second, SCWO does not schedule maintenance tasks based on priority. Foremen distribute work orders to craftsmen as the Service Center receives them from campuses. Moreover, the center has no schedule indicating when orders will be filled.

Finally, SCWO does not generate on-line cost and backlog reports. SCWO is linked to the district's mainframe system, which has little report-generating capability. Unfortunately, cost and backlog reports produced by the mainframe system are very difficult to read, cannot be customized by each user and have to be requested about a day in advance.

Exhibit 5-30 illustrates the capabilities of maintenance management programs used by the peer districts.

Exhibit 5-30
Capabilities of Maintenance Management Programs
AISD and Peer Districts

Required Functions	Austin	Alief	Corpus Christi	Fort Worth	Northside (Bexar County)	Pasadena
Generating work orders	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Preventive maintenance scheduling	**No**	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Scheduling of all maintenance jobs	**No**	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Adjusting inventory stock	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Tracking labor and material costs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Generating on-line reports	**No**	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Cost analysis	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No

Source: AISD and peer district survey.

Recommendation 77:

Purchase and implement a maintenance management system to assist the district in prioritizing work and ensuring critical tasks are accomplished.

The system that AISD chooses should automatically schedule preventive maintenance and other tasks and generate easily readable online cost and backlog reports. The district should prioritize all work orders to determine the most critical items and begin to address them.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the director of the Service Center to assemble a work team to prioritize existing work orders based on the most critical and develop a plan to address them.	August 2000
2.	The director of the Service Center obtains approval from the superintendent to issue requests for proposals to find providers for a maintenance management system with the required capabilities.	September - October 2000
3.	The director of the Service Center presents an analysis of the proposals submitted by software program vendors along with an implementation plan to the superintendent and the board.	November 2000
4.	The board evaluates the maintenance management system alternative and implementation plan.	December 2000
5.	The board approves the Service Center director's recommendation.	December 2000
6.	The director of the Service Center purchases the maintenance management system.	January 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

Although this recommendation would result in an expenditure for AISD, in the long-run, a full-featured maintenance management program should result in significant savings for the district. A system with the recommended capabilities would cost the district about $100,000, based on the review team's research of comparable models. The benefits of the new system are difficult to quantify, and therefore are not included in this

fiscal impact. However, the district could reduce its maintenance supply costs.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Purchase and implement a maintenance management system to assist the district in prioritizing work and ensuring critical tasks are accomplished.	($100,000)	$0	$0	$0	$0

FINDING

On average, each AISD vehicle other than school buses and equipment such as mowers and tractors, was driven nearly 8,000 miles in 1998-99 (**Exhibit 5-31**) with such low mileage, this is an efficient use of funds.

Exhibit 5-31
Vehicle Usage for 1998-99

Department	Number of Vehicles	Total Mileage for 1998-99	Average Mileage Per Vehicle for 1998-99
Administration	11	56,753	5,159
Plumbing	13	144,841	11,142
Drivers Education	18	69,258	3,848
Air Conditioning	13	156,003	12,000
Structural	26	236,562	9,099
Electrical/Electronics	38	243,847	6,417
Media Service	1	396	396
Housekeeping	21	148,740	7,083
Warehouse	12	58,486	4,874
Mailroom	9	67,478	7,498
Athletic Department	21	134,597	6,409
Security	48	509,880	10,623
Instruction	2	14,531	7,266
Garage	4	25,449	6,362

Painting	7	66,603	9,515
Bond Program (leased vehicles	2	9,987	4,994
Special Education (Project TRY)	5	22,405	4,481
Alarm Maintenance	17	132,475	7,793
Total	**268**	**2,098,291**	**7,829**

Source: AISD Department of Vehicle Services.

Recommendation 78:

Evaluate the need and usage of district vehicles, and sell excess vehicles.

Vehicles that are driven less than an average of 10,000 miles per year should be considered for sale. For departments with multiple vehicles, enough vehicles should be sold to bring the average yearly miles driven to the 10,000 mile average. In some cases, costs of reimbursing department personnel for mileage should be compared to the total cost of operating the vehicles internally to determine the most appropriate course of action.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of the Service Center and the director of Vehicle Services identify vehicles that are underused and determine an appropriate number of vehicles for each department.	August - September 2000
2.	The director of the Service Center and the director of Vehicle Services design an implementation plan for redistributing existing vehicles and selling excess ones.	September 2000
3.	The director of the Service Center sells the vehicles.	October 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

Assuming that each district vehicle should be driven an average of 10,000 miles a year, AISD needs about 210 vehicles (2,098,291 miles driven by all district vehicles in 1998-99 / 10,000 miles per vehicle per year = 210 vehicles). On average, the district could sell 58 vehicles for $2,000 each, the total cash proceeds from this transaction would be $116,000 ($2,000 average sale price x 58 vehicles = $116,000). If mileage is paid to employees rather than providing them a vehicle, this recommendation assumes the cost of mileage will be less than the cost of operating a district vehicle, therefore no savings or costs are recognized.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Evaluate the need and usage of district vehicles, and sell excess vehicles.	$116,000	$0	$0	$0	$0

FINDING

Training for AISD maintenance employees is provided on an as-needed basis. Such training is particularly valuable for workers with limited career paths and/or for those who have achieved maximum pay scales.

Exhibit 5-32 compares the average number of hours of training received by AISD maintenance workers with their the peer-district counterparts.

Exhibit 5-32
Average Number of Hours of Training Received Annually
By a Maintenance Worker
AISD and Peer Districts
1998-99

District	Average Number of Hours of Training Per Year
Northside	48
Alief	8
Austin	**8**
Corpus Christi	4
Fort Worth	2
Pasadena	0

Source: AISD and peer district survey.

AISD craftsmen occasionally attend lectures on safety measures and other general topics. Although trade-specific training with a budget of $10,000 is one of the items on the Service Center's Action Plan for 1999-2000, no such training has been developed.

Recommendation 79:

Develop formal, position-specific training requirements for maintenance personnel.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of the Service Center and director of Buildings and Grounds form a task force to develop formal, position-specific training requirements.	August 2000
2.	The director contacts Northside ISD to determine the type of training being provided by that district.	August 2000
3.	The task force solicits employee input on the training requirements and designs an implementation plan.	August - October 2000
4.	The director of the Service Center and the director of Buildings and Grounds implement the plan.	October - November 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

The district should use part of its $10,000 training budget to develop training. Then, assuming each of the 163 maintenance employees attends eight additional hours of training per year, during normal working hours, approximately 1,304 hours at $10 per hour equals $13,040 annually.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Develop formal, position-specific training requirements for maintenance personnel.	($13,040)	($13,040)	($13,040)	($13,040)	($13,040)

FINDING

From time to time, the director of the Service Center requires tradesmen to collect quotes on a number of services within their trade. AISD does not, however, have work performance and material use standards. Therefore, the district has no formal basis for evaluating the efficiency of its maintenance practices, employee productivity or equipment reliability.

Recommendation 80:

Develop work performance and material use standards for maintenance.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of the Service Center and director of Buildings	August 2000

	and Grounds form a task force to develop work performance and material use standards.	
2.	The task force solicits employee input on the work performance and material use standards.	August - October 2000
3.	The director of the Service Center and the director of Buildings and Grounds implement the standards.	October - November 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with the existing resources.

FINDING

The "zone concept" has proven to be an efficient way to deliver maintenance services in school districts throughout the country. Under the zone concept, maintenance workers are assigned and dedicated to a group of buildings, or a zone. The zone concept produces several significant benefits. For example, crews become more familiar with the facilities and type of equipment used in a specific zone and therefore can determine materials and staff requirements for each job more quickly. In addition, crews develop a sense of ownership and pride when they work on the same facility for extended periods, and thus become more accountable for the quality of their work.

Although AISD uses the zone concept for some trades, it does not apply this method to painting, plumbing, electrical work, integrated pest management, structural, asbestos abatement or environmental safety. **Exhibit 5-33** shows the structure of each of the Service Center's trade crews, the number of FTEs involved and the number of vehicles by trade.

Exhibit 5-33
Structure of AISD Maintenance Crews,
Number of Vehicles and Number of FTEs by Trade

Trade	Crew's Structure	Number of FTE's	Number of Vehicles
Air Conditioning	The school district is divided into seven zones and each mechanic is responsible for approximately 15 schools. Two pump mechanics are responsible for all schools. Three control technicians are responsible for the energy management and repair of	15	11

	the pneumatic system in all schools. Two apprentices are assigned where needed.		
Asbestos	"Zone" concept is not used.	7	3
Building Operators	A crew of four to five building operators is assigned to one of the district's 10 zones. The crew performs primarily preventive maintenance tasks.	47	24
Electrical	"Zone" concept is not used.	12	7
Electronics	Two technicians move from school to school according to a pre-set schedule and perform preventive maintenance tasks. Two technicians respond to emergencies. Two technicians work in the shop on complex jobs.	7	5
Environmental Safety	One specialist is responsible for all schools.	1	1
Grounds	Landscaping crew: teams of six or seven cover five district zones. Grounds crew: nine crew members responsible for all district's schools. Tree trimming crew: three people work throughout the entire district. Fence crew: three people cover the entire district.	48	35
Painting	"Zone" concept is not used.	16	9
IPM	"Zone" concept is not used.	3	2
Plumbing	"Zone" concept is not used.	20	12
Refrigeration	Three technicians service all AISD schools.	3	2
Structural	Four locksmiths and 22 carpenters service all AISD schools.	26	17

Source: AISD Service Center.

Recommendation 81:

Expand the "zone" concept for maintenance to include painting, plumbing and electrical crews.

Splitting each crew into several "zone" teams and one emergency team would increase the Service Center's productivity. As shown in the **Exhibit**

5-33, the district's painting, plumbing, and electrical crews are large enough to use the zone concept.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of the Service Center, director of Buildings and Grounds and the painting, plumbing and electrical foremen create an implementation plan for extending the zone concept to the painting, plumbing and electrical crews.	August - September 2000
2.	The director of the Service Center, director of Buildings and Grounds, and painting, plumbing and electrical foremen implement the plan.	September - October 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with the existing resources.

Chapter 5

D. CUSTODIAL SERVICES

District custodial services are intended to keep schools clean and safe, provide minor maintenance and monitor and report facility repair needs to the appropriate authorities. AISD custodians clean nearly 11.5 million square feet of space in district facilities. They are responsible for the cleaning and general maintenance of 102 campuses and 16 other facilities housing more than 77,000 students. The district employs 135 campus custodial supervisors and 485 custodians, who are assigned to campuses and special buildings throughout the district. Campus custodial supervisors and custodians report to their school principals. AISD also employs five housekeeping specialists who develop recommendations for improvements to custodial services, test custodial supplies, resolve emergencies related to housekeeping services and recruit new custodians. Housekeeping specialists report to the supervisor of Housekeeping Services, who oversees AISD's custodial services. In addition, the district employs 18 substitute custodian FTEs who also report to the supervisor of Housekeeping Services.

Exhibit 5-34 presents AISD's budgeted custodial expenditures for 1998-99 and 1999-2000 school years.

Exhibit 5-34
AISD Budgeted Custodial Expenditures
1998-99 and 1999-2000

	1998-99	1999-2000	Percent of Total (1999-2000)	Percent Change
Personnel/ Benefits	$13,535,933	$13,939,090	91.9%	3.0%
Contracted Services	266,600	322,600	2.1%	21.0%
Maintenance supplies	23,525	23,025	0.2%	-2.1%
Custodial supplies	395,570	414,469	2.7%	4.8%
Capital Outlay	15,305	15,305	0.1%	0.0%
Overtime	446,686	455,145	3.0%	1.9%
Total	**$14,683,619**	**$15,169,634**	**100.0%**	**3.3%**

Source: AISD Budget Office.

FINDING

A Spring 1999 *American School and University* study for U.S. Region 6, which includes Texas, suggests that custodial supply costs for school districts should fall between $8 and $10 per student annually. AISD's budgeted cost for custodial supplies per student for 1999-2000 is $5.40, significantly lower than the suggested range. This can be attributed to two factors. First, custodial supplies and equipment are bid for on an annual basis. Second, Housekeeping Services staff evaluate and test all items for efficiency and effectiveness. This allows the district to select high-quality, cost-effective custodial supplies and equipment.

COMMENDATION

AISD purchases high-quality custodial supplies at economical prices due to exemplary testing, evaluation and bidding practices.

FINDING

AISD uses staffing formulas to allocate custodians to the elementary schools and nighttime custodians to the secondary schools. However, the district does not have an allocation formula for daytime custodians in the secondary schools. **Exhibit 5-35** shows staffing formulas employed by the Service Center.

Exhibit 5-35
AISD Housekeeping Allocation Formulas

School Level	Allocation Formula
Elementary	One custodian per 17,500 sq. ft.
Secondary	Daytime: Middle and Jr. High - three custodians High - four custodians
Secondary	Nighttime: Total sq. ft. x 0.7/23,500 = number of nighttime custodians Portables: One sq. ft. = 1.26 sq. ft. main building

Source: AISD Service Center.

AISD has not standardized its custodial shifts and responsibilities. Although AISD housekeeping specialists make recommendations to improve the quality and efficiency of district custodial services, school principals, who manage custodians on campuses, are not obligated to

follow them. Principals determine custodial shifts, assignments and responsibilities for their schools. **Exhibit 5-36** shows AISD's housekeeping allocation calculations by school level.

Exhibit 5-36
Housekeeping Allocation Calculations by School Level
1998-99

	Square Footage (Main Bldg)	Number Of Portables	Portable Square Footage (Effective)	Total Square Footage	Number of Night Custodians	Number of Day Custodians	Total Custodians	Percent of Custodians Working During the Day	Square Footage per Custodian
High	2,884,319	44	85,156	2,969,475	89.0	42.5	131.5	32.3%	22,582
Middle/Jr. High	2,371,961	131	253,532	2,625,493	81.0	51.0	132.0	38.6%	19,890
Elementary	4,339,772	425	831,398	5,171,170	0	301.0	301.0	100.0%	17,180
Special Buildings	655,314	17	32,901	688,215	0	55.5	55.5	100.0%	12,400
Total	**10,251,366**	**617**	**1,202,987**	**11,454,353**	**170.0**	**450.0**	**620.0**	**72.6**	**18,475**

Source: AISD Service Center.
Note: effective portable space = actual portable space x 126 percent.

The housekeeping allocations by shift are recommendations provided by the department of Housekeeping Services to district schools. According to these recommendations, approximately 32 percent of high school custodians and 39 percent of middle school custodians should be working during the day shift. However, the actual distribution of custodians varies by school and changes frequently. Moreover, school opening and closing hours are determined by school principals. **Exhibit 5-37** shows that scheduled work hours vary significantly from one school to another.

Exhibit 5-37
Sample AISD School Work Hours

School Name	Level	Opening Time	Closing Time
Baranoff	Elementary	6:30 a.m.	8:00 p.m.
Mills	Elementary	6:30 a.m.	10:00 p.m.
Oak Hill	Elementary	7:00 a.m.	5:00 p.m.
Bailey	Middle	6:30 a.m.	9:00 p.m.
Fulmore	Middle	7:00 a.m.	7:00 p.m.

Anderson	High	6:00 a.m.	7:00 p.m.
Lanier	High	6:00 a.m.	9:30 p.m.

Source: AISD Service Center.

Lack of standardization in custodial shifts and responsibilities across the district may lead to ineffective usage of custodians and low-quality housekeeping. **Exhibit 5-38** compares AISD's percentage of custodians working at night and its number of custodial shifts with those in the peer districts.

Exhibit 5-38
Percentage of Custodians Working at Night and
the Number of Custodial Shifts
AISD versus Peer Districts
1998-99

District	Percent of Custodians Working at Night	Number of Custodial Shifts
Fort Worth	78%	3
Pasadena	76%	2
Northside (Bexar County)	68%	2
Alief	66%	3
Austin	**50%**	**2**
Corpus Christi	N/A	2
Peer Average	**72%**	**2.4**

Source: AISD Service Center and peer district survey.
Note: AISD's percentage of custodians on the night shift has been estimated, since this information was not available from the district.

According to the *28th Annual Maintenance and Operations Cost Study* published by the American School & University in 1999, the average interior building area maintained by a full-time custodian in K-12 schools in the U.S. was 21,141 square feet. As shown in **Exhibit 5-36** an AISD custodian cleans on average 18,475 square feet, significantly below the national average.

Recommendation 82:

Standardize custodial shifts and responsibilities across the district, and develop a strategy that brings AISD's custodial staffing levels in line with the suggested industry average.

The district should delegate the responsibility for managing AISD housekeeping services to the direction of Housekeeping Services. By implementing a staffing allocation formula based on a conservative 19,000 industry square foot standard, AISD could reduce staffing by 17 of its 620 total custodial positions. Standardization of custodial shifts and responsibilities in the district will ensure that the majority of custodians work on the night shift. This should result in more efficient housekeeping operations and cost savings.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Construction Management, director of the Service Center and director of Housekeeping Services design and document a plan to delegate the responsibility for managing AISD housekeeping services to the director of Housekeeping and to standardize custodial shifts and responsibilities across the district.	August - October 2000
2.	The director of Construction Management, director of the Service Center and director of Housekeeping implement the plan.	October - December 2000
3.	The director of Housekeeping recalculates the staffing levels at each school using a 19,000 square feet standard per custodian.	October 2000
4.	The director of Housekeeping provides AISD Budget Department and school principals with the revised formula.	October 2000
5.	The director of Housekeeping implements the new staffing allocation model and freezes custodian hirings until the desired staffing level is achieved.	October 2000 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could result in a reduction of 17 custodial positions (11,454,353 total square feet ÷ 19,000 square foot standard = 603 custodians - 620 total AISD custodians = 17. This fiscal impact that 17 custodial positions would be eliminated at an average salary for an AISD custodian at $17,205 plus benefits of $4,483, totaling $21,688.

The reduction in the number of custodial employees could be achieved partly through attrition and the elimination of poorly performing employees. Assuming that AISD can eliminate 17 custodial positions annually beginning in 2000-01, the district will save $368,696.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Standardize custodial shifts and responsibilities across the district, and develop a strategy that brings AISD's custodial staffing levels in line with the suggested industry average.	$368,696	$368,696	$368,696	$368,696	$368,696

Chapter 5

E. ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Energy management should ensure the cost-effective distribution of the district's utilities. Energy audits and other sources of data are essential to controlling energy costs. While the primary purpose of an energy management program is to minimize waste, the program also should ensure comfort in occupied spaces and encourage energy awareness across the district.

FINDING

By controlling energy costs on the three fronts-business, technology, and procedures-AISD has developed a successful energy management program.

Business: AISD has pursued fair rates for utility services. The district's bill for natural gas has decreased from $1,016,580 in 1983-84 to $427,637 in 1997-98, even though the amount of natural gas used by the district has not changed. In addition, AISD has pursued utility rebates through the City of Austin Commercial rebate program, and is recovering heating gas meter fees of approximately $25,000 per year.

Technology: AISD is staying abreast of developing technologies and applying them in a timely manner. For example, ground loop heat pumps have replaced old central systems in some schools. In addition, AISD is beginning to use a new energy management system, the Building Energy Management System (BEMS) to centrally control energy use in its schools. By the end of the 1996 bond program, the district will have 65 schools controlled through the BEMS.

Procedures: AISD has supported the effort to recommission existing HVAC systems in its schools. This effort results in better uses of HVAC systems and energy savings. Moreover, AISD conducts an annual Water/Wastewater Averaging program, which involves informing all principals and directors of their past year's consumption and advising them on how they can reduce it.

An essential performance indicator for energy use is the annual cost of energy per gross square foot of facility space. According to industry guidelines for efficient energy use at a school district, energy costs per gross square foot should range from 70 to 85 cents in an energy-efficient facility. AISD's total budgeted expenditures for utilities for 1998-99 and

1999-00 were $8,634,941 and $9,457,171 respectively. This yielded a 1998-99 cost per square foot of 76 cents, within the industry standard.

Although AISD's average energy costs per gross square foot have risen over the last five years, they have remained well within the range of suggested energy guidelines **(Exhibit 5-39)**.

Exhibit 5-39
Summary of AISD's Average Annual Energy Costs Per Square Foot
1994-95 through 1998-99

1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
$0.71	$0.72	$0.76	$0.74	$0.76

Source: AISD.

COMMENDATION

Through pursuit of fair rates for utility services, the application of new technologies, and effective energy use policies and procedures, AISD has successfully controlled its energy costs, which have remained within the suggested industry guidelines for five consecutive years.

Chapter 5

F. YELLOW PAGES TEST OF MAINTENANCE AND CUSTODIAL SERVICES

Comptroller Rylander believes that all goods and services provided by school districts should be put to the "Yellow Pages" test. That is, government should do no job if there is a business in the Yellow Pages that can do that job better and at a lower cost. School districts throughout the country are considering outsourcing their noneducational support services. *American School & University's* sixth annual privatization/contract services survey (September 1999) showed that services being privatized by school districts include grounds maintenance, custodial services, heating, ventilation and air conditioning services, and other plant maintenance functions. In the 1999 survey, 28 percent of U.S. schools outsourced their HVAC maintenance function and 23 percent outsourced office equipment repair.

American School & University reported that school districts turn to privatization for a variety of reasons, but primarily to save money and improve their operations (**Exhibit 5-40**).

Exhibit 5-40
Top Five Reasons School Districts Turn to Privatized Services
1999

	Reasons
1.	Save money
2.	Improve operations
3.	Save management time
4.	They could do a better job
5.	Provide greater accountability

Source: American School & University.

Exhibit 5-41 lists the top five reasons school districts do not use privatized services.

Exhibit 5-41
Top Five Reasons Why School District Do Not Use Privatized Services
1999

	Reasons
1.	Would threaten job of loyal employees
2.	"If they can make a profit, we ought to be able to do it for less."
3.	Too expensive
4.	Union contracts make it too difficult
5.	Not necessary; we can do the job as well

Source: American School & University.

Various factors including a school district's size and in-house capabilities must be carefully weighed before services are outsourced to independent contractors.

FINDING

According to a study published by the Association of School Business Officials (ASBO), school administrators must find viable solutions to a number of troublesome operational issues such as:

- Growing volume of deferred maintenance that will require large capital investments in schools;
- Increasing regulatory compliance burden;
- Rising costs of new construction and renovation projects;
- Increasing energy costs; and
- Escalating labor and supply costs.

School administrators have three choices in overcoming these operational barriers:

- Operate facilities in the traditional manner;
- Employ a contract management service provider (CMSP); or
- Combine a traditional approach with a mixture of assistance from consultants and contractors.

Exhibit 5-42 shows which services and results can be provided by a qualified CMSP.

Exhibit 5-42
Services Provided by a Qualified CMSP and Expected Results

Issue	Services	Expected Results
Deferred maintenance	A professional manager trained to properly use the computerized maintenance management system; A software package customized to the education market; A national database of standards for all equipment that defines what must be done and how long it should take; A broad base of technical expertise that is electronically accessible; and A program that is result-oriented.	Extended equipment life; Reduced disruption to the operations of the schools; Minimized liability to the school; and Controlled operation costs for the school in the areas of labor, utilities, purchased services and supplies.
Management of the regulatory burden	Resources to identify changes in the regulatory environment, and inform the district about the changes and their impact in a timely and proactive manner.	Timely compliance with regulatory requirements.
Facing new high-tech school equipment	On-site management and maintenance services; Vendor service agreements; Time-and-materials contracts; and Maintenance insurance.	Reduced number of equipment replacements; Reduced use of outside repair services; and Single point of accountability.
Rising costs of energy	Capital funding for large energy retrofit programs that are guaranteed to save enough energy to pay back the cost of capital, return money to the schools in terms of energy savings, and provide a reasonable payback on investment; Expertise in utilizing power company rate structures; A well-trained, skilled	Reduced energy costs.

| | support organization that can provide additional research services; and Computerized statistical models for predicting and managing energy consumption. | |

Source: Association of School Business Officials.

Exhibit 5-43 compares some of AISD's maintenance cost indicators to regional benchmarks.

Exhibit 5-43
Summary of AISD and Regional Maintenance Costs

Category	Average for U.S. Region 6	AISD	Percent Difference
Total maintenance payroll and contract labor costs per student	$88.67	$117.25	32%
Total Maintenance and Operations (M&O) costs per student	$495.25	$519.00	5%
Total maintenance payroll and contract labor costs per square foot	$0.58	$0.79	36%

Source: American School & University 28th Annual M&O Study and AISD Budgets.
Total M&O costs include custodial, maintenance and groundskeeping payroll costs, cost of supplies, cost of contracted services, capital outlay and other costs.

As can be seen from **Exhibit 5-43** AISD's maintenance costs are significantly higher than those of other districts in U.S. Region 6, which includes Texas.

In addition, AISD's custodial costs are higher than those of other districts in U.S. Region 6.

Exhibit 5-44 shows that AISD custodial payroll costs per square foot are 34 percent higher than those in other districts in the region, and AISD custodial payroll costs per student exceed the regional average by 17 percent. Moreover, on average, an AISD custodian cleans 13 percent fewer square feet than other custodians in the region.

Exhibit 5-44
Summary of AISD and Regional Custodial Costs

	Average for Region 6	AISD	Percent Difference
Custodial payroll costs per student ($)	$153.65	$179.93	17%
Custodial payroll costs per square foot ($)	$0.90	$1.21	34%
Square feet per custodial	21,141	18,475	-13%

Source: American School & University 28th Annual M&O Study and AISD Budgets.

Recommendation 83:

Consider outsourcing all or part of AISD's maintenance and custodial functions to reduce cost or improve the quality of services.

A qualified contract management service provider could help reduce AISD's maintenance and custodial costs, resulting in substantial savings for the district. However, all pros and cons of outsourcing should be carefully evaluated to determine the most optimal solution for AISD.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of the Service Center conducts an independent cost and service-level analysis of the current maintenance and custodial services.	August - October 2000
2.	The director of the Service Center obtains approval from the superintendent to issue RFPs for outsourcing maintenance and custodial services.	August 2000
3.	The director of the Service Center presents an analysis of the proposals submitted by maintenance and custodial services vendors along with an employee transition plan to the superintendent and the board.	January 2001
4.	The board evaluates the outsourced maintenance and/or custodial services alternative and employee transition plan.	January 2001
5.	If the outsourced maintenance and/or custodial services alternative and employees transition plan is feasible, the board selects a vendor and begins outsourcing maintenance services.	February - April 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

Evaluating the benefits and costs for outsourcing all or part of the district's custodial or maintenance functions can be accomplished with district resources. If the district is able to achieve regional average costs for their services, the district could save as much as $6 million annually. However, actual savings will depend on the level of district implementation.

Chapter 6
ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

This chapter of the report addresses the asset and risk management function of the Austin Independent School District (AISD) in four sections:

A. Cash and Investment Management
B. Insurance Programs
C. Fixed Assets
D. Bond Issuance and Indebtedness

Texas school districts have a fiduciary responsibility to protect publicly financed assets provided to educate children. Cash, employees, land, buildings, equipment, and borrowing capacity all are a school district's assets. The goal of asset and risk management is to protect these assets from financial losses resulting from unforeseen events.

Effective asset and risk management involves:

- investing idle cash to achieve optimum rates of return after board policy, principal preservation, and liquidity considerations are met;
- providing affordable health and workers' compensation insurance to employees;
- safeguarding property from loss through damage, theft, and unexpected events; and
- managing debt through timely principal and interest payments while seizing opportunities to reduce interest costs.

Chapter 6

A. CASH AND INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

For a school district to achieve its instructional goals and objectives, cash and investments must be managed daily. Effective cash and investment management require establishing and maintaining beneficial banking relationships; forecasting cash requirements timely and accurately so funds are available when needed; and maximizing returns on assets deposited in appropriate, approved, and safe investments.

AISD's investment policy designates the treasurer, senior financial administrator, deputy superintendent for finance/chief financial officer, comptroller and assistant comptroller as investment officers responsible for investing district funds.

On November 22, 1999, the Board of Trustees confirmed a permanent appointment to the deputy superintendent for Finance position and renamed it the deputy superintendent for Finance/Chief Financial Officer (CFO). The individual hired began work in January 2000.

AISD's treasurer has day-to-day responsibility for managing the district's cash and investments and reports to the CFO. The treasurer, a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), has been employed with the district since 1994 and became its treasurer in July 1999. The treasurer has been a CPA for two years.

Two staff positions help the treasurer perform cash and investment activities. A summary of Treasury Department responsibilities is provided below:

- invests district funds on a short and medium-term basis;
- moves funds among accounts when necessary to satisfy daily cash requirements;
- monitors collateral to ensure district funds are not at risk;
- communicates with Texas Education Agency (TEA) about changes in collateral;
- processes stop payments, wire transfers, and debt service payments;
- maintains investment ledgers and spreadsheets;
- prepares monthly investment reports;
- posts cash and investment transactions to the general ledger;
- maintains confirmations of security transactions;
- monitors tax collections and verifies deposits; and
- facilitates reconciliation of bank accounts.

The district maintains 12 checking accounts for normal operations and 113 campus and student activity fund checking and investment accounts. Campus and student activity fund investment accounts consist of savings accounts and certificates of deposit. Campus and student activity funds support campus-based activities such as booster clubs and student government and are maintained at the campus level. On August 31, 1999, the district had $4.2 million in campus and student activity funds consisting of $2.6 million in regular checking accounts and $1.6 million in investment accounts.

The district recently extended its depository agreement with Bank of America for an additional two-year term from September 1999 through August 2001. Under the agreement, the bank holds district funds under a compensating balance arrangement in which the district maintains sufficient balances to compensate the bank for account maintenance, items processing, and various other banking services.

The bank applies an earnings credit rate to available cash balances each month to compute the district's earnings credit. Accounts are analyzed and settled monthly. If earnings on the balances exceed the bank's monthly service charges, no service charge is due. If earnings are less than service charges, the deficiency is charged to the operating account each month. During fiscal 1999, the earnings credit was $51,402 and bank service fees were $90,133.

The accounts payable and payroll accounts are controlled disbursement accounts (CDAs). Controlled disbursement is a feature designed to provide disbursement totals early enough each day to satisfy cash needs in CDA accounts. Each business day the treasurer receives an online bank report showing the checks presented for payment that day. The treasurer then transfers funds into the accounts sufficient to honor the checks and bring the account balance to zero.

Exhibit 6-1 summarizes funds held in checking accounts as of August 31, 1999 and describes each account's purpose.

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Exhibit 6-1
AISD Bank Balances
As of August 31, 1999

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Account Name	Balance at August 31, 1999	Purpose of Account
Operating	$988,558	Fund general operations of the district. Funds from this account are transferred to the

		payroll and accounts payable accounts when necessary.
Food Service	$166,742	Campus food service receipts and disbursements flow through this accounts.
Food Service Concessions	$9,391	Food service concession receipts are deposited into this account.
Debt Service	$0	Debt service payments are made from this account.
Construction	$184	Bond proceeds and investments in this account pay construction costs.
Self Insurance	$113,928	District contributions to this account pay claims and operating expenses arising from the district's self-insured workers' compensation program.
Scholarships and Special Projects	$44,054	Donated scholarship funds as well as funds from campus and districtwide projects flow through this account.
Athletics	$8,990	Activity fund pays referees at campus athletic events.
APS Change Fund	$14,943	Change funds for cashiers collecting funds at athletic events.
Community Ed	$34,358	Activity fund for the Community Education Department.
Accounts Payable-CDA	$0	Used to clear general district obligations.
Payroll-CDA	$0	Used to clear district payroll.
Total	**$1,381,148**	

Source: AISD Treasurer's Office.

The district uses a variety of investment vehicles to achieve its investment goals of safety, liquidity, and maturity sufficient to meet anticipated cash requirements. The district's investment policy is consistent with the Public Funds Investment Act and has as its primary objectives to:

- ensure the safety of principal and the preservation of capital in the overall portfolio;
- maintain sufficient liquidity to meet all operating requirements, which might be reasonably anticipated;

- attain a reasonable market rate of return commensurate with investment constraints and the cash flow characteristics of the portfolio; and
- ensure the quality and capability of investment officers through ongoing training.

The district's investment policy also requires the district's external auditors, in conjunction with the annual audit, to conduct an audit of management controls over investments as well as the district's adherence to the act's other provisions.

As of August 31, 1999, the district had funds totaling approximately $343 million in various investments. In addition to specifying the types of investments the district may use, the policy also establishes the district's primary investment strategies, which are designed to address the unique characteristics of the fund groups represented in the portfolio. The types of funds and primary investment strategies are:

Operating Funds (includes general, scholarship, special project, and special revenue funds) - to ensure anticipated cash flows are matched with adequate investment liquidity.

Debt Service Funds - to ensure investment liquidity adequate to cover debt service obligations on the required payment date.

Capital Projects Funds - to generate a dependable revenue stream from securities with a low degree of volatility and still meet the liquidity requirements of capital projects.

Exhibit 6-2 summarizes the district's portfolio as of August 31, 1999, presents the portion of each investment represented in the above funds, and provides a brief description of each type of investment.

Exhibit 6-2
Investment Portfolio as of August 31, 1999

| Type of Investment | Book Value at August 31, 1999 | Percentage Represented in Each Major Fund* | | | Description of Investment |
		Operating Funds	Debt Service Funds	Capital Projects Funds	
LOGIC Investment Pool	$18,009,086	36%	0%	64%	Public investment funds that provide government entities an

					opportunity to pool idle cash with other government entities to achieve liquidity and safety of principal. Participating entities own a pro rata share of the underlying assets of the fund in which they participate.
Lonestar Investment Pool	$4,036,922	100%	0%	0%	See Above
TexPool Investment Pool	$462,369	100%	0%	0%	See Above
Fidelity Institutional Money Fund	$48,661,426	66%	0%	34%	A fund that trades in short-term securities such as bills of exchange, promissory notes, and government securities such as treasury bills.
U.S. Government Agencies	$203,447,000	30%	1%	69%	Obligations issued by U.S. government agencies such as the Federal National Mortgage Association also known as "Fannie Mae."
Flexible Repurchase Agreements	$1,173,987	0%	0%	100%	Agreement between two parties in which one sells the other a security at a specified price with a

					commitment to repurchase it at a later date for another specified price. Most "repos" are overnight transactions.
Commercial Paper	$67,512,000	74%	22%	4%	An unsecured promissory note issued by a corporation with a fixed maturity of no more than 270 days.
Total	**$343,302,790**	**45%**	**5%**	**50%**	

Source: August 1999 Investment Report.

FINDING

The district is not maximizing the return on its short-term investments. Instead of investing a larger proportion of funds in the pool with the highest return, the district is spreading its investments among short-term vehicles with different rates of return. As a result, its overall return is reduced. For example, TexPool outperformed LOGIC, Lonestar, and the Fidelity Institutional Money Fund during fiscal 1997 through fiscal 1999. During these years, TexPool's yield was higher than these funds 31 out of 36 months. Over the three-year period, its overall annual yield was seven basis points-one basis point is equal to .01 percent-higher than the next highest fund. Also, during fiscal 1999, TexPool earned an average yield of 5.01 percent, while Lonestar, the next highest fund, earned 4.94 percent, a difference of .07 percent or seven basis points. Yet during fiscal 1997 through 1999, only about 2 percent of the district's short-term funds were invested in TexPool.

Exhibit 6-3 presents the average annual yield on each of the investment pools during fiscal 1997 through fiscal 1999. During fiscal 1999, the district earned $23.3 million in interest.

Exhibit 6-3
Average Annual Short-term Investment Yields
Fiscal Years 1997 through 1999
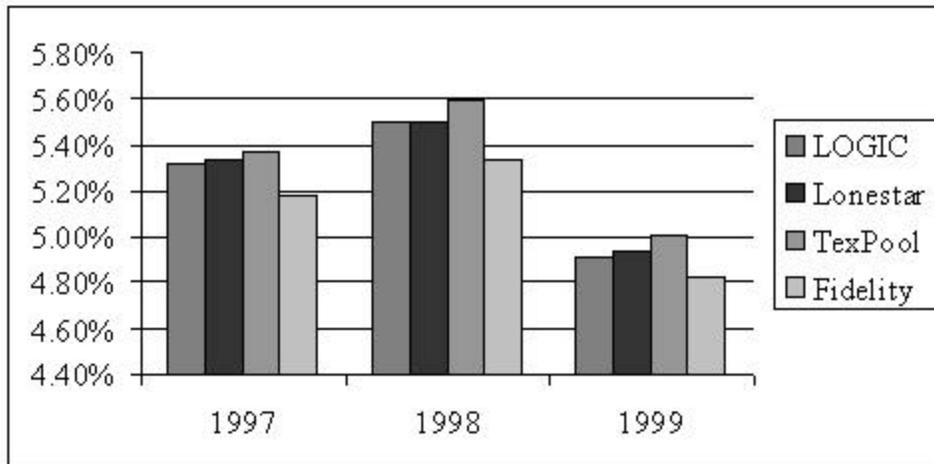
Source: 1997-99 Investment Report.

Exhibits 6-4, **6-5**, and **6-6** show the average proportion of funds invested in TexPool in comparison to other pools and the Fidelity Institutional Money Fund during fiscal 1997 through fiscal 1999.

Exhibit 6-4
Proportion of Funds Invested–Fiscal 1999
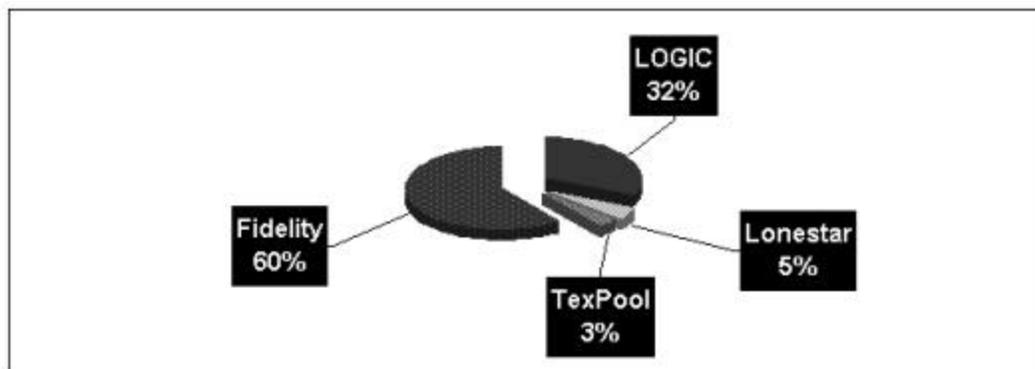
Source: 1999 Investment Reports.

Exhibit 6-5
Proportion of Funds Invested–Fiscal 1998
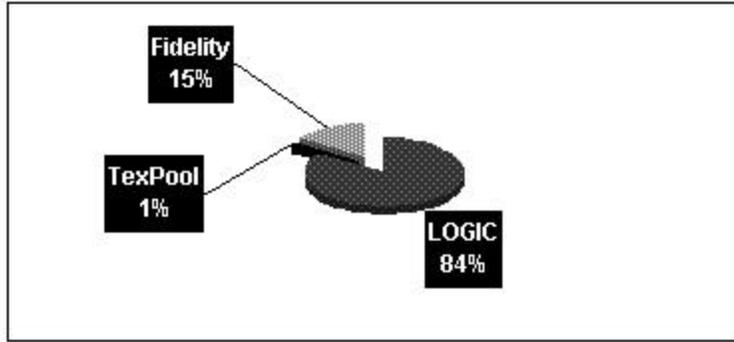
Source: 1998 Investment Reports.

Exhibit 6-6
Average Proportion of Funds Invested–Fiscal 1997
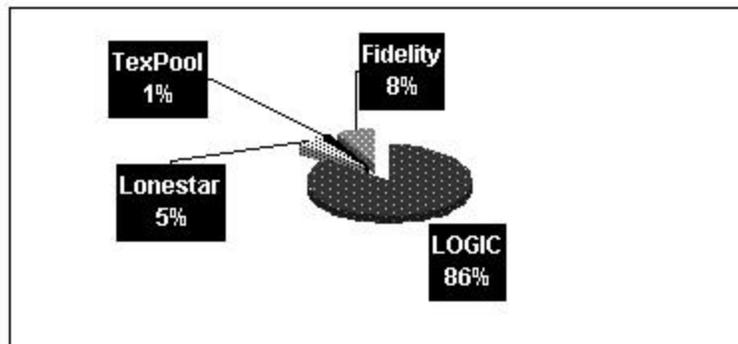
Source: 1997 Investment Reports.

As shown in **Exhibits 6-4 through 6-6**, over the past three years, the district has placed a relatively small proportion of its short-term funds in the fund with the highest yield. During fiscal 1999, the average amount invested in the investment pools and the Fidelity Institutional Money Fund was $132,106,769, based on month-end balances. Sixty percent of this amount was invested in the Fidelity money market fund. This fund is available through the district's depository, Bank of America, and is used more frequently because it provides the greatest daily liquidity and convenience. For example, funds may be moved out of the Fidelity fund into a checking account as late as 3 p.m. each day. However, the treasurer must move funds out of the pools by 10 a.m. for them to be credited to a checking account the same day. The treasurer must have this flexibility to move funds quickly and easily to meet the district's cash flow needs.

The proportion of funds in Fidelity, however, could be reduced without sacrificing liquidity. For example, general operating funds require the greatest liquidity. During fiscal 1999, the average amount of general operating funds invested in Fidelity to satisfy short-term liquidity needs was $25,465,986. Other Fidelity funds, such as the self-insurance and construction accounts, are more predictable and not required to be as

liquid. Consequently, with improved cash planning, a greater proportion of these funds could be placed in a higher-yielding fund such as TexPool.

Recommendation 84:

Maximize short-term investments by regularly moving funds to the account that earns the higher yield.

Although each of the district's investment pools accomplishes the primary objective of matching anticipated cash flows with adequate liquidity, the district should seek to safely maximize its investment return. This objective should be accomplished by investing the greatest proportion of funds in the investment vehicle that consistently yields the highest return.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The CFO instructs the treasurer to analyze historical rates of return on short-term investment pools and funds.	June 2000
2.	The CFO and treasurer review the analysis to determine which investments tend to yield the highest return consistently over time.	June 2000
3.	The CFO instructs the treasurer to alter the mix of investments in short-term pools and funds so a greater proportion of available funds is placed in those funds that yield the highest return consistently over time.	September 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

If the district had kept 80 percent of short-term funds in the pool with the highest yield consistently over time during fiscal 1999, an additional $56,562 could have been earned as shown below:

Average pool & Fidelity Funds invested - 1999	$132,106,769
Average Fidelity operating funds required (Fiscal 1999 average)	($25,465,986)
Available for pools	$106,640,783
Proportion in pool with highest yield	80%
	$85,312,626
Less: 1999 amount already invested in the higher earning pool	$4,510,152
Available for higher earning investment	$80,802,474

Fiscal 1999 rate differential (difference between the two highest rates)	.07%
Additional interest earnings per year	$56,562

Assuming the district continued to keep a higher proportion of short-term funds in higher yielding pools, the fiscal impact would be $56,562 per year based on the above analysis.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Maximize short-term investments by regularly moving funds to the account that earns the higher yield.	$56,562	$56,562	$56,562	$56,562	$56,562

FINDING

Although the district prepares an annual projection of monthly receipts and disbursements, it does not break the projection down by revenue source and account. As a result, the projection is not as useful as it would be if it were more detailed. The treasurer monitors cash on a daily basis using various detailed and summary banking reports; however, the district would receive more benefits from its cash projections if it used historical data to build them and forecasted balances for each major bank account. Historical data includes deposits, disbursements, ledger balances, collected balances, and float.

Cash flow forecasts are useful planning tools businesses use to predict future cash requirements. Accurate cash flow projections are critical to effective cash management because shortfalls in cash needs can be readily identified and addressed before the actual need arises. In addition, cash forecasts allow school districts to maximize the time idle funds are invested in interest-bearing accounts.

The El Paso Independent School District (EPISD) uses an exemplary cash forecasting model that is broken down by account and prepared on a daily, weekly, monthly, and annual basis using a computer-based program known as MicroLink. MicroLink is available through EPISD's bank and allows the district to view and download current and historical details of cash transactions including deposits, disbursements, ledger balances, collected balances, and float. The program enables the district to download data directly into a spreadsheet to use for forecasting, projecting, and trend analysis.

AISD's bank has a personal computer access system that provides daily balance reporting and transaction detail history. The district can load this information into any popular spreadsheet program and use it to construct a cash flow forecasting model.

Recommendation 85:

Develop weekly, monthly, and annual cash flow forecasts by account using computer-based information resources provided by the depository.

AISD should use receipt, disbursement, and float information available through its depository to develop a cash flow projection model for each major bank account. Historical checking account information is available and can be accessed using computer software that the bank provides. This information would enable the district to establish historical patterns of the amount and timing of cash receipts and disbursements. The district could use this information to make future projections of cash flow requirements based on present conditions.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The CFO instructs the treasurer to develop a cash flow forecasting model.	May 2000
2.	The treasurer contacts EPISD's treasurer to discuss the benefits and format of the EPISD cash flow forecasting model.	May 2000
3.	The treasurer adapts EPISD's cash flow forecasting model to suit the district's needs**.**	June 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

The costs related to cash balance and transaction detail services are included in the district's compensating balance agreement with the bank. The fiscal impact of the recommendation would depend on the monthly earnings credit on district compensating balances as well as how frequently the district uses the service.

FINDING

The district is not earning the maximum yield on idle cash in the operating and construction checking accounts. Typically, a school district's earnings would be slightly higher if it used zero-balance sweep accounts (ZBAs) rather than compensating balances for these accounts. ZBA accounts sweep all unused cash balances into overnight investments to maximize interest earnings. The compensating balance agreement requires the

district to maintain compensating balances in its checking accounts to compensate the bank for account maintenance, daily balance reporting, items processing, and various other banking services.

The district does not use ZBA accounts although the bank offers this service. Instead, the district earns interest on compensating balances maintained with the depository. The yield on overnight investments is generally better than the earnings credit the district receives on compensating balances.

The operating and construction accounts are the only accounts that would benefit from the ZBA feature because the bank charges a fee for the service. According to the district's Bank of America account representative, additional sweep earnings would be partially offset by sweep service charges of $100 per month for the first account and $50 per month for additional accounts. Consequently, it would not be profitable to sweep other accounts because their average collected balances are not large enough to offset the service fee.

Exhibit 6-7 shows the district could have earned an additional $3,095, before service fees, if it had used the sweep feature for its operating and construction accounts from November 1998 through October 1999.

Exhibit 6-7
Yield on ZBA Overnight Investments vs Earnings Credit Rate (ECR)
November 1998 through October 1999

Account	Actual ECR Earnings	*Computed ZBA Earnings	Additional ZBA Earnings	**ECR Effective Rate	Average ZBA Rate
Operating	$20,233	$22,359	$2,126	4.01%	4.43%
Construction	$12,688	$13,657	$969	4.02%	4.33%
Total	**$32,921**	**$36,016**	**$3,095**		

Source: AISD Treasury Office and Bank of America Commercial Banking Department account analysis statements.
*Computed based on overnight rates obtained from Bank of America.
**For comparison purposes, the ECR effective rate is applied to the collected balances, while in practice, the ECR effective rate is applied to the credit balances.
Collected balance: the amount that is swept nightly into an interest-bearing account.
Credit balance: the collected balance less the deposit reserves.

Recommendation 86:

Use the bank's ZBA feature to automatically sweep operating and construction fund balances into overnight investment accounts.

The district should use the bank's ZBA feature to maximize its return on the operating and construction fund accounts. The district could earn additional funds using the ZBA feature without sacrificing safety or liquidity. In addition, because the ZBA feature automatically sweeps cash balances into investment accounts every night, there is less chance of human error.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The CFO instructs the treasurer to contact the depository about ZBA services for the district.	August 2000
2.	The treasurer consults with the district's account representative about the advantages of using the ZBA feature for the operating and construction fund accounts.	August 2000
3.	The treasurer assesses the feasibility of using the ZBA feature based on the current average positive collected balances in the operating and construction accounts.	August 2000
4.	The depository starts providing ZBA services to the district.	September 2000
5.	The treasurer monitors earnings on swept accounts to ensure the ZBA feature benefits the district.	September 2000 and ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

Additional sweep earnings would be partially offset by sweep service charges of $100 per month for the first account and $50 per month for additional accounts. The fiscal impact after these charges would be $1,295 per year computed as follows:

Additional Earnings - Operating Fund	$2,126
Additional Earnings - Construction Fund	$969
Total Additional Earnings	$3,095
Less: Annual Sweep Fees ($1,200 operating fund plus $600 construction fund)	($1,800)
Net Additional Earnings	$1,295

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Use the bank's ZBA feature to automatically sweep operating and construction fund balances into overnight investment accounts.	$1,295	$1,295	$1,295	$1,295	$1,295

FINDING

The district's monthly investment report is not as informative as it could be about the district's investment portfolio and performance. The report contains all information required by the Public Funds Investment Act and the district's investment policy; however, it is long and detailed. For example, the August 1999 investment report is 38 pages long. Yet, after reading it, the reader still does not know the district's current month and year-to-date yield on the overall portfolio. The report shows daily transaction activity for 31 accounts across four types of investment funds. Moreover, with the exception of performance on long-term investments, the report does not compare investment performance with other investment benchmarks such as the 30 and 90-day T-bill.

Current and past board members said that district financial and budget reports do not always include executive summaries and are not clearly written and presented. Some complained that the board meeting packets, which include written reports and background information, were overwhelming. One board member, who is a certified public accountant, said that the district's financial and budget reports were difficult to grasp.

One schedule in the report, the Statement of Position, is a good summary of account balances by fund. There is also a helpful glossary of investment terms in the back of the report. In addition, there are two charts. One depicts the portfolio's diversification; the other presents the weighted average maturity by fund. More charts and summary tables, however, would greatly improve the report's value for conveying important information.

The Forth Worth ISD's investment report contains many elements of a well-designed investment report and does an excellent job of communicating investment information. Key investment information can be seen at a glance, prior-period comparisons are apparent, and investment performance is compared to benchmarks.

An investment report is most effective when readers can see, at a glance, information shown in**Exhibit 6-8**.

Exhibit 6-8
Attributes of a Best Practice Investment Report
Compared to AISD's Report

Best Practice	AISD's Report
Types of investments by major category.	Government securities are not summarized by type. For example, investments in Federal National Mortgage Association (FNMA), Federal Farm Credit Bank (FFCB), and Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation (FHLMC) agencies are not summarized separately.
Investment yield by major category and total for the current period and year-to-date.	Yields for the pools are shown. A rough average of yields on other securities is included, but it is not a weighted average and does not consider the entire portfolio.
Comparisons of investment performance, asset mix, and market value to other benchmarks, investment goals, and prior periods.	The yield on government securities is compared to the T-bill rate. No comparisons are provided of investment performance, asset mix, and market value to other benchmarks, investment goals, or prior periods.
Diversification in the portfolio, best depicted by a pie chart.	Included. However, the government securities section could be shown in more detail, perhaps in another chart.
Review of investment strategies and guidelines.	Not included.
Weighted average maturity by fund and for the total portfolio.	Included and shown graphically by fund but not for the entire portfolio.

Source: Adapted from Laredo ISD and Fort Worth ISD Investment Reports.

Recommendation 87:

Redesign the monthly investment report to eliminate detailed daily transaction schedules, while incorporating more summaries, charts, overviews, narratives, and analyses.

The district should remove the detailed daily transaction schedules from its investment report. This information is important and should be

maintained by the Treasurer's Office, but it does not add value to the investment report. The district should include information that helps the reader quickly understand how well the district is meeting its investment objectives. Such information might include the following:

- a descriptive narrative at the front of the report;
- a description of the district's investment objectives for each fund;
- a description of the investment strategy for each fund;
- yield on the total portfolio;
- yield by fund and major category of investment;
- comparison of yield to other benchmarks, prior periods, or predefined investment goals;
- summaries of purchases, sales, book value, market value, accrued interest, and weighted average maturity by fund and type of investment, and;
- additional charts to convey pertinent information at a glance.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The CFO instructs the treasurer to design a more user friendly, informative investment report.	June 2000
2.	The CFO reviews and approves the new investment report format ensuring it complies with the Public Funds Investment Act.	July 2000
3.	The CFO presents a draft of the new report to the superintendent for approval.	July 2000
4.	The superintendent approves the draft and instructs the CFO to use the format at the next board meeting.	August 2000
5.	The treasurer prepares and distributes investment reports based on the new format.	September 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district's process of recording, monitoring, and accounting for investment transactions is manually intensive, cumbersome, and inefficient. As a result, the district cannot readily obtain information that would add value to its investment management activities. For example, the district does not know the annual yield on its total portfolio. This information is useful as a performance measure to assess the performance of the treasurer and other investment officers. Although information is

available to develop any type of analysis the district needs, it is not readily accessible because it is kept manually or on electronic spreadsheets not well suited for in-depth investment analysis.

To illustrate, when the district purchases a security, it computes and tracks the cost as well as any accrued interest that has accumulated since the most recent interest payment. The investment and its related elements such as premium, discount, and accrued interest must be computed, tracked and accounted for properly to accurately reflect the investment on the general ledger. The district uses manual investment ledgers to track this information. These ledgers are maintained in large three ring binders along with related supporting documents such as trade tickets and confirmation summaries. Treasury Office staff transcribe this information from the binders to electronic spreadsheets to prepare the monthly investment report and journal vouchers.

At each stage of this manual process, there are ample opportunities for clerical errors. More importantly, large volumes of useful information are accumulated and compiled, but the information cannot be manipulated quickly and efficiently enough to provide maximum informative value to district management.

The district recently purchased portfolio management software designed for public institutional investors, which provides an automated solution to manual portfolio accounting. Although, the Treasury Office has entered security transactions into the system, investment pool transactions have not been entered and the software's features are not being used. Features of the software include:

- Windows-compatible on a stand-alone PC or on a network,
- accounts for any fixed income, money market, or equity security,
- generates standard and custom reports on any aspect of the portfolio,
- values portfolios at market automatically,
- maintains and monitors legal, policy, and accounting compliance,
- provides online access to pricing services, bankers, brokers, or other governmental organizations, and
- exports data to other programs or the general ledger.

Recommendation 88:

Transfer securities and investments records to the portfolio management software and immediately begin using the system's full capabilities to manage the district's investment portfolio.

The district should immediately stop using manual procedures to manage its portfolio and begin using the full capabilities of the portfolio management software, which will streamline accounting and investment portfolio management.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The treasurer assesses the additional work required to place all of the district's investment on the portfolio management software.	May 2000
2.	The treasurer trains the assistant treasurer how to use the portfolio management software.	May 2000
3.	The treasurer instructs the assistant treasurer to enter initial details of all district investments into the portfolio management software and learn to use all of its features.	June-August 2000
4.	The treasurer begins using the portfolio management software to manage the district's investments and produce investment information.	September 2000 and ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 6

B. INSURANCE PROGRAMS (PART 1)

AISD's insurance programs consist of property and casualty insurance, group health care and employee benefit plans and workers' compensation insurance.

Property and Casualty Insurance

The risk manager is responsible for obtaining and maintaining the district's property and casualty insurance coverage. Property and casualty insurance includes coverage for facilities, vehicles, equipment, personal injury, and professional and general liability. **Exhibit 6-9** provides a detail of property and casualty policies in force.

Exhibit 6-9
AISD Property Casualty Coverage

Company	Agency	Type Coverage	Policy Limits	Deductible Amount	Policy Period	Premium Costs
Hartford Insurance Co.	Tri-Arc	Building & contents	$730,277,960	$25,000/$50,000 $5,000/theft	3-01-99 to 3-01-2000	$237,372
Security of Hartford	Gammon Agency	GAATN fiber optic cable network	$12,580,526	$50,000/annual aggregate	9-01-99 to 9-01-2000	$75,483
Hartford Insurance Co.	Tri-Arc	Telecommunication equipment	$7,502,732	$5,000	7-01-99 to 7-01-2000	$9,754
Royal Insurance Co.	Gammon Agency	Portable classrooms	$27,884,813	$1,000	9-01-99 to 9-01-2000	$55,770
Royal Insurance Co.	Gammon Agency	AISD video equipment van	$304,081	$1,000	1-25-99 to 9-01-2000	$3,330
CGU Insurance Co.	Tri-Arc	Boiler & machinery & mechanical breakdown coverages	$5M	$1,000/$1,000 HVA	9-01-99 to 9-01-2000	$23,100
Executive Risk Indemnity, Inc.	Gammon Agency	Charitable trust fund - employee contributions to charity	$1M/$1M	None	7-18-99 to 7-18-2000	$1,100
CGU Insurance	Gammon	Premises liability	$1M/$2M	None	8-24-99 to	$2,439

					8-24-2000	
Essex Insurance	Gammon Agency	Excess liability	$4M	None	8-24-99 to 8-24-2000	$2,877
Hartford Insurance	Gammon Agency	Public employees fidelity bond	$250,000	$2,500	10-26-99 to 10-26-2000	$2,469
Self-Funded Workers' Compensation	TASB Republic Western	Workers' compensation Excess insurance	Statutory benefits Stop loss limits: Specific Aggregate	Self ins - $250k Stop loss premiums $5m x $250,000 $1m x $5,587,500	9-01-99 to 9-01-2000	$4,160,988 $64,415 $65,255
Property/Casualty Joint Account	TASB	TASB Modified Self-Insurance Plan -Automobile-BI/PD -General Liability - School Brd Liab. - Physical Damage	$1,000,000/$300,000 $1M $1M Actual Cash Value	$100,000 $20,000 $25,000 $250	12/98 to 12/99 12/98 to 12/99 12/98 to 12/99 12/98 to 12/99	$72,820 $22,922 $51,193 $4,580
Insurers Indemnity Bond Co.	Gammon Agency	Peace officers bonding	$1,000	None	Annually renewed	$2,100
Old Republic Ins. Co.	Gammon Agency	Tax collectors bond (Travis County)	$100,000	None	8-05-99 to 8-05-2000	$500

Source: AISD's Risk Management Department.

FINDING

AISD adopted a novel insurance initiative known as the Rolling Owner Control Insurance Program (ROCIP) as part of its 1996 bond construction program. ROCIP is a self-insurance program designed to give the district more control over the cost of general liability insurance. Typically, construction contractors carry liability insurance to protect themselves against claims arising out of construction activity. However, instead of requiring contractors to provide their own insurance, the district purchased the insurance and made it available to the contractors. ROCIP provides comprehensive liability, workers' compensation and builder's risk insurance coverage to contractors at no cost. The program covers all projects in the 1996 Bond Program. As a project begins construction, it "rolls" into the program. When construction is completed, the project "rolls" out of the program.

Exhibit 6-10 presents a summary of policies offered under AISD's ROCIP program.

Exhibit 6-10
ROCIP Insurance Policies

Company	Agency	Type Coverages	Policy Limits	Deductible Amount	Policy Period	Premium Costs
Hartford	Tri-Arc	Builders' risk/install floater Annual reporting policy	$100,000,000 (3rd yr values)	$25,000/$50,000 $5,000 theft	03-01-97 to 03-01-2000 (2nd yr paid - $57,509)	$90,864
National Union Fire *	Hobbs Group	Workers' Comp/ Employers liability	Statutory/ $1,000,000	$250,000 per Occurrence	05-01-97 to 05-01-2001 Pd monthly	$490,608
National Union Fire *	Hobbs Group	General liability	$2,000,000/ $5,000,000 aggregate	$250,000 per Occurrence	05-01-97 to 05-01-2001 Pd monthly	$287,298
TIG group	Hobbs Group	Umbrella excess/catastrophic	$25,000,000/excess Of workers' comp. and general liability limits	Nil	05-01-97 to 05-01-2001 (2nd yr paid- $120,000) Total prems pd $240,000	$120,000
Chubb & Son, Inc.	Hobbs Group	Umbrella excess/catastrophic	$25,000,000/ Excess of $25M	Nil	05-01-97 to 05-01-2001 Total prems pd $120,000	1997 paid In full
Design Professional Insurance	Commercial Insurance Concepts	Project specific professional liability	$5,000,000/ $10,000,000 aggregate	$10,000	Term of construction Bg 2-01-97 + 5 yr discovery (1st yr $311,250) (2nd yr $311,250) (3rd yr $311,250)	$311,250

Source: AISD's Risk Management Office.

The ROCIP program allows smaller contractors, who otherwise couldn't afford insurance, to bid on construction projects. The latest available figures, dated June 10, 1999, show that AISD has awarded an estimated 58 percent of bond contracts to local Austin firms, 43 percent to small businesses, and 32 percent to historically underutilized businesses (HUBs). These figures are compiled from disclosure statements general contractors are required to complete before execution of the construction contract. On the disclosure statement, the general contractor lists all subcontractors that will be used and indicates whether the subcontractor is HUB certified. HUB certification is verified through the General Services Commission's Web site.

The program also helps reduce contractor insurance premiums by consolidating multiple policies into one policy that covers all the projects in the bond program. The most recent audit of the ROCIP program by AISD's broker showed estimated premium savings to the district of $3.6 million since the program's inception in 1996.

The risk manager said the program was the first of its kind and is being replicated by other school districts in Texas. It won a national award from the Public Risk Management Association and is one positive outcome of an otherwise troubled bond construction program.

Exhibit 6-11 presents ROCIP statistics since adoption in 1996.

Exhibit 6-11
ROCIP Achievements through September 1999

Enrollment

- 344 contractors with 767 contracts on 98 projects.
- 134% increase in enrollment over 1998.

Claims

- 154 total claims consisting of 38 open and 116 closed claims.
- 119 medical-only claims, 25 loss time, four workers' compensation, and six general liability.
- 78% under the national average in claims occurrence.

Savings

- $3.6 million estimated as of May 31, 1999.

COMMENDATION

The district's nationally recognized ROCIP program has achieved estimated savings of $3.6 million and has expanded the participation of smaller local contractors in its bond construction program.

FINDING

The district participates in TASB's Modified Self-Funded program for its vehicle liability insurance. Under this program, the district's liability is limited to $100,000 per occurrence for bodily injury and property damage. TASB covers claims in excess of these amounts.

The district's unaudited designated fund balance as of August 31, 1999 for vehicle-related claims was $1,444,100. Actuarial services are provided through TASB. The actuary estimates the outstanding liability for pending auto claims. As of July 31, 1999, the actuary had projected a total liability of $390,666 for pending vehicle claims.

The district's property casualty insurance premiums have declined steadily in recent years. Since fiscal 1997, property casualty premiums declined 15 percent from $179,000 to $151,500. This reduction was primarily attributable to lower automobile insurance premiums, which fell 28 percent during the period from $101,089 to $72,820.

Automobile premiums were lower due to the district's favorable accident record. For example, the number of vehicle accidents fell by 27 percent between fiscal 1998 and 1999. During fiscal 1999, the district experienced 104 vehicle accidents, compared to 143 in fiscal 1998. In addition, claim payments declined between fiscal 1997 and 1999 as depicted in **Exhibit 6-12.**

Exhibit 6-12
Vehicle Insurance Claim Payments
Fiscal 1995-96 through 1998-99
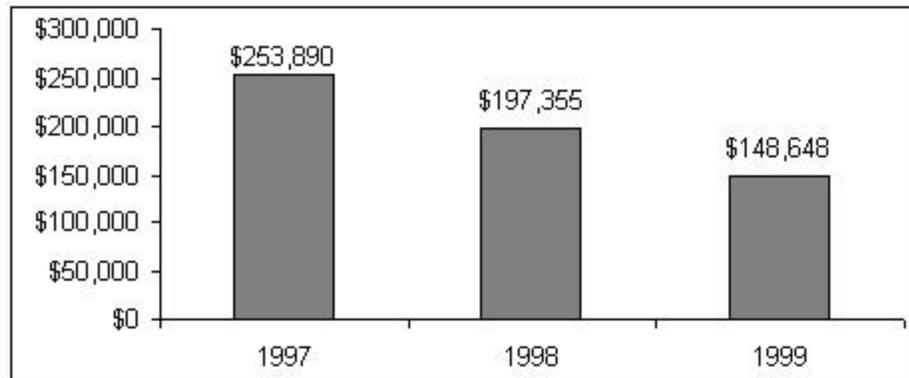
Source: TASB Vehicle Accident Report.

The reduction in vehicle accidents is attributable to the Transportation Department's decline in preventable bus accidents, which fell 25 percent from 96 to 72 between fiscal 1997 and 1999. This decrease can be attributed to training that supervisors received at the Texas School Bus Driver School, a "train the trainer" program sponsored by Texas A&M University. This program provides quality training and technical assistance for driver trainers in "behind-the-wheel" training. The district sent lead drivers to the school, and they returned to train other drivers. The program's goals are:

- To conduct a five-day school for bus driver trainers to emphasize "behind-the-wheel" training in the field.
- To complement, not duplicate other bus training programs.
- To maintain a 1 to 4 ratio of instructors to students.
- To have instructors evaluate student driving techniques.
- To re-evaluate students who have weaknesses in certain skills.
- To allow students an opportunity to evaluate instructors and the effectiveness of the program.

COMMENDATION

The district's transportation safety initiatives and favorable accident record have resulted in lower property casualty insurance premiums.

Employee Benefit Plans

AISD's Benefits Office resides in the Financial Services Department under the supervision of the comptroller who reports to the CFO, formerly the deputy superintendent for Finance. The risk manager helps the comptroller review and evaluate employee benefit plans and monitor costs. In addition,

three clerks perform the day-to-day activities of the Benefits Office, which are listed below:

- assist employees who walk in with benefit questions;
- process benefit enrollment, change, and cancellation forms;
- conduct benefits orientation for new employees;
- process retired employee benefits such as retiree life insurance;
- coordinate with payroll staff on employee benefit deductions;
- act as liaison among employees, providers, and insurance companies;
- review and edit payroll reports to prepare payment to insurance companies;
- process special insurance benefits for employees on Family Medical Leave Act;
- process Teacher Retirement System of Texas forms;
- meet with insurance companies to review open enrollment materials; and
- create open enrollment information packets, new rate charts, and benefit comparison charts.

Benefit clerks also process Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) insurance for terminated employees. COBRA is a federal act that requires group health plans to allow employees and certain dependents to continue their group coverage for a stated period of time following a qualifying event that causes the loss of group health coverage. Qualifying events include reduced work hours, death or divorce of a covered employee, and termination of employment.

During fiscal 1999, the district offered employees a choice among eight group health care plans with four companies. The four were Blue Cross/ Blue Shield, PCA Health Plans, Inc., NYL Care Health Plans, and Prudential HMO. During fiscal 1999, the district issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for its fiscal 2000 group health care plans. Now employees have a choice among four plans offered by two insurance carriers, Amil International and Aetna U.S. Healthcare.

These plans are in effect for one year. In the past, the district has been able to hold down health care costs by bidding its plans every two or three years. The district contributes $154 per month, per employee to either plan chosen by the employee.

Exhibit 6-13 explains the various types of health care plans, and **Exhibits 6-14** and **6-15** summarize features of AISD's group health plans.

Exhibit 6-13
Types of Health Care Plans

- **Preferred Provider Organization (PPO):** A third-party payer contracts with a group of medical care providers that agrees to furnish services at negotiated discounted fees in return for prompt payment and a certain volume of patients.

- **Point of Service (POS):** A hybrid HMO/PPO plan where members may use non-HMO providers at the point of service.

- **Indemnity:** A non-managed health plan where employees are not required to use a specific network of providers.

- **Health Maintenance Organization (HMO):** Members pay fixed, periodic fees directly to the HMO and receive health care services as often as needed. A primary care physician usually directs all medical care.

- **Exclusive Provider Organization (EPO):** A plan that provides benefits only if care is rendered by providers within a network. Provides benefits similar to those of an HMO but is generally self-insured and not subject to state laws governing HMOs.

Source: Houston Area Health Care Coalition's (HCC) Employee Benefits and HCC's 1999 Healthcare Trend and Cost Survey.

Exhibit 6-14
AISD Summary of Health Benefits-PPO Plans

	Amil	
	In-Network	**Out-of-Network**
Calendar Year Deductible		
• Individual	None	$250
• Family	None	$500
Coinsurance Percentage[1]	90%	70%
Maximum Annual Participant Coinsurance Payment[2]		
• Individual	$1,000	$3,000
• Family	$2,000	$6,000
Maximum Lifetime Benefit	$2 Million (Annual)	$2 Million (Annual)
Claim Forms	No	Yes
Physician Services		
• Office Visits		
• Primary Care	Covered at 100% after $10 copay per visit	Covered at 70% deductible
• Specialist	Covered at 100% after $10 copay per visit	Covered at 70% deductible
• Preventive Care	Covered at 100% after $10 copay per visit	Covered at 70% deductible
• Maternity	$10 copay for initial visit; covered at 100% thereafter	Covered at 70% deductible
• Office Surgery	Covered at 100% after $10 copay per visit	Covered at 70% deductible
• In-Hospital	Covered at 90%	Covered at 70% deductible
• Allergy	Testing and serum covered at 100% after $10 copay per visit	Covered at 70% deductible
• **Mental Health[3]**	Covered at 100% after $20 copay per visit; 20 visits maximum per calendar year	Covered at 70% deductible; 20 visits maximum per calendar year
• Immunizations	Covered at 100% after $10 copay per visit	Covered at 70% deductible
Hospital Services		
• Inpatient	Covered at 90%	Covered at 70% after deductible
• Outpatient	Covered at 90%	Covered at 70% after deductible
• Emergency Room	Covered at 100% after $75 copay per visit	Covered at 100% after $75 copay (deductible waived)
• **Mental Health[3]**	Up to 30 days per year covered at 90% for the first 15 days and 70% for the next 15 days	Up to 30 days per year covered at 70% of the first 15 days and 50% for the next 15 days
Substance Abuse	Covered at 90%; lifetime maximum of 3 series of treatment	Covered at 70%; lifetime maximum of 3 series of treatment
Diagnostic X-Ray and Lab	Covered at 90%	Covered at 70% after deductible
Outpatient Prescription Drugs	$25 copay for non-formulary drugs; $15 copay for formulary brand name drugs; $5 copay for generic drugs	Covered at 70% after separate $50 calendar year deductible per insured
Durable Medical Equipment	Covered at 90%	Covered at 70% after deductible

Exhibit 6-14 (continued)

AISD Summary of Health Benefits-PPO Plans

	NYL Care/Aetna	
	In-Network	**Out-of-Network**
Calendar Year Deductible		
• Individual	$300	$300
• Family	$600	$600
Coinsurance Percentage[1]	90%	70%
Maximum Annual Participant		
Coinsurance Payment[3]		
• Individual	$1,000	$2,000
• Family	$2,000	$4,000
Maximum Lifetime Benefit	Unlimited	Unlimited
Claim Forms	No	Yes
Physician Services		
• Office Visits		
• Primary Care	Covered at 100% after $10 copay per visit	Covered at 70% deductible
• Specialist	Covered at 100% after $10 copay per visit	Covered at 70% deductible
• Preventive Care	Covered at 100% after $10 copay per visit	Covered at 70% deductible
• Maternity	$10 copay for initial visit; covered at 100% thereafter	Covered at 70% deductible
• Office Surgery	Covered at 90% after deductible	Covered at 70% deductible
• In-Hospital	Covered at 90% after deductible	Covered at 70% after deductible plus $250 copay per admission
• Allergy	Covered at 90% after deductible	Covered at 70% deductible
• **Mental Health[3]**	Up to 20 visits per year covered at 80% after deductible	Up to 20 visits per year covered at 50% after deductible
• Immunizations	Covered at 100% after $10 copay per visit	Covered at 70% deductible
Hospital Services		
• Inpatient	Covered at 90% after deductible	Covered at 70% and $250 copay per admission Covered at 70% after deductible
• Outpatient	Covered at 90% after deductible	Covered at 90% after deductible (non-emergencies covered at 50% after deductible)
• Emergency Room	Covered at 90% after deductible (non-emergencies covered at 50% after deductible)	
• **Mental Health[3]**	Up to 30 days per year covered at 90% after deductible	Up to 30 days per year covered at 70% after $250 deductible per confinement and calendar year deductible
Substance Abuse	Covered at 90% after deductible for inpatient; covered at 80% after deductible for outpatient; lifetime maximum of 3 series of treatment	Covered at 70% after $250 deductible per confinement and calendar year deductible; lifetime maximum of 3 series of treatment
Diagnostic X-Ray and Lab	Covered at 90% after deductible	Covered at 70% after deductible
Outpatient Prescription Drugs	Covered at 80% after separate $50 calendar year deductible per insured	Covered at 80% after separate $50 calendar year deductible per insured
Durable Medical Equipment	Covered at 90% after deductible	Covered at 70% after deductible

Source: AISD Employee Health Plan Brochure.
[1]*Coinsurance percentage shown is the part paid by the plan. Coinsurance percentage is applied to eligible charges. Charges in excess of eligible charges are the responsibility of the participant.*
[2]*For the PPOs, the benefit maximum and coinsurance payment apply separately to in-network and out-of-network benefits.*
[3]*Serious mental illness, as defined in the Texas Insurance Code, is covered the same as any other illness.*

Exhibit 6-15
AISD Summary of Health Benefits-HMO Plans

	Amil	NYL Care/Aetna
Calendar Year Deductible		
• Individual	None	None
• Family	None	None
Coinsurance Percentage[1]	100%	100%
Maximum Annual Participant Coinsurance Payment		
• Individual	$0	$0
• Family	$0	$0
Maximum Lifetime Benefit	Unlimited	Unlimited
Claim Forms	No	No
Physician Services		
• Routine Office Visits		
• Primary Care	Covered at 100% after $10 copay per visit	Covered at 100% after $10 copay per visit
• Specialist	Covered at 100% after $10 copay per visit	Covered at 100% after $10 copay per visit
• Preventive Care	Covered at 100% after $10 copay per visit	Covered at 100% after $10 copay per visit
• Maternity	$10 copay for initial visit; covered at 100% thereafter	$10 copay for initial visit; covered at 100% thereafter
• Office Surgery	Covered at 100% after $10 office visit copay	Covered at 100% after $10 office visit copay
• In-Hospital	Covered at 100%	Covered at 100%
• Allergy	Covered at 50% of Allowable Charges for Testing & Serum. $10 copay per visit for serum administration if seen by physician	Testing $10 copay; Injection $10 copay; Serum $10 copay
• **Mental Health**[2]	Up to 20 visits per year covered at 100% after $20 copay per visit	Up to 20 visits per year covered at 100% after $20 copay per visit
• Immunizations	Covered at 100% for ages 0 through 6 Covered at 100% after $10 copay per visit	Covered at 100% for ages 0 through 6 Covered at 100% after $10 copay per visit
Hospital Services		
• Inpatient or Outpatient	Covered at 100%	Covered at 100%
• Emergency Room	Covered at 100% after $75 copay per visit; copay waived if admitted directly to same facility as inpatient	Covered at 100% after $40 copay per visit; copay waived if admitted as inpatient
• **Mental Health**[2]	Up to 30 days per year covered at 100%	Up to 30 days per year covered at 80%
Diagnostic X-Ray and Lab	Covered at 100%	Covered at 100%
Outpatient Prescription Drugs	$25 copay for non-formulary drugs; $15 copay for formulary brand name drugs; $5 copay for generic drugs	$10 copay for brand name drugs; $5 copay for generic drugs
Durable Medical Equipment	Covered at 100% with a maximum per condition, per year of $500 to a maximum of $2,000 annual benefit.	Covered at 100%

Source: AISD Employee Health Plan Brochure.
[1]*Coinsurance percentage shown is the part paid by the plan. Coinsurance percentage is applied to eligible charges. Charges in excess of eligible charges are the responsibility of the participant.*
[2]*Serious mental illness, as defined in the Texas Insurance Code, is covered the same as any other illness.*

In addition to its health care plans, the district also pays the full cost of basic life and accidental death and dismemberment insurance and offers employees various benefits under a cafeteria plan. Cafeteria plans are allowed under the Internal Revenue Code and are beneficial because they provide businesses and their employees valuable benefits while saving both significant tax dollars. These plans allow employees to extend their purchasing power by buying benefits with pre-tax dollars rather than after-tax dollars. The contributions employees make to the cafeteria plan through salary deductions are not subject to federal income or social security taxation. During fiscal 1999, employees contributed $7.6 million to district cafeteria plans resulting in savings to the district and its employees of about $943,000 in social security taxes.

Employee contributions to cafeteria plans may be used to purchase a variety of benefits, which include:

- Group health coverage premiums,
- Group dental coverage,
- Group term life coverage,
- Disability, cancer, accident, and vision,
- Flexible spending accounts, which include un-reimbursed medical and dental expenses, dependent care expenses, and savings plans, and
- Tax sheltered annuities.

The district offers dental, vision, disability, childcare, cancer, medical expense reimbursement, and health and life insurance premiums under its cafeteria plan. Employees must choose to shelter health and life insurance premiums under the plan. The district also offers a tax-sheltered annuity (TSA) 403(b) plan. Contributions to the TSA plan are also pre-tax contributions. **Exhibit 6-16** presents the number of employees enrolled in the district's health and cafeteria plans as of September 1999.

Exhibit 6-16

AISD Employee Benefit Plan Enrollment

Type of Benefit	Amil	Aetna/Nylcare	Other
PPO Health Plan	509	233	
HMO- Health Plan	3,300	4,888	
Basic Life Insurance			9,742
Optional Life Insurance			1,615
Disability			2,672
Dental			5,754
Vision			2,575
Cancer			323
Dependent Care			138
Medical Reimbursement			363
Retirees and COBRA	37	78	694
*Total	**3,846**	**5,199**	**23,876**

Since 1992, the district has had a third-party administrator (TPA) to manage its cafeteria and TSA plans. Some of the duties of the TPA include:

- Receives cafeteria plan contributions from the district and pays the insurance providers;
- Performs the exclusion allowance calculation for each participant in the district's tax sheltered annuity plan (The exclusion allowance is the maximum an employee can contribute to the TSA plan);
- Acts as point of contact for employee questions about the cafeteria and TSA plans;
- Acts as point of contact for agents desiring to solicit TSA plans in the district;
- Audits enrollment paperwork and provides required copies for employee files;
- Enrolls employees in plans and helps them complete applications;
- Furnishes Monthly Employee Summary Reports to cafeteria plan participants and Monthly Employee Detail Reports to the district;
- Provides a monthly reconciliation of contribution receipts and disbursements;
- Assumes responsibility for compliance with all applicable state and federal statutes and regulations relating cafeteria and TSA plans, including filing required annual reports with the Internal Revenue Service; and
- Educates district employees on the concept of a cafeteria plan and provides Employee Enrollment Booklets, that outline plan coverages.

FINDING

From fiscal 1996 to 1998, the district enjoyed relatively low group health insurance costs. These low rates were due in large part to the district's informal policy of issuing RFPs frequently in search of the best premiums. The district kept costs low because it "played" insurance companies off against one another through the bidding process. However, as group heath care costs have increased across the board over the last few years, the district has lost this advantage and may not continue to issue frequent RFPs as a matter of policy. Presently, the district has no strategy for reducing or controlling its health-care costs.

The district contributes an amount equal to the lowest premium among the plan alternatives. For example, the lowest premium among the fiscal 2000

options is the $154 Amil HMO employee only premium. Therefore, the district contributes $154 for employee coverage. Since fiscal 1997, the district's contribution to employee health care increased 31 percent from $117 to $154, while the weighted average cost for employees increased 28 percent from $51.41 to $65.63. The weighted average employee cost is determined by multiplying coverage category premiums by the number of enrollees in each category and dividing the result by total enrollees.

Exhibit 6-17 presents the district's cost trend since fiscal 1994 and the employees' cost trend since fiscal 1997. Most of the fiscal 2000 increase depicted in **Exhibit 6-17** is attributable to abnormally low rates in previous years. The new rates reflect more realistic insurance costs. The district's fiscal 2000 contribution increased 23 percent over fiscal 1999, while weighted average employee costs increased 11 percent.

Exhibit 6-17

**District and Employee Weighted Average Cost Trends
Fiscal 1993-94 through 1999-2000**
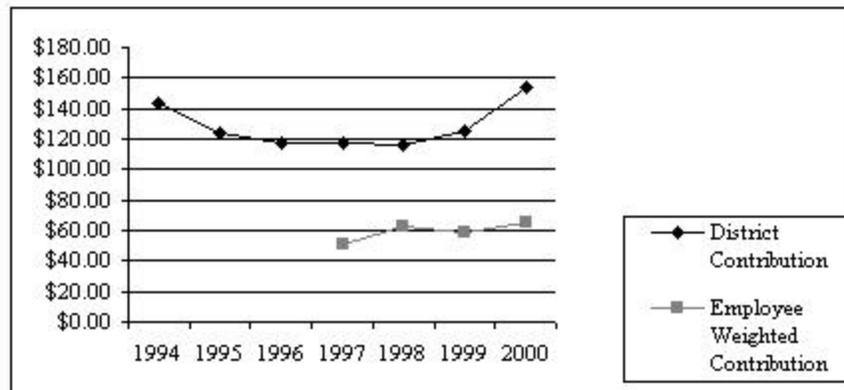
Source: AISD Benefits Office.

According to a 1999 survey commissioned by the Houston Health Care Coalition, overall costs of all types of health plans rose 5.4 percent between January 1998 and January 1999. Observers of the survey commented that the increase was "more of a catch-up of very flat and declining rates in the past few years." Each of the various types of health care plans showed cost increases (**Exhibit 6-18**).

**Exhibit 6-18
Increase in Health Care Plan Costs
Between January 1998 and 1999**

Type of plan	Percentage Increase

PPO	8.0%
POS	1.5%
Indemnity	12.8%
HMO-EPO	3.7%
All type plans	5.4%

Source: Houston Area Health Care Coalition Survey, June 1999.

Between fiscal 1998 and 1999, the district's employee health plan contribution increased 8 percent from $115.91 to $125.71. During the same period, the weighted average cost for employees actually decreased five percent. This decrease occurred because the district contributed a larger proportion of the cost during fiscal 1999.

Nationwide, rising health care costs are attributable to lower managed care company profits, increased cost of prescription drugs, reduced competition resulting from HMO mergers, an aging population, and potential cost shifts resulting from Medicare cuts.

Exhibit 6-19 presents AISD and peer district fiscal 2000 health plan premiums for employee and dependent care coverage.

Exhibit 6-19
Summary of AISD and Peer District Group Health Plan Premiums

	Monthly	Total Monthly Costs			
Type of Plan	Employer Contribution	Employee Only	Employee & Spouse	Employee & Children	Employee & Family
Austin ISD - Amil HMO -Amil PPO -NYLCare/Aetna HMO -NYLCare/Aetna PPO	$154.00 $154.00 $154.00 $154.00	$154.00 $207.16 $162.79 $211.47	$364.67 $490.56 $385.50 $500.76	$320.17 $430.69 $338.45 $439.65	$488.95 $657.74 $516.87 $671.42
Corpus Christi ISD -United Healthcare	$130.00	$181.86	$348.70	$388.76	$499.76
Pasadena ISD	$130.00	$183.00	$358.00	$311.00	$483.00

-PPO Plan A	$130.00	$168.00	$258.00	$242.00	$344.00
-PPO Plan B	$130.00	$130.00	[1]N/A	[1]N/A	[1]N/A
-Hospital Indemnity Plan	$130.00	$183.10	$347.30	$310.20	$495.40
-KelseyCare Option					
Alief					
-HMP Plan	$114.38	$187.42	$370.16	$329.28	$524.80
-Freedom Plan -	$114.38	$165.00	$339.42	$317.12	$487.04
Hospital Indemnity	$114.38	$50.00	N/A	N/A	$75.00
Northside (Bexar County) -Core					
Plan -Low	$125.00	$125.00	$197.72	$152.46	$222.50
Option HMO -	$125.00	$125.00	$302.28	$212.28	$342.28
High Option	$125.00	$158.54	$380.76	$270.76	$440.76
HMO -POS Regional	$125.00	$161.29	$383.81	$273.02	$444.43

Source: AISD Benefits Office and Peer District Health Plan Brochures.
[1] *Dependent Coverage is not available under this plan.*

Health care plans are difficult to compare because of their different features, which are designed to provide adequate benefits while containing costs. Just as plan features vary, so does the cost of medical care from one region of the state to the other. These features and costs must be taken into account when comparing health care plans. These features include but are not limited to: the type of plan; nature of benefits provided; manner in which services are delivered; the size of the provider network; and the degree of cost-sharing provisions such as, deductibles, co-insurance, and co-payments.

Exhibit 6-20 provides a comparison of key features of AISD's health care plans to those of the peer districts. Comparisons use in-network features.

Exhibit 6-20
Selected Health Plan In-Network Features
AISD and Peer Districts

Type of Plan	Deductible	[1]Co-Payments	Maximum Annual Out of Pocket	[2]Drug Copay
Austin ISD -Amil HMO	None	$10-$75	$0	$25 NF. $15 BN.$5 GR

-Aetna HMO	None	$10-$40	$0	$10 BN, $5 GR
-Amil PPO	None	$10-$75-10%	$1K-Ind., $2K-Fam.	$25 NF, $15 BN, $5 GR
-Aetna PPO	$300-Ind., $600-Fam.	$10-10%	$1.3K-Ind., $2.6K-Fam	80% after $50 annual deductible per insured
Corpus Christi ISD -United Healthcare	None	$15-$50-20%	$2.5K-Ind., $5K-Fam.	$15 F, $25 BN, $10 GR
Pasadena ISD				
-PPO Plan A	$100	20%	$1,600	$50 deduct. $8 GR, $15 BN
-PPO Plan B	$400-Ind., $1,200 Fam.	20%	$1,900	$50 deduct. $8 GR, $15 BN
-Hospital Indemnity	[3] N/A	[3] N/A	[3] N/A	[3] N/A
-KelseyCare Option	None	$10-$75	N/A	$5 GR, $10 BN
Alief				
-HMP Plan	None	$15-$75-	$1K-Ind., $2K-Fam.	$5 GR, $25 BN
-Freedom Plan	None	25%	$3K-Ind., $6K-Fam.	25% copay
-Hospital Indemnity	[3] N/A	[3] N/A	[3] N/A	[3] N/A
Northside ISD				
- Indemnity Core Plan	[3] N/A	[3] N/A	[3] N/A	[3] N/A
-Low Option HMO	None	$10-$75	$1.5K-Ind., $4.5K-Fam.	N/A
-High Option HMO	None	$10-$50	$350-Ind., $1.1K-Fam.	$25 NF, $10 BN, $5 GR
-POS Regional	None	$10-$50, 20%	$2K	$25 NF, $10 BN, $5 GR

Source: AISD Benefits Office and peer district brochures.
[1] *Percentages refer to portion of the cost of certain services paid by the employee up to a specified maximum.*
[2] *NF=Nonformulary, F=Formulary, BN=Brand name, GR=Generic*
[3] *Plan pays a daily benefit for a specified number of days in the hospital. There are no deductibles, co-payments, out-of-pocket expenses, or drug benefits.*

The absence of group health plan expertise in the district contributes to its lack of a health plan strategy. No one in the district has the expertise to oversee the legal, pricing, and quality issues associated with group health plans. While this lack of professional oversight might not be as critical in the short-term, the long-term consequences could be devastating. A benefits consultant could provide a variety of services for the district such as:

- Conduct surveys to determine employee needs and wants;
- Facilitate analysis of district culture and needs for benefit programs;
- Provide information on current trends and products in the health care market;
- Perform a cost/benefit analysis for current or future programs;

- Analyze current benefit package to determine if it meets district and employee needs;
- Assist the district in setting goals for its benefit programs;
- Follow up to ensure goals are met;
- Ensure regulatory compliance;
- Review insurance contract;
- Explore feasibility of joint healthcare RFP with other local governmental entities; and
- Provide assistance in preparing a group health RFP.

During the last health plan RFP, the district did not survey its employees before changing plans to determine what *they* wanted. In the past, the Joint Insurance Committee, made up of professional and classified employee representatives, had no involvement with health plan selection other than to relay employee complaints to district administration. Union representatives only get heavily involved with the district's cafeteria plan because benefits under the plan are fully paid by the employee.

Some employees were dissatisfied with the new plans because there were fewer options. Some could not keep their physician because the physician was not listed as a provider in the new plans. During focus groups, teachers complained that doctors were being "dropped off" plans, and that the "Amil plan has been worse than previous plans" because employees must find new doctors. Moreover, some providers lost long-time district patients when the patients were forced to find other providers under the new plans.

When presented with the survey statement, *"The district's health insurance package meets my needs",* nearly half of principals and teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 39 percent of staff did so. **Exhibit 6-21** presents results from principal, teacher, and administrator surveys.

Exhibit 6-21
Survey Results
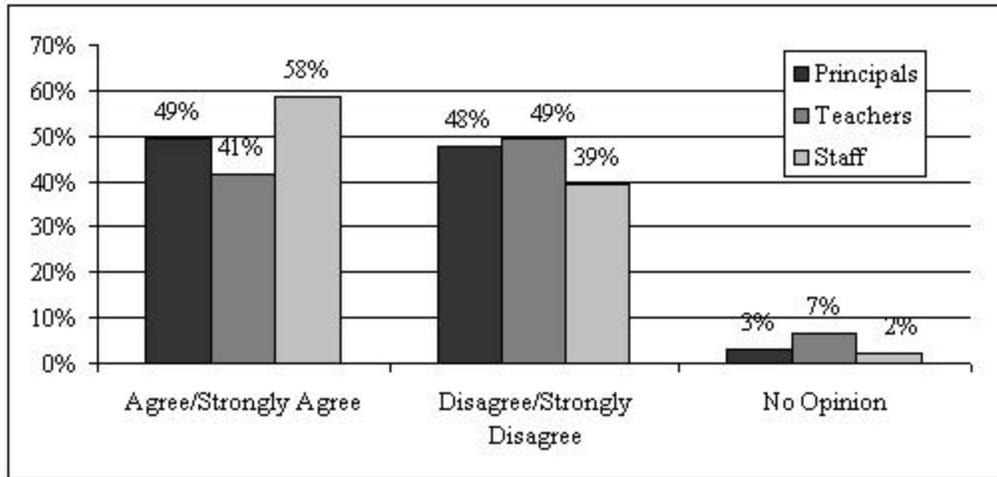
Source: Principal, teacher, and administrative staff surveys.

In January 2000, the district signed a contract with a local actuarial consulting firm to provide benefit consulting services. However, the services the consultant provides are limited. The only services the district will receive are:

An analysis of the issues involved in renewing existing contracts and a determination on the advisability of renewing versus competitive bidding and assistance with miscellaneous issues that arise in connection with day-to-day program operations.

Chapter 6

B. INSURANCE PROGRAMS (PART 2)

Recommendation 89:

Expand the contract of the professional benefits consultant to include assistance in preparing the next RFP for group health care services.

The district should not rely on its limited expertise in such a highly technical and complicated area as group health care plans. If the district decides to issue keep RFP for group health care, the actuary's contract should be expanded to include consultation for RFP preparation assistance. The long-term consequences of preparing keep RFP without professional advice could harm both the district and its employees.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The CFO instructs the comptroller and risk manager to assess the district's health plan procurement and management needs.	May 2000
2.	The comptroller and risk manager consult with the benefits consultant to review existing plan renewal rates and identify RFP services the consultant could provide and the cost of such services.	May 2000
3.	The comptroller and risk manager submit a recommendation to the CFO on the extent of RFP services the benefits consultant may provide.	June 2000
4.	The CFO, comptroller, and risk manager decide, based on service needs and cost, to expand the services of the benefits consultant to include RFP consultation services.	July 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost of benefit consulting services will vary depending on the scope of services performed. Discussions with an Austin benefits consultant specializing in actuarial services revealed that the costs to help prepare keep RFP could range from $10,000 to $50,000. In addition, the consultant said the company could help the district achieve savings goals by recommending alternative plan structures. For example, if the district's goal were to reduce health care cost by 5 percent, the consultant could recommend shifting more costs to employees or redesigning the mix of benefits to enable the district to achieve its goal. Similar estimates were obtained from a large Houston-based benefits consulting firm. This firm's

services range from $15,000 to $20,000 for strategy development and $40,000 to $60,000 for other services such as RFP development, utilization and contribution structure reviews, and evaluation of existing plans.

During fiscal 1994-95, the district paid approximately $19,000 for benefits consulting services.

Assuming the district established a five-year savings goal equal to 5 percent of fiscal 1999 costs and budgeted $30,000 per year for benefit consulting services, the fiscal impact would be $114,859 savings per year determined as follows:

Fiscal 1999 health plan costs	$14,485,855
Annual savings goal (1 percent per year)	$144,859
Annual cost of benefit consulting services	($30,000)
Net savings per year	$114,859

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Expand the contract of the professional benefit consultant to include assistance in preparing the next RFP for group health care services.	$114,859	$114,859	$114,859	$114,859	$114,859

FINDING

During focus groups and interviews, district personnel said the Benefits Office was understaffed and benefits clerks work enough overtime to fund another full-time position. During fiscal 1999, the district paid $28,663 in overtime to benefit clerks. Moreover, the clerks' work is manually intensive, and the outdated computer system does not provide the information the clerks need to serve employees efficiently.

In addition, benefit clerks report to the comptroller, who is in Financial Services. However, employee benefits administration is a personnel function, which typically falls under the director of Human Resources in other districts. In fact, personnel activities such as hiring new employees, processing employee terminations, and monitoring changes in employee life circumstances trigger the work of the Benefits Office. New employees must be enrolled in the insurance programs, terminated employees must be removed, and the payroll file must be updated for changes that affect employee payroll deductions. Such changes might include adding or

deleting a dependent or changing the beneficiary on a life insurance policy.

The misalignment of the Benefits Office within the district's organizational hierarchy is at least partially responsible for inefficiencies in the administration of employee benefits. This inefficiency certainly contributes to the amount of overtime the benefit clerks must work.

Inefficiency also exists because benefit clerks perform some duties that should be performed by other departments such as payroll. In its 1993 report, TSPR noted that the Benefits Office compiles and processes salary, work history, and retirement data for Teacher Retirement System (TRS) filings. Benefit clerks were completing out-of-state verifications of employment, which required researching payroll records not maintained in the Benefits Office. During fiscal 1999, benefit clerks processed 438 TRS forms, such as Notice of Final Deposit before Retirement and School Official Certificate of Salaries, Verification of Service and Salary, Notice of Final Service and Salary before Drop. Typically human resources or payroll department staff process these forms. They were assigned to the benefit clerks years ago for unknown reasons.

Exhibit 6-22 presents a profile of the benefit function in the peer districts and compares the AISD's Benefits Office's workload ratio to that of the peers. The workload ratio is the ratio of benefit clerks to benefit plan enrollees. Plan enrollees may be greater than the number of district employees because typically employees are enrolled in more than one type of plan. Plan enrollees is a better workload measure than total employees because a clerk might provide multiple services for one employee who is enrolled in several plans.

Exhibit 6-22 shows that AISD's benefit clerks work more overtime per month than their peer counterparts and have a heavier workload.

Exhibit 6-22
Benefit Function Profile
AISD and Peer Districts

District	Reporting Relationship	Number of Health Plans	Overtime Per Staff Per Month*	Staff	Fiscal 2000 Plan Enrollees	Workload Ratio
Austin	Comptroller	4 health plans, a cafeteria plan, plus	47.2 Hours	3	32,144	1:10,715

		basic life				
Corpus Christi	Executive Director of Personnel Services	1 health plan, a cafeteria plan, plus basic life	1.4 Hours	2	12,423	1:6,212
Pasadena	Associate Superintendent of Human Resources	4 health plans, a cafeteria plan, plus basic life	4.2 Hours	2	10,555	1:5,278
Northside	Assistant Superintendent Human Resources	4 health plans, a cafeteria plan, plus basic life	0 Hours	2	14,455	1:7,228
Alief	Associate Superintendent Business Services	3 health plans, 2 dental plans, one vision plan, plus basic life	3 Hours	5	16,498	1:3,300

Source: AISD and peer benefit offices.
* Fiscal 1999 Average.

Recommendation 90:

Hire a full-time benefits clerk to relieve the workload in the Benefits Office, and transfer responsibility for completing Texas Teacher Retirement System forms to the Human Resources Department.

The district should hire a full-time benefits clerk to help reduce the workload in the Benefits Office and improve customer service. Adding a benefits clerk would reduce the workload ratio from 1:10,715 to 1: 8,036. The following responsibilities could be assigned to the position:

- Assist with the teacher payroll;
- Act as the department's receptionist to greet visitors and answer the phone;
- Retrieve, open, and distribute mail;
- Assemble, distribute, and monitor the supply of new employee packets as well as enrollment and change forms;

- Assist with filing, open enrollment, and new teacher orientation meetings; and
- Review benefit information with employees.

In addition, the district should implement the 1993 TSPR recommendation to transfer TRS forms processing to the Human Resources Department. Transferring these duties to individuals better equipped to provide the information will allow the benefits clerks to focus on their core functions.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The CFO informs the director of recruiting/staffing/hiring of the need for a full-time benefits clerk position in the Benefits Office.	May 2000
2.	The director of recruiting/staffing/hiring posts the position and reviews applications on file to identify qualified applicants who might be interested in the position.	June 2000
3.	The director of recruiting/staffing/hiring receives applications from individuals interested in the position and schedules interviews with the CFO and the comptroller.	June and July 2000
4.	The CFO and the comptroller interview candidates for the position.	August 2000
5.	The director of recruiting/staffing/hiring fills the position.	September 2000
6.	The CFO instructs the comptroller to transfer TRS form processing responsibilities from the benefits clerks to appropriate staff in the Human Resources department.	September 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

Based on current salaries in the Benefits Office, a benefits clerk's salary would be $27,000. When benefits of $4,282 are added and fiscal 1999 overtime payments of $28,663 to benefit-clerks is subtracted, the net savings would be $2,619 per year ($27,000 salary + $4,282 benefits - $28,663 overtime).

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Hire a full-time benefits clerk to relieve the workload in the Benefits Office, and transfer responsibility for completing Texas Teacher Retirement	$2,619	$2,619	$2,619	$2,619	$2,619

System forms to the Human Resources Department.					

FINDING

The district does not have a wellness program. In 1996, the district issued an RFP for an Employee Assistance Program (EAP), but did not receive any responses. A district employee was assigned the responsibility to administer the EAP, but no company submitted a bid.

Wellness programs have a different focus than EAPs. Wellness programs seek to improve the health of employees by encouraging, promoting, and facilitating healthy, quality-of-life choices. The purpose of a wellness program is to reduce health care costs through prevention and education while improving employee morale and productivity. Wellness programs have the following characteristics:

- Fitness and Lifestyle Screening,
- Risk Assessment,
- Fitness Testing,
- Physician Consent for Exercise Component,
- Participation in Fitness Facility, and
- Periodic Reassessment.

Studies have shown that wellness programs help reduce health insurance costs. A two-year study of employees at a manufacturing company conducted by the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor found that when employees adopted safer health practices as part of a health-risk reduction program, annual health-care costs dropped by $129 per worker. A Prudential Insurance study showed that disability days were 20 percent lower and disability costs per-capita were 32 percent lower after implementing a wellness program. According to a study of a wellness program by Providence General Medical Center, sick leave and health-care costs were reduced after implementing a wellness program. Other intangible benefits include increased worker productivity and morale.

The Wellness Council of America, an organization dedicated to promoting wellness in the workplace, has identified seven best practices for results-oriented wellness programs. The council called these best practices the "Seven C's" and considered them vital components of a comprehensive, effective wellness program.

Exhibit 6-23 presents a summary and brief description of the "Seven C's" of wellness program development.

Exhibit 6-23
Wellness Program Best Practices

Seven C's	Description
Concentrating on Senior-Level Support	Senior level buy-in is essential and must be obtained to link wellness initiatives to the district's priorities through the budget, organizational agenda, and communication channels.
Creating Cohesive Wellness Teams	To ensure the wellness program is uniformly and consistently disseminated throughout the district, key players must be involved. Teams should be composed of representatives from senior and mid-level management, Employee Benefits, Human Resources, Risk Management, MIS, unions, and other critical departments.
Collecting Data to Drive Health Efforts	To balance organizational needs with individual interests, critical data must be gathered and analyzed. Such data includes, health care claims, health risk appraisals, health screenings, culture audits, facility assessments, absenteeism reports, safety reports, disability reports, employee surveys and demographic information.
Crafting the Annual Operating Plan	The annual operating plan sets the wellness program's strategic direction. The plan consists of achievable goals and measurable objectives against which progress is measured and performance is evaluated. It also promotes a sense of purpose and continuity when personnel changes occur on the wellness team.
Choosing Appropriate Interventions	Refers to designing and implementing programs that address the specific needs and interest identified during the data collection step. Involves tying program decisions back to data on district concerns, employee interests, program goals and objectives, and available resources.
Creating Supportive Environments	Involves the district creating supportive environments that increase the likelihood that positive changes in health behavior will occur. For example, establishing a smoke-free environment and offering low-fat alternatives in cafeterias and vending machines.
Consistently Evaluating Outcomes	Revolves around the goals and objectives established earlier. Used to make modifications and improvements in the program and to measure program effectiveness over time. Also includes evaluation of awards and incentives as well as the effectiveness of the district's communication network.

Recommendation 91:

Implement a wellness program to encourage preventive health care practices among district employees.

The district should shift more responsibility for maintaining good health to its employees by promoting prevention as well as treatment. Monetary rewards, discounts on employee health insurance premiums, or prizes could be used as incentives to encourage employee participation.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent forms a wellness program development committee of representatives from each of the district's key constituencies and charges it with the responsibility to recommend a program within four months.	May 2000
2.	The committee meets to outline its strategy, gather and analyze data, balance district needs with employee interests, retain professional assistance, and develop a wellness program based on best practices.	June - September 2000
3.	The committee submits a recommendation to the superintendent and board for approval.	October 2000
4.	The board adopts a resolution to implement an employee wellness program.	October 2000
5.	The superintendent instructs the wellness committee to introduce features of the program to district employees.	October 2000
6.	The wellness program committee introduces the program to employees and implements the program throughout the district.	November 2000 and ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

The initial investment to implement a wellness program will be offset by reductions in health care costs and other intangible benefits. Program costs will vary depending on the type of program, location, and the number of participants. In 1996, the district was prepared to spend $150,000 to establish an Employee Assistance Program. Although EAPs and wellness programs are not the same, they have similar objectives. Also, an EAP component could be incorporated into a wellness program. The following

estimate assumes the district chooses a wellness program, with an EAP component, costing $150,000 the first year and $200,000 each year thereafter, and assuming the district saved 2 percent of its fiscal 1999 health care costs per year beginning in the second year:

Costs year one for EAP alone	($150,000)
Savings year one	$0
Annual costs years two through five for Wellness program with EAP component	($2200,000)
Annual savings years two through five	$289,717
(Fiscal 1999 health care costs $14,485,855 x 2%)	
	$89,717
Net savigs years two through five	

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Implement a wellness program to encourage preventive health care practices among district employees.	($150,000)	$89,717	$89,717	$89,717	$89,717

Workers' Compensation

AISD's risk manager is responsible for identifying, managing, and controlling risks that could have a negative financial effect on the district. The risk manager oversees programs, such as workers' compensation, that are designed to protect both human and physical assets from financial losses due to unforeseen events.

The risk manager also acts as liaison between the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB), the district's third-party administrator and safety coordinators. The third party administrator provides resources to the coordinators and conducts several training sessions during the summer for safety coordinators and district employees. The risk manager also disseminates claim and loss statistics to safety coordinators and establishes accident reduction goals each year. For example, in fiscal 1998, the risk manager challenged each department and campus to reduce accidents by 10 percent.

The risk manager reports to the deputy superintendent for Finance/CFO. Two staff positions assist the risk manager in performing day-to-day activities. One is a clerical position responsible for collecting, reviewing and submitting workers' compensation injury claims to the Texas

Association of School Boards. The other position is responsible for developing a comprehensive safety program as part of the district's bond construction program with the primary focus on the safety of children. Although the risk manager is primarily responsible for administering the district's workers' compensation program, safety coordinators at the school campuses and within administrative departments develop and conduct safety programs at their respective locations.

In addition to their regular responsibilities, coordinators also conduct safety training and provide safety materials while the risk manager oversees and facilitates their activities by providing information and day-to-day support. For example, if a hazard is created at a school because of faulty equipment or facilities, the risk manager will expedite repairs through the Maintenance Department.

Since 1991, AISD's workers' compensation program has been self-funded. Self-funded means the district assumes the risk of workers' compensation losses and pays all claims rather than paying an insurance company to assume the risk. The district's TPA provides the district's self-funded workers' compensation insurance program with all the necessary elements of a commercial plan including claims administration, loss control services, cost containment services, administrative services, and excessive claims coverage.

The district also receives actuarial services through its TPA who contracts with an independent actuary. Each year, the actuary estimates the district's workers' compensation claims liability, which consists of the estimated cost to settle all reported claims plus a reserve for claims incurred but not reported. The actuary also estimates the amount the district must contribute to the workers' compensation fund to cover expenses incurred during the coming fiscal year.

The workers' compensation fund is an internal service fund that accounts for contributions made from the general fund to cover workers' compensation claims costs, professional and contracted service fees, supplies and materials, and other operating expenses.

Exhibit 6-24 presents actual operating results of the workers' compensation internal service fund for fiscal 1996 through fiscal 1999. The August 31, 1999 fund balance is equal to approximately 18 months of operating expenses.

Exhibit 6-24
Workers' Compensation Internal Service Fund
Fiscal 1996 through 1999

Revenues/Expenditures	1996	1997	1998	1999
Revenues	$4,201,667	$4,714,085	$5,107,734	$5,523,681
Expenses				
Payroll costs	80,402	83,251	87,179	91,816
Purchased and contracted services	150,023	175,061	196,377	203,951
Supplies and materials	327	595	4,831	2,889
Other (claims costs)	3,648,632	4,087,066	4,690,575	2,977,804
Capital outlay	2,010	-	-	399
Total operating expenses	3,881,394	4,345,973	4,978,962	3,276,859
Operating Income (loss) before other				
resources and transfers out	$320,273	$368,112	$128,772	$2,246,822
Operating transfers out	(2,450,000)	-	-	
Net income (loss)	**($2,129,727)**	**$368,112**	**$128,772**	**$2,246,822**
Fund Balance, September 1	**$4,243,358**	**$2,113,631**	**$2,481,743**	**$2,610,515**
Fund Balance, August 31	**$2,113,631**	**$2,481,743**	**$2,610,515**	**$4,857,337**

Source: Audited Financial Statements for Applicable Year.

As of August 31, 1999, the workers' compensation claims reserve was $10.8 million. Since fiscal 1997, the reserve has increased $2.1 million or 24 percent. **Exhibit 6-25** presents the district's actuarially determined liability for claims for the last three fiscal years. This amount is based on the estimated cost to settle all claims reported plus an estimate of claims incurred but not reported.

Exhibit 6-25

**Workers' Compensation Claims Liability
as of August 31, 1997, 1998, and 1999**

(In Millions)
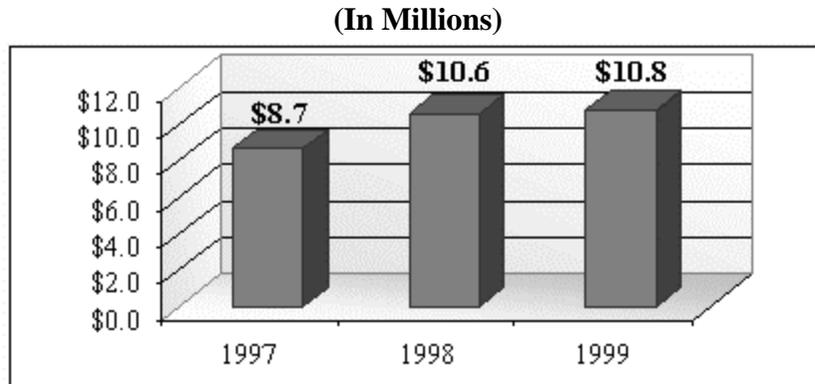
Source: Audited Financial Statements for Applicable Year.

The district has purchased excess workers' compensation insurance through its TPA for additional coverage. This insurance limits the district's exposure to workers' compensation claims to $250,000, up to a maximum of $5 million per occurrence. In addition, the district has excess coverage through a commercial insurance company that limits claim payments to $5.6 million in the aggregate over a four-year period.

As of August 31, 1999, there were no claims exceeding the district's risk retention limits. According to the TPA's May 31, 1999 report of severe claims, 89 claims over $50,000 have been filed since 1986. The total estimated liability for these claims over $50,000 was $7.5 million as of May 31, 1999.

The TPA also provides the district claims data and loss statistics. This information helps the district manage and monitor its workers' compensation claims. **Exhibit 6-26** presents a summary of workers' compensation claims statistics for the past five fiscal years and shows that, although the number of claims generally declined from 1995 to 1999, the average cost of such claims increased from $2,469 to $2,925 per claim. This increase was primarily due to higher medical costs and higher wages. Higher wages affect workers' compensation costs since the indemnity portion of workers' compensation payments is based on the injured employee's wages.

Exhibit 6-26
AISD Workers' Compensation Claims and Average Cost per Claim

Fiscal 1995 through 1999
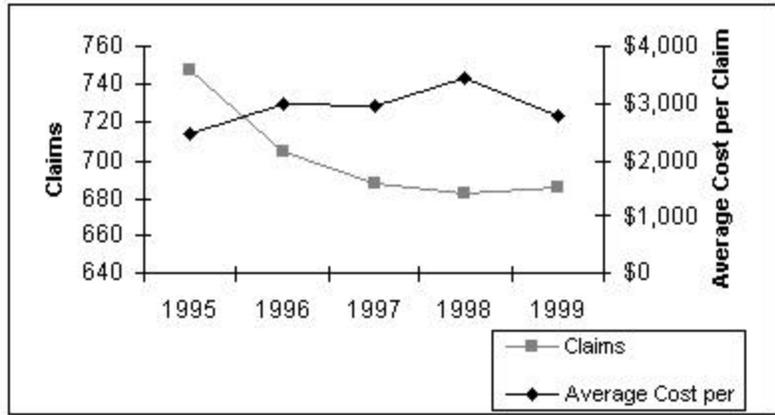
Source: Risk Management Reports of Claims and Estimated Incurred Costs.

Exhibit 6-27 compares AISD's average workers' compensation claims and cost to those of peer districts over the past five years. The exhibit compares average claims as a percentage of full-time equivalents and average cost per full-time equivalent.

Exhibit 6-27
Workers' Compensation Claims and Costs
Fiscal 1995 through 1999

District	Average Claims	Average Ultimate Claims Cost	Average Claims as a Percentage of FTEs	Average Cost per FTE
Pasadena	327	$1,187,630	7%	$264
Austin	**702**	**$2,047,182**	**8%**	**$237**
Alief	268	$1,036,790	6%	$235
Northside	1,603	$1,254,905	10%	$173
Corpus Christi	287	$816,119	6%	$169

Source: AISD and peer risk management departments.

FINDING

Although safety coordinators are responsible for administering safety initiatives at their respective locations, they have no incentives to reach claims reduction goals set by Risk Management. Conversely, there are no punitive measures for not reaching such goals. For fiscal 1999, the risk

manager set a districtwide claims reduction goal of 10 percent. Without incentives, however, there was no motivation for safety coordinators and employees to reach the goal. **Exhibit 6-28** compares workers' compensation claims by category for fiscal years 1998 and 1999 and shows virtually no overall change.

Exhibit 6-28
Comparison of Workers' Compensation Claims by Category
Fiscal Years 1998 and 1999

Category	Fiscal 1998	Fiscal 1999	Percent Change
Other	16	29	81%
Custodial	92	117	27%
Food Service	129	131	2%
Building Maintenance	43	44	2%
Professional/Clerical/Admin.	312	284	(9%)
Drivers & Vehicle Maintenance	92	81	(12%)
Total	**684**	**686**	**0%**

Source: AISD Risk Management claims reports.

Other AISD departments have experienced the benefits of recognizing employees for exemplary service and safety records. For example, the Transportation Department issues safe driver awards to bus drivers who consistently demonstrate safe driving habits. Bus accidents fell by 15 percent between fiscal 1997 and 1999. While other factors such as focused safety training contributed to this reduction, recognition of the bus drivers who put the training into practice also was a factor.

Recommendation 92:

Provide incentives for safety coordinators and district employees to reach accident reduction goals set by Risk Management.

Safety coordinators would be more motivated to reduce accidents if they had an incentive to reach reduction goals set by Risk Management. The district could sponsor a districtwide competition between schools and departments. For example, the two transportation departments could compete for a "Safe Bus Department of the Year" award, or the district could pay a small stipend to safety coordinators who develop effective accident prevention programs at their locations. The stipend could be

funded from the reduction in claims costs achieved when coordinators are more motivated to help prevent accidents.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The CFO instructs the risk manager to determine the kinds of employee safety award programs used in the district and then to select the best features of these programs to design a districtwide safety incentive program.	May 2000
2.	The risk manager designs a districtwide safety program that incorporates the best features of existing programs and submits it to the CFO for review and approval.	May - July 2000
3.	The CFO reviews and approves the safety incentive program and instructs the risk manager to implement it throughout the district.	July - August 2000
4.	The risk manager introduces the program to safety coordinators and other employees throughout the district and implements the program.	September 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

The risk manager set a reduction goal of 10 percent without incentives. Assuming the district provided incentives to safety coordinators and established awards and recognition programs with a reduction goal of 5 percent of fiscal 1999 claims, the net annual savings would be $74,450 (686 claims x 5 percent reduction = 34 claims x 1999 average cost per claim of $2,925 = $99,450, less $25,000, the assumed cost of incentives and stipends).

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Provide incentives for safety coordinators and district employees to reach accident reduction goals set by Risk Management.	$74,450	$74,450	$74,450	$74,450	$74,450

Chapter 6

C. FIXED ASSETS

AISD's comptroller has overall responsibility for fixed assets and reports to the CFO, formerly deputy superintendent for Finance. An accounting supervisor and a fixed assets technician help the comptroller perform day-to-day tasks.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) defines fixed assets as purchased or donated items that are tangible in nature, have a useful life longer than one year, have a unit value of $5,000 or more, and may be reasonably identified and controlled through a physical inventory system. The Texas Education Agency's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guid*e requires assets costing $5,000 or more to be recorded in the fixed-asset group of accounts. Items costing less than $5,000 are recorded as an operating expense of the appropriate fund under TEA guidelines.

To improve control and ensure accountability, these guidelines allow school districts to establish lower thresholds for equipment costing less than $5,000. For example, computer and audiovisual equipment worth less than $5,000 does not have to be accounted for in the fixed-asset group of accounts.

Some districts, however, maintain lists of such assets to improve control and accountability.

AISD's fixed-asset policy is more stringent than TEA guidelines. It requires assets costing $300 or more to be recorded in the fixed-asset group of accounts. Exhibit 6-29 shows unaudited balances of AISD's fixed assets as of August 31,1999.

Exhibit 6-29
Fixed Assets As Of
August 31, 1999 (Unaudited)

Description	Balance 8/31/99	Percent
Land	$43,149,605	6%
Buildings and Improvements	$424,221,152	53%
Construction in Progress	$177,975,449	22%
Furniture, Equipment, Vehicles	$129,837,521	16%

Property Under Capital Leases	$19,921,629	3%
Total	**$795,105,356**	**100%**

Source: AISD Finance Department.

TEA guidelines also state:

> "Certain fixed assets, such as furniture and equipment, should be inventoried on a periodic basis. Annual inventories taken usually at the end of the school term before the staff members leave are recommended. Discrepancies between the fixed asset/inventory list and what is on hand should be settled. Missing items should be listed and written off in accordance with established policy."

As shown in **Exhibit 6-29**, 16 percent of AISD's fixed assets include assets such as furniture, equipment, and vehicles that can reasonably be inventoried.

FINDING

The district does not have formal fixed-asset policies and procedures. The district does not even have a policy requiring district personnel to conduct an inventory. The district's only policy on fixed assets provides a definition of fixed assets and establishes a capitalization threshold of $300. This means that assets costing $300 or more are tracked and included in the fixed-assets group of accounts on the district's general ledger.

In addition, the fixed-assets system is antiquated and is not integrated into the district's financial system. Consequently, the process of identifying, tracking, and managing fixed assets is manually intensive and cumbersome. For example, each month the district's financial system generates the Capital Outlay Expenditures Report. This report identifies all fixed assets acquired with a purchase order and paid for through accounts payable. Using this report as a reference, the fixed assets technician pulls the accounts payable voucher for each transaction from the paid invoice file and reviews it to determine whether the purchase meets the definition of a fixed asset. Then the technician inputs information from the voucher such as quantity, description, model number, and cost into the fixed-assets system. TSPR reviewed a copy of the July 8, 1999 Capital Outlay Expenditures Report noting that it contained more than 500 transactions that the technician had to manually review. Once fixed assets have been set up in the fixed-assets system, summary reports are generated that the

accounting supervisor uses to prepare journal vouchers to record the assets on the general ledger.

The lack of policies and procedures, as well as archaic computer technology, hinders the fixed-asset system's ability to ensure that fixed assets are properly identified, accounted for, and safeguarded. For example, the district police chief told the review team that 28 district VCRs and a violin were discovered in a local pawnshop. The equipment had never been reported stolen.

The fixed asset system has been inadequate for many years. As early as 1990, both internal and external auditors raised concerns over fixed-asset control weaknesses. **Exhibit 6-30** presents excerpts of deficiencies external auditors noted in their 1996-97 and 1997-98 Management Letters.

Exhibit 6-30
External Auditor Management Letter Comments
Fiscal Years 1996-97 and 1997-98

1996-97 Comments	1997-98 Comments
"The District does not have formal and approved procedures in place to ensure that an accurate, reliable and timely physical inventory count is performed each fiscal year...."	"The District has not yet implemented procedures to ensure that an accurate, reliable and independent physical inventory count is performed periodically and then reconciled to the detailed listing of fixed assets...."
"The district does not establish the accountability for each asset, does not have physical safeguards over assets and does not properly identify all equipment by metal numbered tags or other means of positive identification."	".... the District has not yet established the accountability for its fixed assets."

Source: 1996-97 and 1997-98 Management Letters.

Internal reviews have highlighted similar deficiencies. Between March 22, 1999 and April 28, 1999, representatives from Internal Audit, Financial Services, and Materials Management conducted a limited inventory of the district's fixed assets to determine whether they were being properly accounted for and safeguarded. The test sample consisted of 305 items at 14 locations-most of which were purchased before 1987.

Results were dismal. Unaccounted for items at the 14 locations ranged from 8 to 100 percent with computers purchased before 1987 representing the highest category of items that could not be located. In addition, annual

inventories were either not conducted or poorly conducted at the locations. The internal auditors recommended conducting a physical inventory periodically (every one or two years). They also recommended the district sponsor a training workshop on conducting a physical inventory and adding, deleting, and transferring fixed assets. These recommendations had not been implemented as of January 7, 2000.

Past efforts to strengthen fixed-asset controls have represented nothing more than a bandage approach to the problem when the district needed a comprehensive solution. The Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts has developed best practices to help local governments set up an effective and efficient fixed-assets management system. These best practices provide a comprehensive solution to deficient fixed-assets management systems. **Exhibit 6-31** summarizes these best practices.

Exhibit 6-31
Best Practices for an Effective Fixed Assets Management System

Preliminary Steps	- Identify individuals in the district who will have key fixed-asset responsibilities and establish the nature of such responsibilities. - Devise policies and procedures governing capitalization thresholds, inventory, accounting, employee accountability, transfers, disposals, surplus and obsolescence, and asset sale and disposition. - Determine district fixed-asset information needs and constraints. - Determine the hardware and software necessary to effectively manage the system.
Creating the Fixed-Asset Management System	- Adopt a proposal setting up the fixed-asset system including adoption of formal policies and procedures. - Create positions and job descriptions for those with fixed-asset responsibilities. - Determine the design of the fixed-asset inventory database and develop standard forms to match the format of computerized records. - Provide training as necessary. - Identify specific assets below the capitalization threshold that should be tracked for information purposes and safeguarding. - Budget the amount necessary to operate the fixed-

	assets management system adequately.
Implementing the Fixed-Asset Management System	• Inform all departments of the requirements, policies, and procedures of the fixed-assets system. • Ensure that assets to be tracked on the system have been identified and tagged. • Enter information into the fixed-assets database. • Assign appropriate values to the assets in the database. • Establish location codes and custodial responsibility for fixed assets.
Maintaining the Fixed-Asset Management System	• Enter all inventory information into the automated fixed-asset system as fixed assets are received. • Assign tag numbers, location codes, and responsibility to assets as they are received. • Monitor the movement of all fixed assets using appropriate forms approved by designated district personnel. • Conduct periodic inventories and determine the condition of all assets. • Generate appropriate reports noting any change in status of assets including changes in condition, location, and deletions. • Reconcile the physical inventory to the accounting records, account for discrepancies, and adjust inventory records. • Use information from the system to support insurance coverage, budget requests, and asset replacements and upgrades.

Source: "Getting a Fix on Fixed Assets," City and County Financial Management, May 1999 Vol. 15 Issue 2.

Developing and maintaining an effective fixed-asset management system will become even more important with the promulgation of new accounting rules for state and local governments. Currently, state and local governments, which include school districts, are not required to depreciate their assets. However, this situation will change with the recent issuance of Statement 34 by the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB).

GASB issues accounting and financial reporting rules for state and local governments throughout the United States. GASB statement 34, issued

June 1999, requires capital assets to be reported in the financial statements after depreciation. Governments with total annual revenues of $100 million or more follow the rules of the statement for fiscal years beginning after June 15, 2001. This means AISD must begin complying with the provisions of the statement on September 1, 2001. To ensure compliance, AISD must maintain age and useful life information for its depreciable assets, and its fixed asset management system must be capable of calculating and tracking depreciation.

Recommendation 93:

Develop and maintain a comprehensive fixed-assets management system to ensure that district fixed assets are properly identified, monitored, and safeguarded.

This process must begin by conducting a complete districtwide inventory of fixed assets to ensure that AISD has a comprehensive database to begin with. The district should abandon piecemeal "fixes" and adopt a fresh, comprehensive solution to weak controls over its fixed assets. School personnel should continue to be primarily responsible for conducting the physical inventory with oversight from central administration and internal auditing. The district's fixed-asset system, however, should be managed more effectively to ensure accountability for assets purchased with local and federal resources. Moreover, the system must provide an accurate value of assets for internal and external reporting. Finally, assets must be protected against theft, deterioration, or other loss.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the CFO to reengineer the district's fixed-asset management system using best practices.	May 2000
2.	The CFO instructs the comptroller to identify key stakeholders in the district's fixed-asset management system and to define their roles and responsibilities, develop fixed-asset policies and devise a fixed-asset inventory system that is fully integrated with other financial systems.	May 2000
3.	The comptroller, with input from all stakeholders, develops fixed-asset policies and procedures governing capitalization thresholds, inventory, accounting, employee accountability, transfers, disposals, surplus and obsolescence, and asset sale and disposition.	May - July 2000
4.	The comptroller and the CFO submit the fixed-asset policies and procedures to the superintendent for review and the superintendent presents them to the board for its review and	August - September 2000

		approval.	
5.		The Board of Trustees adopts appropriate fixed-asset policies concerning capitalization thresholds, annual inventory, and other issues.	September 2000
6.		The comptroller requests the director of Information Technology to develop fixed-asset inventory system that will be fully integrated with other financial systems.	June 2000
7.		The director of Information Technology in Cooperation with the comptroller, develops a fixed-asset computer system that is full integrated with other financial modules.	June - October 2000
8.		The comptroller introduces the reengineered fixed-asset system to appropriate district employees and conducts training sessions to familiarize employees with fixed-asset policies and procedures and the new automated system.	November - December 2000
9.		The district conducts the first annual inventory under the reengineered system.	January - February 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

The district could implement most of the elements of a best practice fixed-asset system with existing resources. The exception is the cost of a fixed-asset computer system that is fully integrated with other financial modules such as purchasing, warehousing, and accounting. The fiscal impact of a fixed-asset system cannot and should not be determined apart from a total information technology solution. Once the system is in place and operating effectively, however, the fixed asset technician position could be eliminated for a savings of $28,841 to the district ($24,753 salary plus $4,088 benefits).

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Develop and maintain a comprehensive fixed-assets management system to ensure that district fixed assets are properly identified, monitored, and safeguarded.	$0	$0	$28,841	$28,841	$28,841

FINDING

The district's $300 threshold for fixed-asset capitalization is more stringent than TEA's recommended threshold and places a heavy burden on those

responsible for identifying, tracking, and safeguarding the district's fixed assets. This low threshold coupled with the district's lack of policies and procedures creates a disincentive to the proper inventory of fixed assets. The time and expense required to establish and maintain accountability for a $300 item is not cost effective.

The review team analyzed the detailed fixed-assets listing of five schools as of November 1, 1999 and found that items costing $1,000 or less make up two-thirds of the units while comprising only one-third of the value. The average value of items in inventory for the five schools was $957. The district's comptroller performed a similar analysis in June 1999 to support a recommendation to raise the capitalization threshold and found similar results.

Exhibit 6-32 presents a summary of the analysis and demonstrates that most of the items in fixed asset inventory would not need to be tracked centrally if capitalization thresholds were raised.

Exhibit 6-32
Summary of Detailed Fixed Asset Listings
of Five AISD Schools as of November 1, 1999

School	Units in Inventory Excluding Library Books	Total Inventory Value	Number of Units Costing $1,000 or Less	Percent of Units	Value of Units Costing $1,000 or Less	Percent of Value
Austin	**1,995**	**$2,183,590**	**1,237**	**62%**	**$604,636**	**28%**
Bowie	2,390	$2,452,125	1,504	63%	$777,741	32%
Covington	1,496	$1,082,606	1,082	72%	$427,521	39%
Johnston	2,239	$2,217,522	1,550	69%	$728,926	33%
Crockett	2,406	$2,134,565	1,611	67%	$745,418	35%
Total	**10,526**	**$10,070,408**	**6,984**	**66%**	**$3,284,242**	**33%**
Average Cost of Inventory		**$957**				

Source: Detailed fixed asset listings as of November 1, 1999.

Recommendation 94:

Adopt a policy that requires central administration to identify, track and inventory only fixed assets worth more than $1,000.

The district should raise its capitalization thresholds and eliminate items costing less than $1,000 from its detailed inventory listing. Central administration's efforts to inventory these items is wasted, particularly since tracking them is an administrative burden that adds little to no value to the process. Items costing less than $1,000 that are prone to theft or loss such as computer equipment, pagers, audiovisual equipment, fax machines and other items should be physically controlled at the lowest level of accountability and custodianship. For example, principals should be held accountable for all equipment at their school. Teachers should be held accountable for specific equipment assigned to their classroom.

Assigning responsibility is a key element of a comprehensive fixed asset management system. At the district level, budgetary control rather than physical control should be established for equipment costing $1,000 or less. For example, if a campus consistently spends more than what has been budgeted for cellular phones, then those responsible for the phones should be held accountable. Moreover, during the annual budget process, users should be required to justify new acquisitions of computer, audiovisual, and communications equipment.

Fixed assets include all properties, vehicles, equipment and building contents. Accounting for these fixed assets involves tracking and reconciling additions and deletions to property in the inventory. The most important purposes for keeping and maintaining accurate accounting records of fixed assets are:

- Properly kept fixed asset records furnish taxpayers with information about their investments in the district, in contrast to expenditures, for current operations;
- fixed asset records provide the basis for adequate insurance coverage;
- systematic physical inventories of fixed assets allow the district to survey the physical condition of its assets and assess the need for repair, maintenance or replacement;
- periodic inventories establish a system of accountability for custody of individual items;
- for budgeting purposes, reliable information about fixed assets now owned can provide material assistance in determining future requirements; and
- periodic inventories identify lost or stolen items so that insurance claims can be filed, additional controls instituted and accounting record adjusted to reflect the losses.

Once the district has a good system in place and gains control over its fixed assets, it can raise its capitalization thresholds to $5,000.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The CFO instructs the comptroller to establish an accountability system throughout the district for high-risk assets costing $1,000 or less.	May 2000
2.	The comptroller designs an accountability system and introduces it to principals and department heads who are instructed to establish accountability systems within their areas of responsibility.	May - July 2000
3.	The superintendent places on the board agenda a recommendation to increase the capitalization threshold to $1,000.	August 2000
4.	The comptroller notifies materials management and other stakeholders throughout the district of the change in capitalization policy and instructs them to take the appropriate steps to account for assets acquired that cost more than $1,000.	August 2000
5.	The comptroller monitors purchases of assets costing $1,000 or less by reviewing budget to actual expenditures and identifying unusual tends and high volume purchases.	September 2000 and ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 6

D. BOND ISSUANCE AND INDEBTEDNESS

The CFO is responsible for issuing bonds, debt obligations, and refinancing. The district contracts with a local financial advisor for financial advice. In the 1996 bond election, voters approved $369 million to construct and renovate school facilities. **Exhibit 6-33** presents a summary of the bond proposal, which was presented to voters in three propositions: Renovating existing facilities; Constructing new facilities; Technology and infrastructure improvements.

Exhibit 6-33
Summary of 1996 Bond Proposal

Proposal	Cost
Renovation of 96 school sites across the district.	$120,555,000
11 new schools and 156 classroom additions to existing schools.	$176,967,000
Systems, technology, equipment, districtwide facilities, ADA access & site acquisitions.	$71,953,000
Total	**$369,475,000**

Source: AISD's School Bond Election Publication, "Children First" (Redbook).

After the 1996 bond election, the district issued $150 million in Unlimited Tax School Building Bonds. In 1997, the district issued $110 million, and in 1998, the district issued the remaining $109,475,000 of the bonds for a total of $369,475,000. The district maintains separate investment accounts in the Capital Projects Fund to account for bond construction funds. As of August 31, 1999, $170.4 million of bond construction funds was held in various investment accounts **Exhibit 6-34**.

Exhibit 6-34
Invested Bond Construction Funds
As of August 31, 1999

Bond Fund	Amount
1991/93 Construction	$4,551,524
1996 Construction	$83,511,299

1997 Construction	$1,473,677
1998 Construction	$80,845,137
Total	**$170,381,637**

Source: AISD August 1999 Investment Report.

In addition to issuing bonds for construction of school facilities, the district also has refunded several bond issues since 1996. Refunding bonds are issued to repay principal and accrued interest on older outstanding bonds. The purpose of refunding older bonds is to reduce interest cost or reschedule bond maturities to coincide with district objectives.

In 1999, the district issued $42 million of Public Property Finance Contractual Obligation bonds. Contractual obligation bonds are debt instruments the proceeds of which are used to pay for personal property under the provisions of the Texas Public Property Finance Act. The proceeds from the sale of these bonds were used to purchase equipment and to pay the cost of issuing the bonds.

Exhibit 6-35 presents AISD's unaudited outstanding bond indebtedness as of August 31, 1999.

Exhibit 6-35
AISD Outstanding Indebtedness
As of August 31, 1999 (Unaudited)

Description	Interest Rate	Amount
1991 Unlimited Tax Refunding Bonds	0 - 6.20%	$4,814,688
1993 Unlimited Tax Refunding Bonds	0 - 5.50%	$48,145,000
1996 Unlimited Tax Refunding Bonds	4.875% - 7.00%	$90,699,957
1997 Unlimited Tax and School	4.750% - 6.00%	$107,500,000
1998 Unlimited Tax and School	4.125% - 5.00%	$109,475,000
1998 Unlimited Tax Refunding Bond	0 - 5.00%	$127,047,389
Total		**$487,682,034**

Source: AISD Finance Department.

FINDING

On October 1, 1998, the district issued $130,446,764 in refunding bonds to refund Series 1996 bonds. The refunding bonds with an average interest cost of 4.54 percent replaced older bonds with an average interest cost of 5.72 percent. As a result, the present value of interest saved was $4.8 million.

In addition, the district has effectively managed its debt since the bond election. It has taken on more debt without significantly increasing the debt component of the tax rate. Since fiscal 1995, the debt component of the rate has slightly decreased. Although past experience is no guarantee of low future rates, the district has successfully capitalized on favorable market conditions while maintaining a fairly stable tax rate.

Exhibit 6-36 presents the debt component of the district's tax rate from 1994-95 through 1999-2000.

Exhibit 6-36

Debt Component of Tax Rate
Fiscal 1994-95 through 1999-2000

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Debt Rate	$0.16	$0.15	$0.16	$0.17	$0.17	$0.16
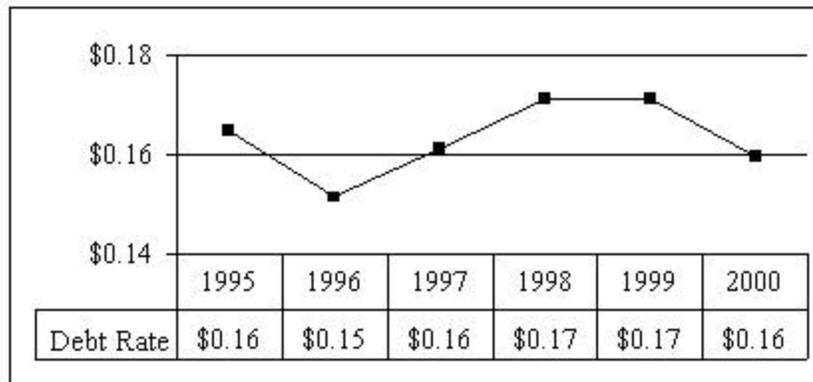
Source: 1999 Audited Financial Statements and AISD Finance Department.

COMMENDATION

AISD achieved savings of $4.8 million after refunding Series 1996 bonds and has effectively managed its debt since the 1996 bond election.

Chapter 7
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the Austin Independent School District's (AISD) financial management functions and focuses on the following topics:

A. Organization and Staffing
B. Planning and Budgeting
C. Business Processes
D. Internal and External Audit

Financial management in school districts involves effective planning, budgeting, managing and maximizing resources. A district's ability to perform these tasks affects its relationships with its employees, vendors, funding agencies and the local community. Financial management is most effective when a district allocates and spends its resources using a system of established priorities; when internal controls are in place and operate as intended; when financial information is provided in a timely way and in useful formats; and when staff resources and technology are leveraged to achieve the best results.

School districts must maintain and operate effective financial management systems in a highly regulated environment. They must meet financial management requirements established by federal and state laws, rules and regulations. The Texas Education Agency's (TEA) *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide* outlines accounting and reporting requirements for Texas school districts. Internally developed policies and procedures, Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, and Governmental Accounting Standards Board guidelines also affect school districts' financial management activities.

BACKGROUND

AISD's expenditure budget for 1999-2000 is more than $579 million, while budgeted revenues are nearly $523 million and are generated from local, state, federal and other sources such as investment income.

Local revenues are primarily generated through the local property tax system. Districts adopt two tax rates each year, a maintenance and operations tax rate (M&O) and a debt service or interest and sinking fund tax rate (I&S) if the district has bonded indebtedness. M&O taxes are subject to a statutory maximum of $1.50 per $100 of taxable value. Districts may levy up to an additional $0.50 per $100 of taxable value for debt service taxes at the time its bonds are issued. AISD receives nearly 90 percent of its revenues from local property taxes.

State revenues are generated through grants and appropriations from the state's two-tier funding system-Tier I and Tier II. Generally, Tier I funding-commonly known as the basic allotment-is designed so that the district and the state share the cost of providing basic educational services. The share funded by each depends on the district's property tax wealth per student. The greater the district wealth per student, the larger the share provided by the district's property tax base; the smaller the district wealth per student, the greater the share funded by the state. In short, school districts with higher property wealth receive less state funding than low-wealth school districts. Tier I funding was set at $2,396 per average daily attendance in 1998-99, and was increased to $2,950 per average daily attendance in 1999-2000.

Districts receive Tier II funds based on the number of weighted students in average daily attendance (WADA). Weighted students in average daily attendance is a measure of "student need" that recognizes that certain types of students require additional resources to meet their educational needs. To treat school districts fairly in funding, the state uses WADA to measure the extent to which students participate in special programs. Special weightings that differ by type of handicapping condition are given for special education students; other weights are given for compensatory and bilingual education students and gifted and talented program students.

Tier II provides equalization funds to school districts beyond the base funding level in Tier I. The Tier II tax rate generates resources for education in the form of a guaranteed yield. One penny of local tax rate will generate $21 per student in WADA from a combination of local and state resources. Districts with wealth above $295,000 per WADA are subject to wealth-reduction provisions of Chapter 41 of the Texas Education Code. For 1999-2000, AISD's wealth per WADA was just under the limit at $284,587. AISD has been informed by the Texas Education Agency that its wealth per WADA is likely to exceed $295,000, making it subject to Chapter 41 provisions beginning in 2000-01.

Federal revenues represent the smallest source of public education funding. Most federal funds are appropriated for specific programs or to provide services to a specific group of students. The National School Breakfast and Lunch Program is one example.

Exhibit 7-1 presents a four-year summary of district revenues.

Exhibit 7-1
AISD Budgeted Revenues by Source
Fiscal Years 1996-97 through 1999-2000

Source	1996-97		1997-98		1998-99		1999-2000	
Local	$309,141,359	80.0%	$344,163,007	84.4%	$381,126,298	85.5%	$449,255,455	85.9%
State	38,116,268	9.9%	31,429,547	7.8%	29,889,146	6.7%	20,938,363	4.0%
Federal	13,717,685	3.5%	14,404,668	3.5%	14,330,093	3.2%	37,696,950	7.2%
Other local and intermediate	25,669,581	6.6%	17,586,478	4.3%	20,485,489	4.6%	14,905,529	2.9%
Total	$386,644,893	100%	$407,583,700	100%	$445,831,026	100%	$522,796,297	100%

Source: TEA's Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS).

As illustrated in **Exhibit 7-1**, total revenues for the district increased by approximately 42 percent between 1996-97 and 1999-2000. During this same period, local revenues grew by 51 percent, federal revenues nearly tripled, and state revenues decreased nearly 13 percent. Because of AISD's property wealth, district officials anticipate increased dependency on local revenue sources in the future.

Exhibit 7-2 shows the budgeted revenues per student for AISD and its peer districts for 1996-97 through 1998-99.

Exhibit 7-2
AISD & Peer District Budgeted Revenues per Student
Fiscal Years 1996-97 through 1998-99

District	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Pasadena	$3,587	$4,407	$4,603
Fort Worth	$4,520	$4,604	$4,716
Northside (Bexar County)	$4,671	$4,899	$4,805
Corpus Christi	$4,432	$4,702	$4,832
Alief	$4,843	$4,804	$5,032
Austin	**$4,539**	**$4,895**	**$5,166**
State Average	**$4,686**	**$4,900**	**$5,043**

AISD's 1998 tax rate was $1.432 per $100 taxable value, lower than any of its peer districts that year. In 1999, however, AISD's superintendent and school board increased the 1999 tax rate by more than 8 percent to $1.549 per $100 taxable value. This tax increase is expected to generate almost $33.4 million in additional local tax revenue for AISD.

In addition, AISD will receive additional local tax revenues from the increase in the value of its property tax base, valued at slightly more than $30 billion. The growth of its property tax base will result in an additional $34.8 million for AISD over 1998-99. Between the tax rate increase, the property value increases and other factors, AISD anticipates receiving $71.4 million, or almost $900 per student, more in tax revenues in 1999-2000 than it did in 1998-99. At the time of this report, AISD had collected $390 million of its expected $455 million in 1999 property tax revenues (or approximately 86 percent), putting the district well ahead of this time in 1998-99 when it had collected approximately 73 percent of expected revenues. **Exhibit 7-3** lists the tax rates for AISD and its peer districts in effect for 1998 and 1999.

Exhibit 7-3
1998 and 1999 AISD & Peer District Tax Rate

District	1998 Tax Rate	1999 Tax Rate	% Increase (Decrease)
Corpus Christi	$1.555	$1.500	(3.5%)
Fort Worth	$1.485	$1.515	2.0
Pasadena	$1.554	$1.524	(1.9)
Austin	**$1.432**	**$1.549**	**8.2**
Northside	$1.548	$1.599	3.3
Alief	$1.700	$1.640	(3.5)

AISD spending grew by 21.5 percent during the three-year period ending August 31, 1999, which is largely attributable to increases in capital outlay. The percentage devoted to instruction and instruction-related services declined slightly as a percentage of total expenditures from 50.2 percent in 1996-97 to 49.7 percent in 1998-99. The percentage devoted to the "other" category, which includes debt service, capital outlay and community services, had the greatest increase of all categories, from 15.5 percent in 1996-97 to 17.6 percent in 1998-99.

Exhibit 7-4 presents a three-year summary of expenditure amounts for the district.

Exhibit 7-4
AISD Budgeted Expenditures by Function
Fiscal Years 1996-97 through 1999-00

Function (Code)	1996-97	1996-97 Percent of Total	1997-98	1997-98 Percent of Total	1998-99	1998-99 Percent of Total	1999-00	1999-00 Percent of Total
Instruction (11, 95)	$188,911,800	48.4%	$211,498,133	49.4%	$226,565,642	47.7%	$260,271,791	44.9%
Instructional Related Services (12, 13)	6,900,957	1.8	9,036,414	2.1	9,140,757	2.0	10,297,302	1.8
Instructional Leadership (21)	5,406,850	1.4	6,491,376	1.5	7,226,250	1.5	7,188,741	1.2
School Leadership (23)	20,172,352	5.1	22,824,071	5.3	24,885,427	5.2	31,191,413	5.4
Support Services - Student (31, 32, 33)	11,808,429	3.0	14,117,683	3.3	14,682,727	3.1	15,815,729	2.7
Student Transportation (34)	13,176,017	3.4	14,135,861	3.3	14,400,148	3.0	17,814,251	3.1
Food Service (35)	30,505,808	7.8	23,630,125	5.5	26,448,948	5.6	28,858,807	5.0
Cocurricular/ Extracurricular Activities (36)	2,005,687	0.5	4,780,398	1.1	5,449,398	1.1	3,937,502	0.7
Central Administration (41, 92)	12,481,164	3.2	12,707,235	3.0	14,148,744	3.0	15,157,721	2.6
Plant Maintenance and Operations	34,014,026	8.7	36,719,063	8.6	40,330,660	8.5	43,038,923	7.4

(51)								
Security and Monitoring Services (52)	1,957,508	0.5	2,908,841	0.7	2,962,214	0.6	3,640,996	0.6
Data Processing Services (53)	2,735,689	0.7	4,927,310	1.2	5,193,011	1.1	5,920,091	1.0
Other	60,587,148	15.5	64,123,561	15.0	83,365,793	17.6	$135,892,724	76.5
Total Budgeted Expenditures	$390,663,435	100%	$427,900,071	100%	$474,799,719	100%	$579,025,991	100%

Source: TEA's Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) and Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS).

Exhibit 7-5 shows the budgeted expenditures per student for AISD and its peer districts for 1996-97 through 1998-99.

Exhibit 7-5
AISD & Peer District Budgeted Expenditures per Student
Fiscal Years 1996-97 through 1998-99

District	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Alief	$4,095	$4,272	$4,382
Pasadena	$4,053	$4,262	$4,400
Corpus Christi	$4,309	$4,380	$4,455
Austin	**$3,934**	**$4,441**	**$4,595**
Fort Worth	$4,307	$4,505	$4,695
Northside	$4,418	$4,681	$4,739
State Average	**$4,329**	**$4,565**	**$4,751**

Source: 1996-97, 1997-98, and 1998-99 TASB Bench Marks.

AISD had more than $1.6 billion in total assets as of August 31, 1999.
Exhibit 7-6 shows AISD's balance sheet information as of August 31, 1999 and comparative totals as of August 31, 1998.

Exhibit 7-6
AISD Assets, Liabilities & Fund Equity
as of August 31, 1999 & Compared to August 31, 1998 Balances

Fund	Assets	Liabilities	Fund Equity
General	$51,626,926	$46,095,180	$5,531,746
Special Revenue	8,092,275	5,649,189	2,443,086
Debt Service	23,630,143	93,840	23,536,303
Capital Projects	196,290,566	44,569,152	151,721,414
Enterprise	345,355	62,877	282,478
Internal Service	16,239,346	10,832,218	5,407,128
Trust & Agency	4,152,376	1,491,055	2,661,321
General Fixed Assets	795,105,355	0	795,105,355
General Long Term Debt	546,728,907	546,728,907	0
August 31, 1999 Totals	$1,642,211,249	$655,522,418	$986,688,831
August 31, 1998 Totals	$1,636,300,905	$600,810,318	$1,035,490,587
Increase/(Decrease)	**$5,910,344**	**$54,712,100**	**($48,801,756)**

*Source: August 31, 1998 Annual Financial Report. August 31, 1999
figures are unaudited balance sheet amounts provided by AISD's
comptroller.*

Chapter 7

A. ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING

In September 1999, the superintendent eliminated the senior financial administrator position, which had led the district's financial operations since 1994, and created a deputy superintendent for Finance. During the September 1999 change, the incumbent senior financial administrator was temporarily assigned to serve as the interim director for Internal Audit and soon thereafter left the district.

An individual who had previously served as the executive assistant for Planning Services temporarily filled the new deputy superintendent for Finance position. In January 2000, AISD hired an experienced Texas school business administrator to permanently fill the interim deputy superintendent for Finance position and subsequently renamed the position to "chief financial officer" (CFO).

Exhibit 7-7 illustrates the organization structure of the Finance Department as provided by AISD at the time of TSPR's review.

Exhibit 7-7
AISD Finance Department
Organization Structure
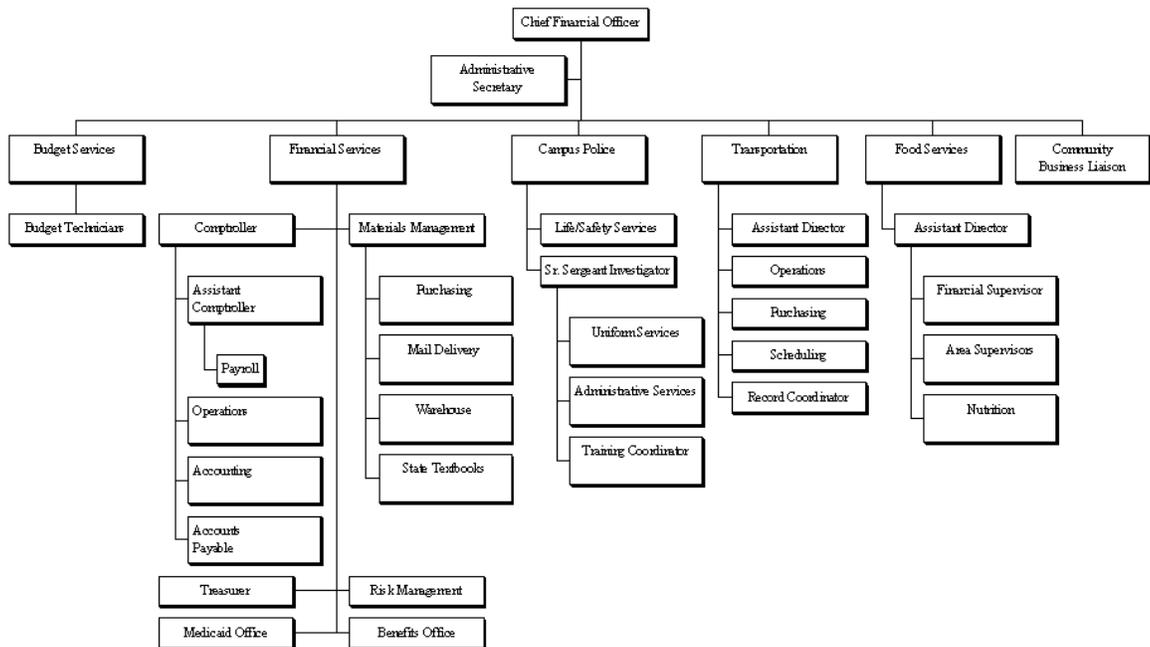
Source: AISD's chief financial officer.

In general, the Finance Department is similar to Finance Departments in its peer districts and with other similarly sized, urban school districts in the state. Reporting to the chief financial officer are sections devoted to budgeting, financial services, campus police, transportation, food services and the community business liaison. Some districts consolidate the finance and operations functions of the district into one organization, usually reporting to a deputy superintendent for business. AISD has chosen to separate many operating functions-such as Human Resources, Construction Management, Planning and Management Information Services-and require them to report to other deputy positions.

In AISD, the Finance Department also includes a Medicaid claims processing function. AISD's Medicaid claims processing office is responsible for seeking reimbursement from the federal government's Medicaid program, via the Texas Department of Health, for health-related services that school personnel, such as nurses and speech therapists, provide to students who are eligible for Medicaid benefits. This office brings in approximately $1.5 million in Medicaid revenue annually to the school district.

In addition to the Finance Department, AISD also has finance personnel and resources assigned to schools, Food Services, Athletics and Community Education.

FINDING

The community business liaison position is responsible for identifying and encouraging small, local, and historically underutilized businesses (HUBs) to participate in AISD's procurement process. The individual occupying this position told TSPR that the office has focused on ensuring that the district's construction bond program, which has subsequently ended, followed Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) guidelines. This position is also responsible for increasing HUB firm participation in day-to-day procurement by providing technical assistance and general support to such firms.

In many school districts, affirmative action efforts are accomplished through a board policy that establishes guidelines and goals for purchasing and contracting, which require prime contractors to identify HUBs and include them in their bids. In addition, most districts and other organizations pre-certify these firms based on certain financial criteria. Once established, the policies and procedures governing affirmative action are implemented and monitored by Purchasing Department employees.

AISD, however, is encouraging affirmative action through a separate community business liaison position. The individual occupying this

position told TSPR that attempts are being made to get official language in board policy supporting the position and function and that such a policy does not exist. The community business liaison said that the function receives no official budget from the district. The result of the district's approach to affirmative action is that the Purchasing Department, while in regular communication with the community business liaison, is explicitly separated from the district's primary HUB participation efforts, effectively splitting the efforts into two different areas.

Recommendation 95:

Eliminate the community business liaison position and adopt a district policy that establishes guidelines and goals for including historically underutilized businesses on AISD purchase orders and contracts.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The CFO recommends eliminating the community business liaison position.	May 2000
2.	The superintendent and the board adopt the CFO's recommendation and eliminate the community business liaison position.	May 2000
3.	The CFO drafts a district policy establishing goals and guidelines for including historically underutilized businesses on AISD purchase orders and contracts.	June 2000
4.	The superintendent and board adopt the new policy.	June 2000
5.	The director of Materials Management implements the policy and monitors the district's affirmative action performance.	Ongoing after policy adoption

FISCAL IMPACT

Eliminating the community business liaison position will save the district $62,384 per year in salary and benefits ($55,625 in salary and $6,759 in benefits). There is no fiscal impact associated with adopting a policy.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Eliminate the community business liaison position and adopt a district policy that establishes guidelines and goals for including historically underutilized businesses on	$62,384	$62,384	$62,384	$62,384	$62,384

AISD purchase orders and contracts.					

FINDING

AISD's Benefits Office, which coordinates all employee benefits such as health insurance, reports through the Comptroller's Office to the chief financial officer and is separated from Human Resources. In school districts and in the private sector, an organization's benefits office is almost always part of the organization's human resources department. In four of AISD's five peer districts, the benefits department is under the control of Human Resources. When asked why AISD organized its benefits function within the Finance Department instead of Human Resources, district employees said they were unsure why this was the case. By organizing benefits employees under the Finance Department, the district is splitting its human resources functions into two separate departments.

Recommendation 96:

Move the Benefits Office from under the supervision of the comptroller to the supervision of the executive director of Human Resources.

This recommendation will result in moving three benefits technicians, with salaries totaling $87,788, from the Finance Department to the Human Resources Department

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The CFO recommends moving the Benefits Office to the supervision of the executive director of Human Resources.	May 2000
2.	The superintendent adopts the CFO's recommendation.	May 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

The recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Finance personnel are located in schools, Food Services, Athletics and Community Education. In schools, bookkeepers maintain each school's activity fund accounts, payroll and other local financial needs. In Food

Services, financial personnel operate a separate payroll and accounting system. In Athletics, financial personnel manage athletic event ticket sales and cash collection and a cash account to pay officials, security and other athletic personnel. In Community Education, financial personnel maintain the budget for the various community education programs, pay personnel involved in these programs and manage receipts from individuals and organizations who pay for their services. For example, Community Education personnel may collect "tuition" for various programs and may pay local organizations for renting their space to conduct its programs.

These separate functions report directly to their immediate department head or school administrator and have little interaction with AISD's Finance Department, except in the case of Food Services, which was moved under the supervision of the CFO in February 2000. In some cases, the need for maintaining separate finance staff is justifiable due to special circumstances, such as paying athletic officials at each game. In all cases, however, the separate financial staffs have little or no interaction with the central Finance Department staff. As a result, AISD lacks a coordinated, districtwide finance strategy that links all financial processes, systems, procedures, controls, strategies and reporting requirements to controlling standards. **Exhibit 7-8** outlines all of the financial functions located outside of the Finance Department.

Exhibit 7-8
AISD Financial Functions that Operate Outside of the Finance Department
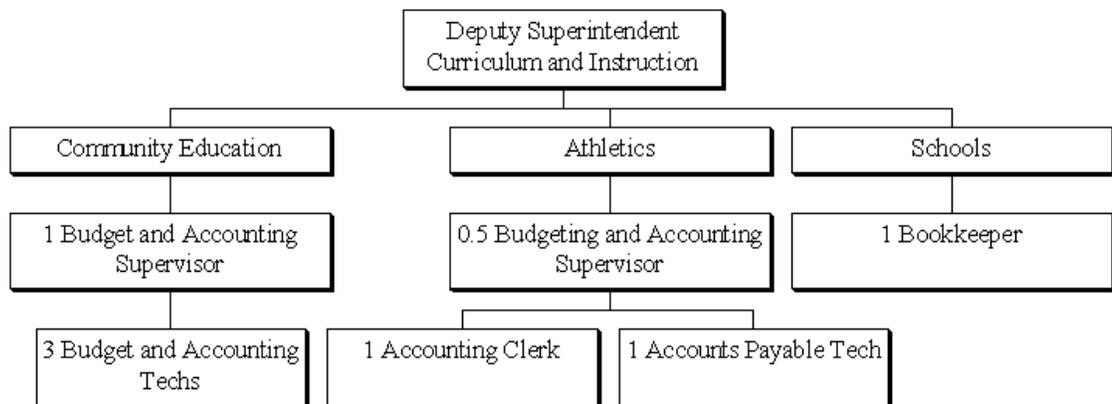
Source: AISD personnel.

School bookkeepers process central office reimbursements, initiate purchase requisitions and account for school activity funds. These positions interact primarily with Internal Audit instead of Finance, primarily because Internal Audit is responsible for auditing all school activity funds. As a result, inconsistent practices are in place at schools for

activity funds, and Finance is not able to direct financial and accounting practices districtwide.

Decentralized leadership of the financial functions throughout the district has resulted in inconsistent practices, inefficient processes, non-standardized systems and redundant work steps and manual tasks in the Finance Department. The district has not maintained clear and direct methods and procedures for accomplishing the financial tasks required, so when the district's financial function was without a leader, the financial functions were in disarray. School districts typically maintain standard operating practices and procedures irrespective of the person leading the financial functions.

For example, AISD's Finance Department does not play an active role in planning, forecasting or projecting school funding and expenditures for the district. Largely attributable to the lack of consistent leadership in the district and a lack of follow-through on a structured districtwide strategic plan since at least 1995-96, AISD has had to take considerable steps to build schools and increase taxes.

Outside of facilitating the annual budget process, Finance Department management said that they do not participate in student enrollment projections, Weighted Average Daily Attendance (WADA) calculations, tax revenue projections or property valuation monitoring. The Finance Department also could not provide any analysis of the recent tax increase that supported the rationale for the increase. That information was provided to TSPR by the superintendent's office. These analyses, and others, contribute to the district's financial strength and its ability to operate in an efficient and effective manner, and the analyses are being performed by other departments with little or no interaction with the Finance Department.

Without a financial function that proactively monitors, plans, forecasts, and projects the financial condition of the district, AISD risks being significantly affected by unforeseen financial shortfalls. This is especially important as the district prepares to enter into state Chapter 41 provisions, in which it may be forced to return money to the state because of its property wealth.

Recommendation 97:

Ensure accountability and continuity in the district's financial operations by making the chief financial officer responsible for all financial monitoring, planning and forecasting.

AISD's chief financial officer position should be the clearinghouse for all financial-related matters, regardless of whether the position directly or indirectly oversees those functions. Similarly, such oversight should not change based on the individual occupying the position but should remain steady and consistent over time. The CFO should work with the heads of all departments responsible for any financial monitoring, planning, or forecasting to develop a concerted financial strategy for the district.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the CFO to oversee, directly or indirectly, all financial operations in the district.	May 2000
2.	The CFO, working with the district's planning department, begins working on a strategy for conducting all of the financial planning necessary for maintaining sound financial practices.	May 2000
3.	The CFO, working with all department heads with financial responsibility, develops a strategy for maintaining consistent oversight of the district's overall financial strategy.	June 2000
4.	The CFO communicates the new districtwide financial strategy to all district administrators.	July 2000
5.	Financial positions outside the Finance Department receive supervision, direction, training, evaluation and guidance from the Finance Department's management personnel.	Ongoing after restructuring

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 7

B. PLANNING AND BUDGETING

An organization's financial planning, budget development and management and financial monitoring establish the foundation for all of its financial management operations. Effective budget processes typically include formal input from all interested business units, appropriate guidance from senior administrators, strategic and tactical planning processes, detailed management and reporting functions and stringent administrative monitoring throughout the budget cycle. In some areas, AISD's budget process sets it apart from other districts, but in many other areas the district is falling short of reasonable expectations.

AISD's budget development process is a cooperative, team-based process that relies on input from a number of central administrators, local school officials and community members. Unlike many districts, AISD's Budget director (a position that was vacant between 1998 and 2000) supports a team of central office administrators who drive the budget process. The district has made a conscious effort to make education and instruction staff the primary forces behind the budget; and accordingly, the central office Budget Team has included Special Education, Curriculum and Instruction, Area Superintendents, Operations, Human Resources and Finance staff. The Budget Team is charged with shepherding the budget through a rigorous initial development, community review, board approval and local school implementation process.

At the center of AISD's cooperative and community-involved budget process is the Budget Advisory Council, which includes more than 70 community and school-based individuals who review the entire budget and recommend changes. Guided by the administration's Budget Team, the Budget Advisory Council holds a series of meetings in which it hears budget presentations from each program area in the budget, reviews each program's budget details and recommends changes.

At the end of its review process, the Budget Advisory Council ranks every proposed budget increase to help guide the administration when it decides which increases it can afford and which it cannot. In recent years, the Budget Advisory Council has drawn its core membership from the District Advisory Council (a legislatively mandated group of community members) and supplemented its membership with individuals typically nominated by local school officials and approved by central administrators. In filling the Budget Advisory Council, the administration's ultimate goal is to achieve adequate representation from all possible stakeholder groups.

Individual school budgets are treated differently from the general districtwide budget. In April, each school receives from the district a package of information and forms to complete a school's Basic Table of Organization (BTO). Each school's BTO is essentially its budget plan for the year, including how it plans to distribute its resources from local, grant and Title I funds. In the BTO package, schools receive the adopted board assumptions (staffing and student projections), staff and non-staff allocations and parameters for revising allocations and preparing the BTO.

Schools receive staff allocations for all positions and guidelines for which positions can be reduced to pay for other positions. Schools receive three types of non-staff allocations that they can reallocate depending on the needs of the school:

- a per-pupil allocation (ranging from $59 to $71 per student in 1999-2000 based on elementary, middle or high school),
- a professional development allocation, and
- a clerical overtime allocation.

Once each school has completed its BTO, it submits the BTO to an area superintendent, who reviews it and submits it to the director of Special Education. Once approved by the director of Special Education, each BTO is loaded into the district's computer system, and it is then used to track each school's budget during the year.

Exhibit 7-9 contains an outline of AISD's annual budget calendar. This budget process is similar to ones followed by other Texas school districts in timing and general structure. It differs from other districts in its heavy focus on stakeholder input and reliance on a curriculum-and-instruction-driven budget team for much of the budget development.

Exhibit 7-9
AISD Budget Calendar

Month	Action	Responsibility
November	Develop budget format, calendar and assumptions.	Budget Team, Human Resources, Office of Student Services, and Board of Trustees
January	Adopt budget format, calendar and assumptions.	Board of Trustees
January	Hold workshop for program managers on budget format, calendar and assumptions.	Budget Team
February	Prepare program budgets and submit to	Program Managers

	Budget Team.	
February	Collect feedback from Campus Advisory Councils on budget priorities and use to help guide budget decision-making.	Budget Team
February	Prepare initial budget document.	Budget Team
February-April	Conduct Budget Advisory Council (BAC) review meetings during which program managers present budgets and BAC rank-orders all proposed increases and makes additional recommendations.	Budget Team, Budget Advisory Council, and Program Managers
April	Distribute Basic Table of Organization (BTO) to each school outlining board's assumptions, staffing projections, per pupil allocations and parameters under which schools can reallocate certain dollars at the school level.	Budget Team
April-May	Submit revised BTOs to Area Superintendent and then to Budget Team for approval/revision.	Principals
May-June	Prepare final draft of budget based on BAC recommendations, revenue estimations and board assumptions.	Budget Team
June	Present budget to Board of Trustees and answer any board questions about the budget.	Budget Team
June	Preliminarily adopt the budget.	Board of Trustees
June-July	Convert program-based BTO budgets into fund/function-based budget and upload onto the mainframe system.	Chief Financial Officer
August	Adopt final budget in fund/function format (per TEA requirements).	Board of Trustees

Source: Interviews with budget team members and budget documents.

Exhibit 7-10 compares AISD to its peer districts in a number of budgetary areas. AISD differs from its peer districts in the way it organizes its budget document and in its team-based approach to budgeting. The exhibit also compares AISD to its peer districts to illustrate which districts have been recognized for their budgets by two national organizations. The Association of School Business Officials (ASBO) and the Government

Finance Officers Association (GFOA) both produce detailed suggestions and guidelines for organizations to follow when preparing budgets. Both organizations also award school districts for excellence in budgeting.

Exhibit 7-10
Budget Comparisons
Austin and Peer Districts

District	Organization of budget document	Budget Director Position	Primary Budget Development Responsibility	Recently Received or Pursuing Recognition*
Austin	By Program	Yes**	Budget Team	No
Alief	By Fund/Function	No	Assoc. Supt. Business	Yes
Corpus Christi	Mixed	No	Director of Finance	No
Fort Worth	By Fund/Function	Yes	Budget Director	Yes
Northside	By Fund/Function	Yes	Budget Director	No
Pasadena	By Fund/Function	Yes	Budget Director	Yes

Source: AISD budget team interviews and peer district surveys.
* Recognition for outstanding budgets is awarded by ASBO (Association of School Business Officials) and GFOA (Government Finance Officers Association).
** The position was filled in February 2000 after having been vacant since 1998.

FINDING

AISD's budget process is primarily lead by educational staff through the Budget Team made up of staff from Special Education, Curriculum and Instruction and Area Superintendents, in addition to Operations, Human Resources and Finance staff. The Budget director does not have primary control over the budget. Although AISD's focus on a cooperative and education-based approach to budgeting has achieved support from the community and other stakeholders, AISD has allowed the financial monitoring and control functions of the budget to essentially fall by the wayside. This problem was exacerbated because the position of AISD's

Budget director was vacant between the summer of 1998 and February 2000, leaving the director of Special Education to act as interim Budget director. As a result, it has not been possible to ensure accountability for monitoring and controlling budget revisions and expenditures. Senior educational administrators and accounting staff are forced to make budgetary changes during the year, tasks typically performed by a Budget director and staff.

Many senior-level central administrators have been forced to spend an inordinate amount of time developing and shepherding the budget. While this situation may have resulted in a more education-focused budget, it has also taken time away from administrators who have important responsibilities in their designated areas. While having a budget process driven by educators and educational administrators appears on the surface to be a goal all school districts should seek, the result at AISD has been that program after program has been budgeted, implemented and then left to operate without serious evaluation of efficiency or effectiveness.

Similarly, the education-driven budget has meant that important administrative and business support functions (such as information technology) have been left unattended. While the main focus has appropriately been on delivering quality education in the classroom, the district's business functions, and the budget to support them, have been largely ignored. The district has not made investments in its business functions, most notably in its administrative computer systems, and it is subsequently suffering from gross inefficiencies and disorganization that is now costing the district time, money and resources.

Recommendation 98:

Transfer the direct authority over and responsibility for developing, implementing and controlling the budget from the Budget Team to the Budget director.

By giving the Budget director authority over the budget, the district can eliminate the Budget Team and instead seek less formal but nevertheless important input from the various administrators previously in charge of the budget process. In many school districts and in the private sector, budget officials work to include input from all pertinent stakeholders throughout the budgeting process, while maintaining primary control over the budget document. AISD should pursue this arrangement.

In addition, AISD should eliminate the cumbersome and structured process of budgetary review conducted by the Budget Advisory Council and change the role of the Budget Advisory Council back to an "advisory" capacity. While still maintaining its strong commitment to community

involvement, AISD should conduct less structured public review and input sessions in which it invites all interested parties to review, comment on and make recommendations for changes in the budget.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Budget director begins developing and implementing new procedures for developing, monitoring and controlling all future budgets.	June 2000
2.	The Budget director take responsibility for completing the 2000-01 budget, with the assistance of other district administrators, school officials and members of the community.	September 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Four of AISD's five peer districts-Alief, Fort Worth, Northside and Pasadena-prepare their budgets primarily in the standard fund/function format. The peer districts also place primary responsibility for developing the budget in the hands of a Budget director or a comparable individual in a financial position. AISD, meanwhile, differs from the majority of the peer districts on these and other budgetary matters.

In response to a request from the 1994-95 school board for more useful budget information, AISD classifies all of its budget items by program (for example, the math program and the transportation program) in all published budget documents. The district's computer systems, however, cannot process and manage a budget that is not organized by fund and function, which is the format in which the budget must be adopted by the school board, according to state law. As a result, district administrators have been forced to prepare the budget based on programs for the school board and the community and then translate the budget into fund/function for the Finance Department's computer system, the schools, the district's administrative departments, and for submission to the Texas Education Agency.

In addition to creating a duplicative process, the district's program-based budget contains almost no narrative and has no table of contents or other mechanism for navigating through the document.

The Association of School Business Officials (ASBO) and the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) are two national

organizations that promote excellence in the form, content and presentation of budget documents through budget award programs. These programs establish a number of criteria for exemplary budget documents and provide certification awards to governmental entities with budget documents that meet the criteria. For example, ASBO requires a school district to budget its expenditures first by fund/function classification and then by program or other mechanism if the districts desires. Many school districts across the country use the criteria to apply for the award, but some use it merely to improve their budget document's content, format and presentation. Peer districts Alief, Fort Worth and Pasadena are pursuing one or both of these awards. AISD, however, is not using the criteria to help develop its annual budget.

Recommendation 99:

Prepare a district budget that is based on fund/function classification and that serves as a policy document, an operations guide, a financial plan and a communications device.

The district should use the ASBO and GFOA criteria as a guide to improve the content, format and presentation of its budget document, and it should seek recognition by either or both of these organizations. AISD should produce a document that can be used and understood by all interested parties, from local school administrators to community members.

By focusing on producing an easily understandable fund/function-based budget, the district will eliminate the need to translate its program budget for the computer system. If the district wishes to continue classifying budget items by program, it should do so, but a program-based budget should not be the district's primary budget. Program budgets can be very useful tools for managerial decision-making and should be considered as a complement to a fund/function budget. AISD should also provide budget information for each department and school so that stakeholders can understand how AISD is spending tax dollars.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The CFO recommends a new budget format based on fund/function organization to the Board of Trustees.	June 2000
2.	The Board of Trustees adopts the new budget format for the 2001-02 budget.	September 2000
3.	The Budget director begins working on improving the budget document for the 2001-02 budget.	October 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Since 1996-97, AISD's budgeted expenditures have exceeded budgeted revenues. Not only is it wise for a district to pass balanced budgets, but districts are expected to maintain an optimum level of reserves to handle emergencies and to ensure that sufficient funds are on hand to cover cash and expenditures flows. The district's management letter from their external auditor states:

> "...the General Fund's current year's budgeted expenditures and transfers were projected to exceed budgeted revenues by approximately $30 million. The 1998 and 1997 budgets also had projected budgeted fund deficits of approximately $23.5 million and $15.4 million, respectively. Each year, for the past three years, the district has amended the original budget and approved large deficit budgets during the year, yet actual results reflect the district's General Fund's fund balance has increased by approximately $14.5 million over the last three years. If the district had actually spent the entire General Fund budgeted expenses for fiscal years 1997 through 1999, the district would have depleted its General Fund's fund balance as of August 31, 1999.
>
> Operating at a deficit, or even budgeting to operate at a deficit, can have an impact on cash flows because of the lack of working capital or available fund balance necessary to fund future short-term and long-term operations..."

The Texas Education Agency's Fund Balance and Cash Flow Calculation Worksheet is used to determine the optimum fund balance for every district in the state. **Exhibit 7-12** shows that AISD is not maintaining an optimum fund balance.

<div align="center">

Exhibit 7-12
Austin Independent School District
Fund Balance and Cash Flow Calculation Worksheet
General Fund (Unaudited)
As of August 31, 1999

</div>

Data Control codes	Explanation	Amount

1	Total General Fund Balance 8/31/1999 (Exhibit A-1 object 3000 for General Fund Only)	$105,531,744
2	Total Reserved Fund Balance (from Exhibit A-1 total of object 3400s for the General Fund Only)	12,393,621
3	Total Designated Fund Balance (from Exhibit A-1 total of object 3500s for the General Fund Only)	39,894,720
4	Estimated amount needed to cover fall cash flow deficits in general Fund (net borrowed funds and funds representing deferred revenues)	91,612,519
5	Estimate of one month's average cash disbursements during the regular school session (9/1/99-5/31/00)	33,061,220
6	Optimum Fund Balance and Cash Flow (2+3+4+5)	176,962,080
7	Excess (Deficit) Undesignated Unreserved General Fund Fund Balance (1 - 6)	$(71,430,336)

Source: AISD Audit Management Letter

The form used by the administration to inform the board of the budget amendments does indicate the funding source, but it does not show the impact of the amendment on the total reserves. Therefore, the board could not easily determine the cumulative impact of multiple small amendments on the overall fund balance, or that these decisions had actually created an emergency funding situation for AISD. Some districts that have anticipated and planned effectively for the impact of Chapter 41 have set aside funds to help the district weather the loss of state funds. AISD not only did not set funds aside, but continued to deplete the fund balance so that today they are not only faced with the loss of state funds, but they must in addition make up for a lower-than-optimum fund balance.

Recommendation 100:

Amend board policy to require a fiscal impact statement on all proposed budget actions, including the impact of those actions on the optimum fund balance.

Budget revisions should carry a fiscal impact statement before any board vote on the matter. Board policy should be amended to require that a fiscal impact statement be included with the background materials submitted to the board for any action item necessitating a budget revision. The revised policy should require that the fiscal impact statement clearly show the effect that the budget revision will have on the optimum fund balance.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The chief financial officer prepares a revision to board policy for consideration by the superintendent.	May 2000
2.	The superintendent provides comments on the draft policy and submits to the board president for comments.	May 2000
3.	The superintendent submits the draft policy revision to the full board for adoption.	June 2000
4.	The board adopts the revised policy.	June 2000
5.	Fiscal impact statements begin to appear with every budget revision.	July 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 7

C. BUSINESS PROCESSES

For a business organization to be effective and efficient, its people, processes and technology must operate seamlessly and in unison. People must be adequately skilled and trained, and they must be equipped with appropriate technologies designed to support efficient business processes. In a school district's business departments in particular, people, processes and technology must come together efficiently and effectively. These departments typically form the core of a district's "customer oriented" business activities, and they set the tone for the district's financial support services and its customer service orientation.

In today's information-driven society, capable financial and management reporting system technology can no longer be viewed as a luxury. School districts require more automation to meet the increasing demands for department, school, program and student performance and accounting data. Similarly, with the advent of newer support technologies, new business processes must be designed and followed to keep pace with the technology. New skills must be acquired by those individuals operating in business support functions.

FINDING

AISD has not kept pace with technology and now finds itself operating with archaic computer systems *and* overly-manual, inefficient business processes.

Many of AISD's business processes are unnecessarily redundant, disproportionately manual and time-consuming. A large portion of the ineffective business processes can be attributed to the district's archaic supporting technologies, but many inefficiencies also can be attributed to basic mismanagement and a lack of planning and oversight.

According to district Finance Department personnel and users of the system, the finance and management reporting system at AISD has several deficiencies. The system is overly dependent on programmers and has excessive manual processing requirements, multiple/redundant "off-line" support systems, limited linkage with other systems, inefficient controls over quality and data integrity, increasingly limited support resources and a limited capacity to provide financial reports to management. Similarly, the district's businesses operations are plagued by inefficiency as evidenced by redundant, manual and paper-intensive processes.

From 1996-97 to 1998-99, the district and outside organizations made several unsuccessful attempts to remedy the district's technology problems. The district implemented and used the American Management Systems, Inc. (AMS) financial accounting software for an eight-month period in 1996-97. The system was subsequently dropped, however, and the previous (and current) system, Pro-Tech, an outdated, COBOL-programmed general ledger and payroll system, was reinstated.

A Citizen's Financial Oversight Committee (CFOC) was developed in Spring 1998 to address financial reporting, management, controls and systems issues in the district. In June 1998, the CFOC issued its first report to the Board of Trustees in which the committee identified data processing systems and financial management issues as "major" focus areas for its review. In November 1998, the CFOC issued its final report to the board summarizing its recommended strategy for a new districtwide information management system. The CFOC recommended that such a system have a "high degree of fit," that the district be willing to pay for large system project management expertise, that in implementing such a system, process reengineering will be necessary, and finally, that financial reporting strategies be implemented based on board objectives.

While the district attempts to remedy its technology problems, AISD has not addressed the related problem of its inefficient business processes. Most of the district's business functions are manual, paper-based activities that are extremely low value-added, yet still necessary.

Much of the problem can be traced to the poor support provided by the outdated financial and accounting software system. When TSPR asked the department to provide a basic business procedures manual, however, staff could not provide one. The Finance Department is clearly not following accepted and standardized business policies and procedures, especially in the accounting and accounts payable areas. The result is that employees spend their time doing only the work necessary to get by each month. TSPR was repeatedly told that when accountants and accounts payable clerks attempt to follow a standard of operation, such as refusing to pay a school for central office reimbursements that do not meet certain criteria, they are often contacted by an area superintendent and told to pay them anyway. Without official, standardized business policies and procedures, Finance Department employees cannot enforce any semblance of organized financial operations.

AISD's Accounting Office is staffed by one chief accountant, two grant accountants and three general accountants. The great majority of the office's accounting processes and procedures are manual and labor-intensive. Because of the limitations of the district's accounting software system, accountants must process and review large amounts of paper in

the form of purchase requests, purchase orders, accounts payable vouchers, central office reimbursement forms, purchasing confirmation forms, supplemental pay request forms and more. One accountant told TSPR that when returning to the office from two days of training, the accountant found a stack of confirmation forms standing two feet high. Similarly, the two grant accountants told TSPR that because of their inability to closely monitor grant activity, largely due to the lack of an effective accounting system, the district had to return unused grant money estimated at greater than $1 million in fiscal 1998.

Similarly, AISD's Accounts Payable Office is staffed by one supervisor and six technicians. This department also is operating under paper-intensive processes with little or no policy and procedural support. For example, the office files a copy of every purchase order, alphabetically by vendor name, in its own separate files because the Purchasing Office, which receives three of the seven total copies of each purchase order, files its copies by number. Employees said that they spend an inordinate amount of time "training" school bookkeepers and others on how to correctly navigate the accounts payable process, only to find that schools and departments consistently submit paperwork that does not meet basic levels of consistency and timeliness.

The Finance Department operates inefficient, paper-intensive processes. TSPR was told by staff that the floor on which the Finance Department is located occasionally shakes due to the volume of paper that must be stored. The paper is managed by periodically transferring groups of filing cabinets to the basement. While the district has a coordinated records management function that follows state requirements and uses electronic storage technologies, the abundance of paper-intensive processes has overburdened not only the people working for the district but also the facilities in which the district operates.

Recommendation 101:

Create, adopt and implement standardized business operating procedures aimed at streamlining business processes and equipping personnel with the guidance and authority necessary to serve the district's customers effectively.

Specific findings and recommendations concerning AISD's information technology systems are addressed in other areas of this report. AISD's Finance Department should create a detailed procedures manual that outlines the steps employees should take to perform certain repetitive tasks, such as rejecting a purchase order, changing an employee's payroll withholding or making a general ledger entry. Typically, such procedures manuals closely correspond to the functions of a computer software

system, and AISD should update and revise its processes when the district acquires and implements new technologies. Since AISD's Finance Department operates a number of manual processes, a procedures manual should be designed to maximize efficiency.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The comptroller, in cooperation with representatives from the Finance Department staff and the schools, prepares a set of procedures for all accounting and Finance Department employees.	June 2000
2.	The comptroller submits these procedures to the superintendent for approval.	July 2000
3.	The Finance Department begins operating under the new procedures.	July-August 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. The recommendations and fiscal impact concerning AISD's information technology systems are addressed in other areas of this report.

FINDING

AISD's Payroll Office operates four payrolls (three monthly and one biweekly) which pay approximately 10,000-11,000 district employees, depending on the time of year. The three monthly payrolls include one each for teachers/professionals (including counselors, nurses, speech therapists and other similar professional positions); administrators/monthly classified employees (including administrators, central office staff, secretaries and other clerical staff); and finally, substitutes.

The biweekly payroll is for classified staff not included in the monthly payroll, typically the lowest-paid employees in the district, such as custodians, bus drivers, bus monitors, maintenance staff and hall monitors. Direct deposit is available for most employees, including teachers, administrators and other professional staff, and is used by at least 75 percent of those eligible. Only biweekly classified employees, temporary and substitute staff cannot use direct deposit.

In addition to the four payrolls processed by the Payroll Office, which is staffed by six payroll technicians and one payroll supervisor, the Food Services Office operates two of its own payrolls, including a monthly payroll for administrators and a biweekly payroll for classified staff,

through which it pays approximately 800 food service employees. When TSPR asked why Food Services operates its own payrolls, district employees cited separate funding as the reason. The Food Services payroll staff has two full-time technicians and one supervisor, whose time is split between supervising payroll and accounting. The staff's payroll process is separate but runs parallel to the process followed by the Payroll Office. The two separate payroll processes operate independently, up to the point where the final food service and regular payroll sets of data are given to the Technology Department for processing and printing.

Exhibit 7-12 shows that AISD prepares more payrolls than any of the peer districts and lacks a fully automated payroll system. AISD's ratio of payroll staff to district employees is among the lowest, indicating its relative inefficiency. The only district with a lower ratio, Northside, is implementing new software it expects will eliminate the need for many of its 12 payroll full-time employees, likely pushing AISD into last place among its peer districts in payroll efficiency. Not only does AISD have too many payrolls, but it is extremely inefficient.

Exhibit 7-12
Summary of Payroll Statistics
AISD and Peer Districts

District	Payroll Staff	Ratio of Payroll Staff to District Employees	Fully Automated Payroll System?	Number Of Payrolls
Austin	**10**	**1:1165**	**No**	**6****
Alief	2	1:2400	Yes	1
Corpus Christi	5	1:1250	Yes	1
Fort Worth	9	1:1222	Yes	4
Northside*	12	1:667*	Yes	2
Pasadena	4	1:1375	Yes	1
Peer Average	6	*1:1383*	*N/A*	2

Source: AISD Payroll Department and peer district surveys.
* Northside is implementing a new module of the Region 20 Service Center software
package and expects to reduce its payroll staff significantly.
**(4 monthly/2 biweekly)

Recommendation 102:

Reduce the total number of payrolls from four monthly and two biweekly payrolls to one monthly and one biweekly payroll.

The district can accomplish this task by combining the two food service payrolls with the corresponding Payroll Office's administrator and biweekly payrolls, and by combining the separate teacher/professional, administrator/monthly classified and substitute payrolls into one monthly payroll. The result will be two payrolls: a monthly payroll for teachers, other professionals and administrators/monthly classified employees and a biweekly payroll for regular classified staff.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant comptroller, with the cooperation of the Payroll Office's payroll supervisor and the Food Service payroll supervisor, develop a plan for integrating the six payrolls into two payrolls.	June 2000
2.	The assistant comptroller asks to reassign one of the Food Service payroll technicians to the Payroll Office.	June 2000
3.	The assistant comptroller and the Payroll Office begin operating the two new payrolls.	August 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation will save $427,050 over five years by eliminating two of the three FTEs in the food service payroll department. The total annual salaries and benefits for the two eliminated FTEs is $85,410, which includes $40,363 in salary and $5,438 in benefits for the supervisor and $34,664 in salary and $4,945 in benefits for the technician.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Reduce the total number of payrolls from four monthly and two biweekly payrolls to one monthly and one biweekly payroll.	$85,410	$85,410	$85,410	$85,410	$85,410

FINDING

AISD's Payroll Office is staffed by six payroll technicians and one payroll supervisor. In addition, the assistant comptroller spends more than half of his time overseeing payroll. One programmer dedicates 75 percent of her

time to payroll programming, and three operations technicians together spend the equivalent of one full-time employee on payroll processing. The district's entire payroll function, including all pertinent salaries and benefits, materials and keypunching contract fees, costs the district approximately $525,979 per year. During 1998-99, the district issued approximately 145,000 payroll checks.

The Payroll Office collects time and pay information from district employees in a variety of ways, all of which are manual and paper-intensive. For example, payroll information on all teachers and school staff is submitted to the department each month by a clerk at each school.

The clerk writes this information on a report generated by the central office that identifies each employee at that school. These handwritten reports are then sent to a private vendor that keypunches the information into the mainframe system at a cost of $25,515 per year. In contrast, many biweekly employees fill out handwritten time cards; substitutes fill out manual bubble sheets; and bus drivers input their time information on an automated system called Kronos.

Similarly, the Food Services payroll function operates its two payrolls in an entirely separate and parallel process to those operated by the Payroll Office. Needless to say, the district's payroll functions are redundant, fragmented and inefficient. Eventually, all payroll information ends up on the mainframe system where it is checked and re-checked by payroll employees for accuracy. Finally, the district's Information Technology Department prints checks for all employees who do not have direct deposit.

While the district does have an automated payroll system, the district's payroll employees cannot rely on the automated system to provide accurate information about employees. For example, during a visit to the Payroll Office, payroll employees demonstrated how the software reported inaccurate information about a randomly-selected district employee. Without an effective automated payroll system, payroll employees must manually calculate and make many salary adjustments, such as raises and retroactive pay for those exceptions that the system rejects.

To correct the automated system's deficiencies, employees maintain a separate card file for each payroll. These card files contain a colored index card for each district employee, with pertinent administrative and payroll information. When a new employee is hired, the department creates a new card for that individual, and when an employee leaves the district, that employee's payroll information card is removed from the active file. During TSPR's visit, the card file contained accurate information on the randomly-selected district employee whose information was reported

inaccurately by the software system. In many cases, payroll employees must also spend hours reviewing reports generated by the computer system for individual mistakes in the payroll. Understandably, the payroll employees told TSPR they did not want to use such a manual system; but without an alternative, they are forced to do what it takes to get by. **Exhibit 7-13** compares AISD's payroll function to key success factors for a payroll system.

Exhibit 7-13

Comparison of AISD Payroll Services to Key Success Factors

Success Factor	Status
Management Information Systems	Staff does not rely on AISD's payroll system and instead use a "system" of colored index cards.
Productivity	AISD's ratio of payroll staff to district employees is one of the worst among its peer districts.
Efficient Processes	AISD operates six separate payrolls, compared to an average of two payrolls among its peer districts.
Clear Organization	AISD's payroll functions are spread out across the district, with responsibilities shared among central payroll staff, food service payroll staff, and an external payroll keypunching vendor.
Customer Satisfaction	Despite obvious problems, focus groups of district employees showed relative satisfaction with the level of service.
Employee Morale	Payroll Office employees are the first to admit that the payroll system is not efficient and that major changes are necessary.

Source: Interviews with district employees and focus groups.

Recommendation 103:

Outsource AISD's payroll data collection, processing, check printing and direct deposit functions to an external vendor.

The district should seek bids for a vendor to collect and process all of its payroll data, print its payroll checks and handle all of its direct payroll deposits. Private companies such as Automatic Data Processing (ADP),

Paychex, and even the Region 20 Education Service Center in San Antonio provide relatively low-cost payroll outsourcing services.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The comptroller and assistant comptroller prepare a plan for outsourcing many of the payroll functions to an external vendor.	June 2000
2.	The comptroller submits the outsourcing plan to the chief financial officer.	July 2000
3.	The chief financial officer amends the outsourcing plan and submits to the superintendent.	July 2000
4.	The superintendent submits the payroll outsourcing plan to the board and the board approves.	August 2000
5.	The chief financial officer and director of Purchasing prepare a request for proposal for payroll services.	August 2000
6.	The director of Purchasing publishes the request for proposal.	September 2000
7.	The superintendent presents submitted proposals to the board.	November 2000
8.	The board awards a contract to a payroll processing vendor.	November 2000
9.	The comptroller and assistant comptroller work with vendor staff to implement the new arrangement and begin transferring duties to the vendor.	November 2000
10.	The CFO takes the necessary steps to reduce payroll costs as specified.	December 2000
11.	The Payroll Office begins functioning under the new arrangement.	December 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

If AISD implements this recommendation, it will eliminate the need for *at least* two payroll full-time employees, the payroll programmer, the operations technician, the check printing materials budget and the contract with a vendor to keypunch this data. This would be a cost savings of $70,660 in salaries and benefits ($30,725 in average salary plus $4,605 in benefits, multiplied by two), $68,709 in programmer salary and benefits ($61,447 in salary and $7,262 in benefits), $39,512 in salaries and benefits for the operations technician ($34,574 in salary and $4,938 in benefits),

$31,200 for the check printing budget and $25,515 in fees paid to the outside keypunching vendor. The total annual savings will be $235,596.

Based on estimates provided by two payroll outsourcing services companies, the cost of outsourcing AISD's payroll will be approximately $1.25 per check. AISD staff said that the district processed 156,354 payroll checks and direct deposits during the 1998-99 school year. Based on that, the total cost of outsourcing the district's payroll services will be $195,443 per year (156,354 checks x $1.25 for processing each check). Additionally, most payroll processing companies charge a one-time implementation fee of between 25 and 50 percent of the annual processing fee. Using the more conservative estimate, the district would incur an approximate $97,722 one-time implementation fee. ($195,443 x .50 = $97,722).

The total fiscal impact of this recommendation is a first year net cost of $57,569, which results from $235,596 savings from payroll staff reductions and other costs, less $195,443 for the outsourced payroll processing equals $40,153 savings less the one-time $97,722 payroll implementation fee. In subsequent years, there is a net savings of $40,153 ($235,596 savings from payroll staff reductions and other costs, less $195,443 costs for the outsourced payroll processing).

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Outsource AISD's payroll data collection, processing, check printing and direct deposit functions to an external vendor.	$40,153	$40,153	$40,153	$40,153	$40,153
Payroll implementation fee.	($97,722)	$0	$0	$0	$0
Net Savings (Costs)	**($57,569)**	**$40,153**	**$40,153**	**$40,153**	**$40,153**

Chapter 7

D. INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AUDIT

In most school districts and similar organizations, internal auditors have no operating responsibility or authority. They are part of an independent appraisal activity within an organization. They conduct reviews of operations as a service to management. Internal auditing is a managerial control that measures and evaluates the efficiency, effectiveness and cost/benefit of operations, programs, other controls and systems. The objective of internal auditing is to help management effectively discharge its responsibilities by providing analyses, appraisals, recommendations and pertinent comments on the activities reviewed.

State and federal law requires school districts in Texas to have annual independent audits of their financial statements. AISD has hired the firm of Martinez, Mendoza & Company P.C. as their external auditor. Martinez, Mendoza began auditing AISD's financial statements with the year ended August 31, 1997. Before Martinez, Mendoza, KPMG Peat Marwick had been the district's auditor for more than 10 years.

AISD has received an unqualified opinion from its auditor each of the past three years. The external auditor also prepares a report to management concerning internal accounting controls and other matters related to significant deficiencies in the design or operation of the internal control structure.

The Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) has promulgated five general standards for the professional practice of internal auditing. **Exhibit 7-14** describes those standards.

Exhibit 7-14
Institute of Internal Auditors
General Standards

Standard	Description
Independence	Internal auditors should be independent of the activities they audit.
Professional Proficiency	Internal audits should be performed with proficiency and due professional care.
Scope of Work	The scope of internal auditing should encompass the examination and evaluation of the adequacy and

	effectiveness of the organization's system of internal control and the quality of performance in carrying out assigned responsibilities.
Performance of Audit Work	Audit work should include planning the audit, examining and evaluating information, communicating results and following up.
Management of the Internal Audit Department	The director of internal auditing should properly manage the internal auditing department.

Source: Institute of Internal Auditors, Summary of General and Specific Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing, http://www.theiia.org/standard/Summary.htm

AISD's Internal Audit Department is governed by a charter that includes a statement of authority and purpose and lists the department's responsibilities.

FINDING

The charter for the Internal Audit Department in AISD does not reference many components of the Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing as promulgated by the IIA. For example, the charter does not reference independence, objectivity, professional proficiency, safeguarding assets, operations and program reviews, planning, staff development, external auditors and quality assurance. The IIA standards require that the charter include the purpose of the internal audit function, its scope of work and a declaration that auditors are to have no authority or responsibility for the activities they audit. As a result, the Internal Audit Department in AISD has not been held accountable to the minimum standards on which it should be founded.

Recommendation 104:

Update and adopt a new charter for the Internal Audit Department that references the Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing as promulgated by the Institute of Internal Auditors.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Internal Audit, with the assistance of other Internal Audit and Finance Department staff, drafts a new charter, incorporating the Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.	May 2000

2.	The superintendent reviews, approves and submits the revised audit charter to the Board of Trustees for adoption.	May 2000
3.	The Board of Trustees reviews and adopts the new internal audit charter.	June 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Annual internal audit activities are not effectively planned and executed. While the department does prepare an annual audit plan, the plan is limited to school activity fund audits. The Internal Audit Department is often unable to complete the annual audit plan due to special projects and investigations not included in the initial plan.

AISD's internal audits are not based on a formal assessment of organizational and operational risks. A review of internal audit activities for the past six years disclosed that approximately 80 percent of the audits performed in AISD have been audits of school activity funds. The plan is developed each year based on the previous year's activity fund audits with little attention to risk considerations in other operating areas of the district.

School activity funds in AISD accounted for approximately $18 million in revenues and expenditures during 1998-99. The balances on hand as of August 31, 1999 were approximately $4.1 million. Although this amount represents significant cash activity, spending 80 percent of the internal audit effort on one area with less than 4 percent of the district's annual expenditure budget does not effectively use internal audit resources.

In addition, Internal Audit staff are used extensively for special projects and investigations that have impaired Internal Audit's ability to complete many of its audits. The district lacks an effective internal audit plan that incorporates resource time allocations for special projects and investigations. Consequently, the district is not efficiently and effectively using its internal audit resources.

Recommendation 105:

Adopt a formal risk assessment of the AISD organization and its operations, programs, systems, and controls to be used by internal audit in identifying potential high-risk areas for review.

As a result of implementing this recommendation, AISD will benefit from a balanced audit approach that audits and reviews more than just school activity funds. In addition, special project and investigation hours can be anticipated and budgeted.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Internal Audit, with the assistance of other internal audit and Finance Department staff, defines the role and scope of internal audit activities.	May 2000
2.	The director of Internal Audit, with the assistance of other internal audit and Finance Department staff, gathers input from central administration and school staff on the role and scope of internal audit activities.	June 2000
3.	The director of Internal Audit develops and implements a new audit planning process incorporating that input and guided by the audit charter and the Institute of Internal Auditors standards.	June 2000
4.	The Internal Audit Department begins implementing the new audit planning process.	July 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The charter for AISD's Internal Audit Department states that the department shall report administratively to the Board of Trustees and functionally to the superintendent. Present and past Internal Audit staff told TSPR that the department rarely interacted with the board and that past superintendents had presented audit findings to board members. There are no board standing committees, therefore no audit committee of the board exists, and annual internal audit plans receive little attention from board members.

External audit reports also receive little attention from board members. These reports are presented to the entire board, with little focus on them by any specific group of board members. For example, the board has received external auditor management letter comments every year since 1996-97 regarding the district's deficient fixed asset system, but to date, the system is still not fixed.

Recommendation 106:

Create a standing audit committee of the Board of Trustees that directs the Internal Audit Department and monitors the external audit function in auditing and investigating operational and financial matters of the district.

The Internal Audit Department should report directly to the newly created audit committee of the Board of Trustees. The audit committee should also receive the findings and recommendations from the external auditor, and should report back to the full board on the actions that should be taken to resolve the issues raised.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board establishes a standing audit committee of the board to supervise and direct the Internal Audit Department, and to monitor the external audit function.	May 2000
2.	The board selects members of the board to sit on the audit committee.	May 2000
3.	Audit committee establishes its charter, mission, goals and objectives that will guide its operation, including defining the reporting relationship between the board and Internal Audit.	June 2000
4.	Audit committee holds monthly and quarterly meetings that include reports from the director of Internal Audit.	July 2000
5.	Audit committee reviews and approves audit plan for 2000-01.	July 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The technical proficiency and educational background of Internal Audit staff, which consists of two auditors and a vacant director position, is not adequate, which results in non-compliance with several Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing. Neither of the auditors is a certified public accountant or certified internal auditor. One auditor has a college degree, the other is working towards a college degree and has passed two of four parts to the certified internal auditor (CIA) exam.

While the director position requires the occupant to be either a certified public accountant (CPA) or a CIA (certified internal auditor), that position has been vacant since February 1999. Although significant institutional knowledge resides with the existing staff because of their long years of

service, adequate knowledge of planning and managing the department's annual audit activities has been lacking for many years. In addition, auditing district operations outside student activity funds is seriously lacking.

Present Internal Audit Department resources are not sufficient to ensure an effective internal audit operation. Since 1991, the staff has decreased from one director and four auditors to one director and two auditors. The lack of leadership and sufficient, qualified audit personnel has resulted in less-than-adequate results from the department, such as its failure to prepare and execute an adequate audit plan.

Moreover, the essential standards of independence have been violated by Internal Audit staff training and providing assistance to school activity fund managers, the same staff that are auditing the school activity funds. Audit staff members also said that they were investigating one incident of fraud and embezzlement involving a school activity fund and were preparing to investigate at least one additional incident.

Recommendation 107:

Fill the vacant director of Internal Audit position and hire at least two additional audit staff.

The director should be a certified public accountant or certified internal auditor with at least six years of internal audit management experience, preferably in a school district or similar entity. Staff auditors should possess a minimum of a college degree in accounting, be a certified public accountant or certified internal auditor (or progress toward certification), and a minimum of three to five years of audit experience. The district posted the director position in March 1999, but it has not filled the position.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Human Resources, with input from the superintendent, aggressively solicits candidates for the open director and staff positions.	May 2000
2.	The superintendent, with assistance from the chief financial officer, interviews all candidates and hires a new director of Internal Audit and two additional audit staff members.	June 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

The director position is already budgeted and, therefore, has no fiscal impact.

The average salary of the two current audit staff members (Internal Auditor IV position) is $47,409, with an average benefits cost of $6,048, for an annual cost of $53,457 for each audit staff member. Hiring two additional internal auditors at the average salary and benefits will cost the district $106,914 annually in salary and benefits.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Fill the vacant director of Internal Audit position and hire at least two additional audit staff.	($106,914)	($106,914)	($106,914)	($106,914)	($106,914)

FINDING

Internal Audit provides management supervision and training to school bookkeeping personnel on how to administer school activity funds. Nearly 100 percent of one full-time clerk's time and between 10 percent to 15 percent of an auditor's time is spent directly supporting, training and overseeing school bookkeeping activities. The Finance Department does not have available accounting resources to fulfill this function for the district.

Alleged misappropriations are being investigated at two schools. One school has allegedly misappropriated $20,000. Internal Audit's credibility, independence and objectivity is questioned when its staff is investigating people and a process of which they previously have had oversight responsibilities.

The IIA standards specifically require internal auditors to be independent of the activities they audit and to maintain a high degree of objectivity. The practice of supporting and training school bookkeepers impairs Internal Audit's independence and objectivity when auditing activity funds.

Recommendation 108:

Hire two full-time staff accountants and reassign the oversight responsibilities for school bookkeeping activities, training, and support to the Finance Department.

Implementing this recommendation will centralize financial accounting and bookkeeping activities in the Finance Department and improve Internal Audit's independence. Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District (CFISD) is a best-practice model in this area. In CFISD, two accountants, who also have additional accounting assignments, handle all bookkeeping activities, training and support.

In addition, that district prohibits campus bank accounts for activity funds. All activity fund accounting is processed centrally. Deposits, procurements and payments are treated as any other transaction in the district. Northside Independent School District recently adopted similar operating procedures.

These new positions in AISD will increase the Finance Department's ability to direct financial and bookkeeping activities at the schools and other locations.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The CFO develops position descriptions for the two new accounting positions.	May 2000
2.	The superintendent and board approve the two new accounting positions.	May 2000
2.	Personnel posts the positions and begins to accept applications.	June 2000
3.	The CFO and comptroller conduct interviews and fill the two positions.	August 2000
4.	The CFO and comptroller train new employees on job duties and responsibilities.	September 2000
5.	The comptroller evaluates new employees' performance.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

Two entry-level accountants will cost the district $32,982 in salary for each plus benefits of $4,800 each, for a total cost of $37,782 for each accountant. The salary level is based on the average salary of the three current Accountant Assistant positions.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Hire two full-time accountants and reassign the oversight	($75,602)	($75,602)	($75,602)	($75,602)	($75,602)

responsibilities for school bookkeeping activities, training, and support to the Finance Department.					

FINDING

Since 1996-97, AISD has repeatedly failed to submit its Consolidated Annual Financial Reports (CAFR) to the Texas Education Agency within the prescribed time limits. The Texas Education Code requires that "[a] copy of the annual audit report, approved by the board of trustees, shall be filed by the district with [TEA] not later than the 120th day after the end of the fiscal year for which the audit was made." The release of the financial reports has been delayed between four to six weeks each of these years.

The district's external auditors said that the audit could not be performed within the prescribed time frame because of AISD's inability to provide adequate accounting information. The external auditor considers the accounting information to be incomplete, primarily because of AISD's alleged inadequate financial systems. AISD said that the audit could not be done in the time frame because of the external auditors' insufficient pre-audit planning, loss of previous year's accounting information, frequent turnover of audit staff and an insufficient number of available, knowledgeable audit staff. Regardless of the actual reason for the failure, AISD not only fails to comply with state law, it is most likely incurring additional audit fees as a result of the added testing and field work required by the external auditor.

Recommendation 109:

Develop an annual external audit approach that will enable AISD to comply with Texas Education Code financial reporting requirements.

The solution to this problem will require a joint effort between AISD and its external auditors.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The CFO meets with the comptroller to develop an annual financial report production strategy.	June 2000
2.	The CFO and comptroller meet with the superintendent to discuss the strategy.	June 2000
3.	The CFO and comptroller meet with the external auditor to discuss	July

	the annual audit approach and develop a strategy to comply with state reporting laws.	2000
4.	The CFO and comptroller monitor internal financial reporting processes and the external auditor to ensure that financial reporting deadlines are met.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 8
PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSE SERVICES

This chapter reviews the Austin Independent School District's (AISD) purchasing and warehousing functions and focuses on the following topics:

A. Purchasing
B. Textbooks
C. Warehouse Services

Purchasing functions within a school district should ensure that supplies, equipment, and services are purchased from the right source, in the right quantity, at the lowest prices and in accordance with Texas purchasing laws and guidelines. These criteria should be met for each purchase without sacrificing quality and timeliness. Warehousing operations include the receipt, storage, and distribution of a wide variety of goods, including school supplies, textbooks, and vehicle parts.

BACKGROUND

The Texas Education Code includes state purchasing regulations designed to provide the best value to school districts through a competitive bidding process. During the 1999 legislative session, the regulations for competitive procurement were revised to explain the competitive bidding process more fully to vendors and show that the process is conducted openly and fairly, providing maximum value to the district. Generally, when districts purchase items valued at $25,000 or more (or multiple like items with a cumulative value of more than $25,000 in one year), one of the following processes must be followed:

- competitive bidding: requires that bids be evaluated and awarded based solely upon bid specifications, terms and conditions, bid process and bid price;
- competitive sealed proposals: vendors submit a written proposal that is publicly opened to ensure fairness in the bidding process;
- request for proposals: furnish a mechanism for the competitive sealed proposal process that generates the receipt of competitive sealed proposals and contains several key elements, including newspaper advertisements, notice to proposers, standard terms and conditions, special terms and conditions, scope of work, acknowledgment form/response sheet, felony conviction notice and a contract clause. Requests for proposals have been eliminated as an option for competitive procurement for construction services;

- catalogue purchase: provides an alternative to other procurement methods for the acquisition of computer equipment, software and technology services;
- 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 take responsibility for both the design and construction of a project;
- job order contracts: used for minor repair, rehabilitation or alteration of a facility; and
- construction management contracts: used to construct, rehabilitate, alter, or repair facilities using a construction manager.

Districts must advertise bids for more than $25,000 in goods or services at least once a week for two weeks in any newspaper published in the county in which the district is located. Contracts for $10,000 to $25,000 must be advertised in two successive issues of any newspaper in the county. The Education Code requires advertisements specifying the categories of property to be purchased and solicitation of vendors that are interested in supplying them.

Vendors can be placed on a potential vendor list that specifies when the vendor wants to supply the district with their merchandise or services. This list is used to notify vendors when bids are issued.

Contract fees for some types of professional services are not subject to competitive bidding requirements, including architects, attorneys, and fiscal agents.

The Education Code also allows a district to purchase items that are available from one source ("sole-source" purchases) if certain criteria are met, including:

- an item for which competition is precluded because of the existence of a patent, copyright, or proprietary process;
- a film, manuscript, or book;
- a utility service including electricity, gas, or water; and
- a replacement part or component for equipment that is specific to a particular piece of equipment and is not available from more than one vendor.

After a revision in 1999, the Texas Education Code requires school districts to give preference to agricultural products produced, processed or grown in Texas, if equal in cost and quality. School districts may not place unnecessary restrictions on agricultural products that would exclude Texas

products. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) is responsible for determining the effectiveness of the new provisions.

Chapter 8

A. PURCHASING

AISD's Materials Management Department is responsible for district procurement and warehouse and mail services. Reproduction and printing are also a part of Materials Management. Materials Management does not purchase construction management services, food service items and items purchased by schools or departments using activity funds or confirmation orders.

The Purchasing Division of Materials Management employs 11 full-time staff members, including the department director and secretary. During 1998-99, the Purchasing Division had two temporary employees. One full-time, senior buyer position was added during the 1999-2000 budget process, and the position was filled in October 1999. The district also has a student working 19 hours a week. Food Services also has three employees who perform some procurement duties for cafeteria and food programs.

The mailroom operations division has five full-time staff members. Mail routes run daily to each of the district's facilities and campuses. In addition to the mail, mailroom operations returns items to the curriculum and instruction library, returns audio/visual equipment to schools after repairs, and delivers paperwork to the Board of Trustees.

The print shop and copy center are part of Materials Management. Both use a combination of in-house and outsourced services. Each department and campus has copy machines on-site to meet daily reproduction needs. The copy center is located at Central Administration and provides services for the campuses and Central Administration. About 70 percent of the district's copying needs are met through the copy center and on-site copy machines. The district also has a contract for copying services that cannot exceed $100,000 annually. The district bid out a portion of the services to a vendor with multiple locations. Thus, schools can get copy jobs done without going through the copy center.

The print shop has a staff of three consisting of a manager/instructor and two printers. The print shop recovers its supplies, materials and operating costs. Typical print jobs include forms, student handbooks, letterhead, football programs, posters, signs, and business cards. About 60 percent of its jobs are forms for instruction or curriculum. About 30 students work in the print shop during the school year, learning to typeset, run the presses, and perform other aspects of the trade. About 10 students work at the print shop during the summer. The district also outsources about 50 percent of

its print jobs, typically those that require services the shop cannot provide. Jobs that are outsourced include Community Education course offerings schedules, bus schedules, reports to the community, staff directories and class schedules.

Exhibit 8-1 shows AISD's current organization structure for the Materials Management Department.

Exhibit 8-1
AISD Purchasing
Current Organization Structure
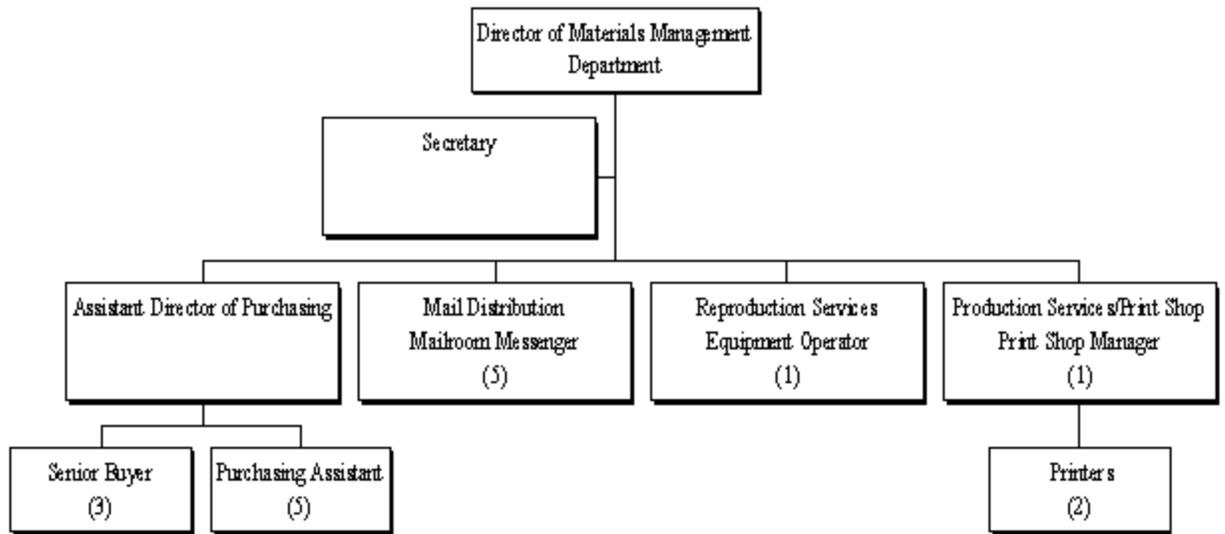
Source: AISD Materials Management Department.

Training sessions are held for AISD purchasing employees prior to each school year. Policies outlined include:

- purchases of $500 to $1,000 require three verbal price quotes. Schools and departments are authorized to obtain quotes and submit them to purchasing with a purchase requisition. The campus or department provides the same specifications to each vendor. The names of the vendor, vendor representative and quotation amount is kept on file;
- purchases of $1,000 to $10,000 require three written quotes. Schools and departments are authorized to obtain quotes and submit them with the purchase requisition to purchasing. If possible, each vendor should be furnished written specifications. Use of a fax machine is encouraged. All quotes, regardless of amount, should be taken with freight costs included;
- formal advertising for bids must be made for purchases of $10,000 or more, and the purchasing office must be given time to

sufficiently advertise the purchase. If more than $10,000 worth of equipment for a single use, such as athletic equipment or instructional supplies, is purchased over a 12-month period, the purchase must be submitted for competitive bidding; and

- purchases of $25,000 or more require at least three additional weeks for approval by the Board of Trustees.

Exhibit 8-2 outlines the district's bid process for purchases of $10,000 to $24,999 and $25,000 or more.

Exhibit 8-2
Bid Process for Purchases
$10,000 to $24,999 and
$25,000 or More

$10,000 to $24,999	$25,000 or Greater
Bid Prepared Due by Thursday of week issued	**Bid Prepared** Due by Thursday of week issued
Bid Mailed Must be available to the public by Monday following the first advertisement	**Bid Mailed** Must be available to the public by Monday following the first advertisement
Advertise Saturday and Sunday of the same weekend	**Advertise** Saturday and Sunday of two consecutive weeks
Bid Opening 10 calendar days after the second advertisement	**Bid Opening** 10 calendar days after the second advertisement
Evaluation Generally less than 10 days	**Evaluation** Generally less than 10 days
Board Award Purchase Order or Notice of Award issued by purchasing	**Agenda prepared** 3 weeks prior to board meeting
	Board Award Purchase Order or Notice of Award issued by purchasing
3 WEEK CYCLE	**8 WEEK CYCLE**

Exhibit 8-3 presents the operating budget of the Purchasing Division for 1997-98 through 1999-2000.

Exhibit 8-3
AISD Purchasing Operating Budget
1997-98 through 1999-2000

Category	1997-98 Actual	% of Actual	1998-99 Actual	% of Actual	1999-2000 Budget	% of Budget
Payroll	$461,771	79.5%	$511,243	83.8%	$513,537	74.5%
Purchased and Contracted Services	76,575	13.2	57,652	9.5	146,700	21.3
Supplies and Materials	9,662	1.7	17,105	2.8	12,500	1.8
Travel	709	0.1	930	0.2	1,816	0.3
Fees, Dues and Advertising	10,478	1.8	11,817	1.9	14,500	2.1
Capital Outlay	21,232	3.7	11,230	1.8	0	0
Total	**$580,427**	**100%**	**$609,977**	**100%**	**$689,053**	**100%**

Purchasing is responsible for:

- purchase requisitions (requests for purchases that are initiated by schools or departments and forwarded to purchasing);
- competitive solicitations (requests for specific goods or services from vendors);
- quotations (prices for specific goods or services that are verified by Purchasing); and
- competitive sealed bids (formal proposals for providing goods or services at a specified price through sealed documentation).

To requisition an item, each department or campus enters the purchase request on the Purchasing Requisition System (PREQ) or on a paper requisition form. Paper requisitions are required for travel, professional services and consultants.

Exhibit 8-4 illustrates the district's purchasing process.

Exhibit 8-4
AISD Purchasing Process

School or Department needs to purchase an item

The item is available from the warehouse —No→ Is the item on District Bid —No→ Not on District Bid, Not in Warehouse

Warehouse branch (Yes):
Requester fills out a warehouse requisition → Requester receives Material

District Bid branch (Yes):
Process a purchase requisition → Submit to Purchasing electronically → Purchasing Issues a Purchase Order → Receives Materials → Process a Receiver to Accounts Payable

Not on District Bid, Not in Warehouse branches:

Less than $500:
Obtain 1 Quote → Process Purchase Requisition and Submit to Purchasing Electronically → Purchasing Issues a Purchase Order → Receive Materials → Process a Receiver to Accounts Payable

$500 -999:
Obtain 3 Verbal Quotes → Process Purchase Requisition and Submit to Purchasing Electronically → Purchasing Issues a Purchase Order → Receive Materials → Process a Receiver to Accounts Payable

$1,000 - 9,999:
Obtain 3 Written Quotes → Process Purchase Requisition and Submit to Purchasing Electronically → Purchasing Issues a Purchase Order → Receive Materials → Process a Receiver to Accounts Payable

$10,000 or Greater:
Submit a Written Request to Purchasing → Purchasing Advertises and Obtains Formal Bids → Award of Items $25,000 or Greater Require Board Approval → Process Requisition and Submit to Purchasing Electronically → Purchasing Issues a Purchase Order → Receive Materials → Process a Receiver to Accounts Payable

Source: AISD Materials Management Department.
PREQ has been in use since 1986. It is written in an antiquated Cobol programming language, and cannot be changed easily. PREQ cannot be used with other district computer systems, including the accounting system. As a result, finance and purchasing do not have access to the same information about purchase orders. When a change is made on the purchase requisition system, the corresponding change is not made automatically by the accounting system. The information is communicated from the purchasing system to the accounting system during a batch transfer each night. The Accounts Payable Division does not have access to purchase orders by vendor, while Purchasing does. This inadequate

technology hinders AISD from processing requisitions and purchase orders efficiently.

Hardware and software can be purchased several ways:

- districtwide bids are available for computer hardware, software and printer needs. Vendors can be contacted directly by school and department personnel for pricing and technical guidance;
- purchases can be made through the Texas Department of Information Resources. Schools and districts can purchase a variety of software through DIR's Web site at competitive prices; and
- Texas General Services Commission (GSC) - Qualified Information Systems Vendors (QISV) Catalog Purchases - Purchases of computers, software, technology services and peripherals not available through a district bid are made through QISV catalog solicitations. Purchasing issues all solicitations for QISV purchases.

AISD makes purchases through competitive bids, and state contracts that are the result of a competitive process, or through vendors on the GSC, or a QISV catalog listing. Vendors can submit their catalogs to the GSC and once approved, are available for purchase without competitive bidding. Although direct negotiation is an option for QISV purchases, AISD makes the majority of its QISV purchases through a competitive process to ensure low prices.

FINDING

A formal purchasing policy and procedures manual is not available for district departments or campuses. While training classes are held on the purchasing process for librarians, there is not a comprehensive procedure manual that provides a reference tool for district employees to use when processing purchase requisitions, inventory requisitions, confirmation orders and central office reimbursements. As a result, when a person on a campus needs to purchase something, they are expected to either know the procedures, or call Purchasing. Without a manual, Purchasing Division customers cannot understand the process. Teachers requested the Purchasing director that all district employees receive the same purchasing training as librarians.

Recommendation 110:

Develop a comprehensive purchasing policy and procedures manual for all offices in the Purchasing Division, campuses and departments and place the manual on the district's intranet.

A formal, comprehensive policy and procedures manual will reduce the frustrations and inefficiencies in the purchasing process.

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 often be used to acquaint vendors and suppliers with the school district's policies and procedures. Internally, the manual helps to train school district personnel in purchasing policy and procedures. Finally, it promotes consistency in purchasing applications throughout the school district. Such a manual can be either stand-alone or be included as part of a financial and accounting manual.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the Materials Management director to develop a formal comprehensive policy and procedures manual for employees.	June 2000
2.	The director of Materials Management coordinates with the assistant director of Purchasing to develop the policy and procedures manual.	June 2000
3.	The assistant director of Purchasing produces the policy and procedures manual.	June - September 2000
4.	The assistant director of Purchasing, in conjunction with the director of Information Technology, places the Policy and Procedures Manual on-line on the district's intranet.	September 2000
5.	The assistant director of Purchasing develops training for use of the manual.	September - October 2000
6.	The assistant director of Purchasing conducts training courses for department and campus representatives.	October 2000
7.	The assistant director of Purchasing distributes the comprehensive policy and procedures manual to each department and school.	October 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district's board policies for purchasing do not include changes made in the Texas Education Code during the 1995, 1997 and 1999 legislative

sessions. Without adopting the changes, the district's board policies are more restrictive than current state law and are causing the district staff to use additional time and other resources.

According to AISD board policies, formal sealed bids are required for purchases exceeding $10,000. The Texas Education Code was changed by Senate Bill 1 in 1995 to provide new options for purchasing goods and services valued at $25,000 or more, including sealed proposals, request for proposals, a catalogue purchase, an interlocal contract and a design/build contract. Purchases from $10,000 to $25,000 require written or telephone price quotes from at least three suppliers. AISD board policies require formal, competitive sealed bids for items between $10,000 and $25,000. In 1998-99, competitive sealed bids between $10,000 - $25,000 made up 34 percent of total competitive sealed bids solicited in 1998-99. The district's requested competitive sealed bids for purchases of $10,000 to $25,000 during 1998-99 are shown in **Exhibit 8-5**.

Exhibit 8-5
Requested Competitive Sealed Bids
$10,000 to $25,000
1998-99

Bids Requested	Estimated Value
Printing of Staff Directory	$19,000
Two-Way Radio Repair	15,000
Multiple Outlet Strips and Extension Cords	12,000
Fresnel Lens	10,500
Tape Rack System	18,000
Printing of Guidance and Counseling Magazine	12,000
Kilns	18,000
Video Equipment for Buses	20,000
Library Supplies (Warehouse)	12,000
Principles of Technology Lab Equipment	13,000
Pest Management Products	17,000
Lesson Plan Books and Class Record Books	11,000
Diplomas and Diploma Covers	15,000
Van Rental	16,800

Psychology Books	17,000
Grass and Turf Supplies	13,000
Gym Floor Finish and Thinner	12,000
Library Shelving	16,000
Printing of Community Education Brochure	11,000
Display Books	15,000
Refrigerant Gases	20,000
Area Rugs	23,000
Music Instruments - Elementary Schools	15,000
Custodial Supplies	15,000
Fire Extinguisher Cabinets	18,000
Physical Education Supplies, Special Order	18,000
Floor Tile	19,000
Athletic Training Supplies	22,000
Boxes	20,000
Fencing Material	23,000
Seat Covers for School Buses	20,000
Disposal Site for Solid Waste	20,000
First Aid Supplies Special Order	12,000
Audio Visual Carts	17,000
Medical Services for Varsity Football Games	10,000
Copier/Maintenance - Reproduction Center	10,000
Advertising Sales Services for the AISD Staff Directory	15,000
Printing of Community Education Brochure	10,000
Electrophoresis Camera and DNA Analysis Equipment	23,000
Data Processing Paper Products	14,000
Printing of Professional Development Catalog	11,000
Microscopes and Balances	15,000
Service to Recycle and Transport Spent Oil and Oil Filters, Antifreeze and Spent Solvents	16,000

Fire Extinguisher and Venthood Services	12,000
Lawn Equipment, Flail Mowers	12,500
Mailing Services	12,000
Total	**$715,800**

Source: AISD Materials Management Department.

If AISD board policies reflected the changes from the Legislature, the items identified in **Exhibit 8-5** could have been purchased with only three written or telephone quotes rather than through sealed competitive bids, freeing up staff time for other projects.

AISD policy also requires bids when more than $10,000 is spent on construction, repair, or renovation of a structure, road, or addition to property, and any materials used. The Legislature set the minimum at $25,000.

Recommendation 111:

Revise and implement AISD board policies for competitive purchasing to reflect changes in the Texas Education Code.

Once the policies have been changed and implemented, staffing levels in purchasing should be reduced by one temporary position.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	Superintendent directs the Materials Management director to review all purchasing policies.	June 2000
2.	Materials Management director reviews all purchasing policies to reflect state law.	June - July 2000
3.	Materials Management director presents the proposed changes to the chief financial officer.	August 2000
4.	Chief financial officer reviews the changes and submits them to the superintendent for review.	August - September 2000
5.	Superintendent presents the proposed revisions to the board for its review and approval.	October 2000
6.	Board approves the Purchasing policy revisions to reflect state law.	October 2000
7.	Superintendent directs Materials Management director to	October 2000

	implement the changes.	

FISCAL IMPACT

Reducing the number of competitively sealed bids for items between $10,000 and $25,000 would allow the elimination of one temporary position. Based on the current salary of a temporary clerk in Purchasing, this recommendation would result in annual savings of $5,700.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Revise and implement AISD board policies for competitive purchasing to reflect changes in the Texas Education Code.	$5,700	$5,700	$5,700	$5,700	$5,700

FINDING

While the district's purchasing system is capable of online requisitioning and approval, paper requisitions are required for all consultant contracts, travel requests, and professional services. Departments and schools may also use a paper requisition if they do not want to enter the requisition online. This process is paper intensive and inefficient.

Purchasing processes an estimated 15-20 paper requisitions each day during the school year, and about 10 a day during the summer. About 4,700, or 21 percent, of all requisitions are processed on paper each year.

A paper requisition must be submitted to Purchasing manually. When a paper requisition is submitted, information may be missing. Purchasing staff must complete the requisition form before processing it. Once the school principal, grant compliance office or department head has approved the request, Purchasing enters the requisition into the online purchasing system. The system processes the day's requests overnight.

After the requisition has been processed, a blue requisition is printed in Purchasing. The blue requisitions are then distributed to the assigned buyer or purchasing assistant for review. Each requisition is reviewed by the buyer or purchasing assistant for account, catalogue and bid information. In addition, the Finance Division reviews paper requisitions for consultant contracts to ensure proper account codes and sends them back to Purchasing to be put into the system and converted to purchase orders. Once the requisitions have been reviewed, the buyer or purchasing assistant makes changes to the requisition on the computer system. After

the initial review, the director of Materials Management or assistant director of Purchasing reviews all blue paper requisitions.

Once the requisition is approved, it is converted into a purchase order. Converting a requisition requires the buyer or purchasing assistant to enter the requisition number and information into the computer again. A purchase order number is assigned at that time. A six-page purchase order is printed with copies distributed to the vendor, purchasing, finance, the school or warehouse, and Receiving. One copy is kept on file in Purchasing.

Recommendation 112:

Require all departments and campuses to use the online Purchase requisitioning and approval system.

AISD should require every department and campus to use the online requisitioning and approval features of its purchasing system. This will also transfer the responsibility for entering requisition information from the Purchasing Division to the individual departments and campuses.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent requires all campuses and departments to enter all purchase requisitions online by September 2000.	June 2000
2.	The chief financial officer and director of Materials Management develop a process allowing the Accounting Division to review the requisitions electronically.	June 2000
3.	The superintendent instructs the director of Information Technology and the director of Purchasing to develop a training guide for entering purchase requisitions and train the staff on online requisitioning.	June - July 2000
4.	The Purchasing director provides training guides to departments and campuses and trains staff to enter Purchase requisitions on-line.	July - August 2000
5.	Departments and campuses entering requisitions and approvals online.	September 2000 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

Eliminating paper requisitions would free up some purchasing staff time. Assuming this would reduce staff overtime by five hours a week, at a rate of $18 an hour for overtime pay, an average rate the department is

currently paying, this recommendation would save $4,680 annually (52 weeks x 5 hours per week x $18 per hour).

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Require all departments and campuses to use the online purchase requisitioning and approval system.	$4,680	$4,680	$4,680	$4,680	$4,680

FINDING

The Purchasing Division reviews and approves all purchase requisitions submitted by schools and departments. Although the district purchases most of its merchandise from previously approved bid lists, like those prepared by GSC, Purchasing still reviews and approves each purchase.

The Departments and schools are authorized to obtain three phone or written quotes for all purchases under $10,000. All purchase requisitions are initially reviewed by purchasing assistants or buyers, then forwarded to the director of Materials Management or assistant director of Purchasing for review.

Purchasing Division reviews each department or school's paperwork to ensure that the requisite number and type of quote was obtained, an approved vendor was selected and the best price was chosen. Purchasing would also ensure that the department provides adequate justification when the lowest quote is not selected.

Exhibit 8-6
Number and Value of AISD Purchases by Dollar Thresholds
1998-99

Threshold	Number of Purchases	% of Number of Purchases	Value of Purchases	% of Value of Purchases
$0 - $499	14,240	64.7%	$2,750,158	1.4%
$500 - $999	2,618	11.9	1,910,302	0.9
$1,000 - $9,999	4,461	20.3	14,059,578	7.1
$10,000 - $24,999	541	2.5	8,901,241	4.5
Over $25,000	139	0.6	170,900,852	86.1
Total	**21,999**	**100%**	**$198,522,131**	**100%**

Source: AISD Materials Management Department.

Exhibit 8-6 illustrates the district's total purchases orders according to their dollar thresholds during 1998-99. About 77 percent of all purchase orders are for purchases of less than $1,000. However, these purchases only amount to less than 3 percent of the total value of purchase orders.

Recommendation 113:

Expedite the purchase requisition approval process by authorizing purchasing assistants and buyers to approve purchase requisitions of $1,000 or less, and by developing a procurement card program.

Purchase requisitions for less than $1,000 should be reviewed and approved by purchasing assistants and buyers without the department director or assistant director's approval. This will allow purchase requisitions to be approved and processed more quickly by eliminating the time between initial review of the requisitions and entry of the purchase order.

A management report should be designed to randomly check purchases approved by the purchasing assistants and buyers. This report would allow the director and assistant director of Purchasing to check the work of the assistants or buyers.

In addition, AISD should develop a procurement card program to shift responsibility for relatively low-dollar purchases to ordering departments. Procurement cards are designed to maintain control of expenses, while reducing the administrative costs associated with authorizing, tracking and paying for routine, inexpensive items that would normally require a purchase order. The distribution of procurement cards can be limited to authorized employees, and controls can be built into the cards, allowing AISD to promptly track and evaluate employee spending patterns.

AISD should build controls into the procurement cards that limit the total dollar amount that can be spent, limit the types of items that can be purchased and set limits on where the bill is sent and the level of detail included on the bill. AISD should consider whether a procurement card vendor offers electronic billing and access to accounts, and make sure the vendor has sound fraud prevention and customer service programs.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent instructs the Materials Management director to reduce oversite of purchase requisitions for less than $1,000.	June 2000

2.	The Materials Management director directs the Purchasing director to authorize the purchasing assistants and buyers to oversee purchase requisitions for $1,000 and less.	June 2000
3.	The superintendent instructs the director of Materials Management to identify commodities used by the district that could be purchased with procurement cards, and to identify departments in the district that would benefit from a procurement card program.	June 2000
4.	The director for Purchasing establishes a team of representatives from Accounts Payable, Purchasing, Warehouse Services, Accounting, and customer departments to develop a procurement card program.	June 2000
5.	The team members conduct site visits with local companies to evaluate the program and its benefits.	June-July 2000
6.	The team members review card capabilities with major providers.	August 2000
7.	The team gains the approval of the assistant superintendent for Business Services to move forward with an RFP or negotiations through the state GSC contract.	September 2000
8.	The team submits the RFP.	September 2000
9.	The assistant superintendent approves the RFP.	September 2000
10.	The school board approves the recommended vendor from the RFP or negotiations through the state GSC contract.	
11.	The team establishes procedures and policies for the procurement card.	November-December 2000
12.	The Purchasing Department trains staff on how to use the cards and then distributes them.	January 2000
13.	The Purchasing Department pilots the procurement card program in several departments.	January 2000-February 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

A procurement card system for purchases of less than $1,000 would reduce the review of requisitions. No cost would be associated with the procurement card program. As the purchasing process becomes more efficient, a temporary clerk in Purchasing could be eliminated. Based on the current salary of a temporary position, this recommendation would result in annual savings of $5,700. Because of the implementation timeline, only half of the savings would be realized during first year.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Expedite the purchase requisition approval process by authorizing purchasing assistants and buyers to approve purchase requisitions of $1,000 and less, and by developing a procurement card program.	$2,850	$5,700	$5,700	$5,700	$5,700

FINDING

There are two methods for purchasing items without using the formal purchasing process, confirmation orders and central office reimbursements. Both allow departments and schools to be reimbursed for items they purchase. Operating departments primarily use confirmation orders, while individual campuses tend to use central office reimbursements.

Confirmation orders provide operating departments with a mechanism for purchasing items that are needed to address an immediate problem. Purchasing is provided a copy of confirmation orders that fall within competitive bidding requirements prior to approval of the request by Accounting. Confirmation orders are submitted to Accounting after the purchases have been made. Departments or campuses are required to document that quotes were obtained when required. A department or campus then submits the form to Accounting to pay local vendors for goods or services that those departments or schools have purchased on account with the vendor.

Accounting estimates that about $4 million worth of confirmation orders were processed in 1998-99. When Accounting is processing the order, if there is a violation of the purchasing process, it is brought to the chief financial officer's attention. Any action taken at that time is at the discretion of the CFO.

Confirmation orders are also used when a department has closed a blanket purchase order. A blanket purchase order is established when large quantities of an item will be used over the year. The items are competitively bid as a whole but not received or paid for at one time. The items will be used throughout the year with invoices received for each item. When a blanket purchase order is set up, the total purchase amount appears in the finance system as having been spent by the department. As a result, departments close blanket purchase orders toward the end of the fiscal year, so they do not appear to be spending over their budget, then

purchase items through confirmation orders. The confirmation orders
allow flexibility in managing a department's budget.

During 1998-99, the Department of Construction Management processed
over 1,000 confirmatio n orders worth over $330,000. One confirmation
order can be the combination of several invoices from the same vendor.
Each invoice must be reviewed as part of the confirmation order.

Exhibit 8-7 shows the detail of confirmation orders processed by the
Department of Construction Management during 1998-99.

Exhibit 8-7
Confirmation Orders
Department of Construction Management
1998-99

Month	Value	Number of Invoices	Number of Confirmation Orders
September	$26,390	1,025	97
October	33,600	1,207	95
November	12,194	1,093	138
December	24,206	1,093	102
January	13,900	794	91
February	27,559	1,674	143
March	29,000	1,292	N/A
April	58,919	2,038	N/A
May	49,483	2,767	174
June	56,421	2,654	185
July	N/A	N/A	N/A
August	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	**$331,672**	**15,637**	**1,025**

Source: AISD Department of Construction Management.

Campuses use activity funds to purchase items or services, then process a
central office reimbursement and reimburse the campus activity fund.
Purchasing does not review central office reimbursements and
departments and schools have the greatest potential for violating the

district's purchasing procedures and rules by paying for goods or services out of their school activity funds and then seeking reimbursement. In 1998-99, some accountants spent as much as 25 percent of their time processing central office reimbursements.

Departments and schools are not held accountable for following purchasing policies because there are no formal policies for the confirmation order and central office reimbursement process. Finance and Purchasing have no written procedures to support them in denying or redirecting the requests. Each case that may have violated the purchasing policies and laws are handled on a case-by-case basis.

Recommendation 114:

Develop, implement, and train users on administrative policies governing appropriate use of central office reimbursements and confirmation orders.

Development of procedures and guidelines to govern the use of confirmation orders and central office reimbursements will provide direction to departments/campuses and limit the use of these processes. Punitive measures should be developed for employees who engage in misuse of the confirmation orders or central office reimbursements. The McAllen Independent School District holds employees who purchase or order items or services without following the district's purchasing policies and procedures personally responsible for payments to vendors or return of items. Houston Metro considers failure to follow procurement procedures an offense punishable by termination.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the chief financial officer to develop procedures and guidelines for confirmation orders and central office reimbursements and develop disciplinary guidelines for misuse of confirmation orders and central office reimbursements.	June 2000
2.	The chief financial officer develops procedures and guidelines for confirmation orders and central office reimbursements and disciplinary process for misuse of the confirmation orders and central office reimbursements.	June - July 2000
3.	The chief financial officer develops training for department and school personnel on the procedures.	August 2000
4.	Required training is given to selected department and school personnel on the procedures and guidelines for confirmation orders and central office reimbursements and potential	September 2000

	disciplinary actions if procurement policies are violated.	
5.	The superintendent implements the policies and procedures.	October 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

AISD is not formally tracking key performance data or using performance measures to manage the financial performance, cycle time, and quality of its purchasing functions.

During the 1999-2000 budget process, the Materials Management Department requested five additional employee positions. No performance measures were used to justify the request, only the staffing level in 1976 and school district growth since that time. There were no data indicating an increase in workload, only an assumption that if the district grew, so would the amount of work.

Performance measures provide benchmarks that allow management to evaluate its performance against itself over time and against other district and industry measurements. **Exhibit 8-8** outlines sample performance measures for three key purchasing functions.

Exhibit 8-8
Examples of Performance Measures

Type of Performance Measure	Sample Effectiveness and Efficiency Measures
Financial Performance	• Number of purchase orders by amount • Cost of operating the purchasing function as percent of total revenue • Percent of total purchasing requisitions processed • Total purchases of goods as a percent of total district, campus or department budget • Total purchases of services as percent of the total budget
Cycle Time and Productivity	• Average number of days needed to fill purchase requisitions

	- Average number of purchase orders processed per purchasing employee - Total volume of purchases per purchasing employee - Total volume of purchases per professional (exempt) purchasing employee
Supplier Quality	- Number of active suppliers per purchasing employee - Number of purchases per active supplier - Cost of purchasing per active supplier - Percent of total purchases spent with minority-owned suppliers - Percent change in number of active suppliers during the one-year reporting period

Source: Center for Advanced Purchasing Studies.

Recommendation 115:

Develop and use key performance measures to aid in the management of AISD's purchasing operations.

By calculating and analyzing key financial, cycle time, and supply quality performance measures on a regular basis, a purchasing agent can identify key variances in departmental costs and supplier performance, and better manage the operations of the department.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the Materials Management director to develop performance measures for purchasing.	June 2000
2.	The director of Materials Management works with the assistant director of Purchasing to develop performance measures.	June - July 2000
3.	The director of Materials Management coordinates with the director of Information Technology to develop the required reports for identification of the measures.	July - September 2000
4.	The director of Materials Management directs the assistant director of Purchasing to process the required reports on a quarterly basis.	September 2000

5.	The director of Materials Management reports to the superintendent Purchasing's performance based on its performance measures.	September 2000 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 8

B. TEXTBOOKS

TEA is responsible for selecting and purchasing most of the textbooks used in Texas school districts. Each year, TEA provides districts a list of recommended textbooks and also buys textbooks from publishers and lends them to districts. A district's established textbook adoption committee then selects the textbooks the district will order, following TEA guidelines. The decision to purchase is made at the local level, and TEA does not monitor the use of the textbooks.

The number of books allowed per subject and grade level is based upon student enrollment information submitted to TEA through the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS). Annual orders for instructional materials are based on the maximum number of students enrolled in the district during the previous school year and/or registered to attend district schools during the next school year. Annual textbook orders are due by April 1 of each year. Supplemental orders are submitted after the annual order and throughout the year. Districts are given the opportunity to report exceptions to the PEIMS data if they are incorrect.

Each district is responsible for returning these borrowed textbooks to TEA. If textbooks are lost during the school year, the district either recovers its cost from the student, the student's parent or guardian or the district compensates the state for the loss.

AISD's director of Materials Management is the district coordinator for textbook operations. Training sessions about the textbook process are held twice a year, at the beginning of the school year and in January or February. AISD developed *A Guide to Textbooks* detailing the procedures for ordering textbooks for the classroom. This guide is distributed at the training sessions. A textbook guide is also sent to the principal of any campus that does not send a representative to the training session.

The principal is the custodian of all state textbooks on the campus and is responsible to the district textbook coordinator for issuing and collecting and accounting for all state-adopted textbooks.

In June, each campus conducts an annual inventory of all textbooks and reports any fines, worn-out textbooks, or textbooks that have been paid for by students or the district. The textbook coordinator sends each campus a textbook record and price list. The textbook record and price list is for reconciliation of books between what the schools have and what the textbook record and price list shows. If the school identifies a difference, it

should contact the textbook coordinator and identify the differences. If the textbook coordinator does not receive any response from the schools, it is assumed the information is correct. The textbook coordinator rarely receives any changes from the campuses.

The Materials Management personnel perform a textbook audit at a school whenever a change of principal has occurred, or at least once every three years regardless of staffing changes. Current adoption textbooks, systems, and surplus or damaged textbooks are included in the count.

The district's textbook processing software is on the mainframe written in COBOL, an antiquated programming language, that requires considerable programmer support. Since 1995-96, seven programmers have been assigned to support the textbook system. As a result of the high staff turnover on the support of this system, it has been difficult for any changes or updates to be made. The district purchased a new software system in 1998-99, but has had problems implementing the system. The software vendor and the district have addressed programming-related problems, and the district is working with the vendor to transfer the data from the current system to the new system. With limited programming support available for the current system, transferring to the new system has been a slow process. The district has only purchased the licensing for use at the district level.

After annual textbook adoptions are announced, a report and requisition form is sent to each campus. This form includes projected enrollment figures based on student records. The form also identifies the number of books the district can receive from TEA, based on the projected enrollment. Each campus then identifies how many books it has, based on the February inventory and any authorized changes that might have occurred after that time. The report and requisition form is then returned to TEA in April with the annual book order.

The principal's supporting data form is used in conjunction with the annual report and requisition form. Key items appearing on the principal's form include:

- projected number of teachers, including special education and bilingual teachers;
- enrollment of special education and bilingual students; and
- junior and senior high forms including projected enrollments for each subject by grade

The enrollment figure provided on this form must agree with the enrollment figure on the annual textbook report and requisition form. The number of students and teachers appearing on the principal's supporting

data report are combined into a consolidated districtwide report that is used by TEA to determine if the combined book order is approved. Textbooks are distributed to schools in June for the next school year based on the enrollment projections on the textbook report and requisition form. If the projected enrollment for one school is not correct, the textbooks must be redistributed after the beginning of the school year.

Items reported as surplus on the report and requisition form will be picked up from the campuses in the early summer. The surplus books will be used to stock other schools needing the same title. If surplus books are not returned by the campuses, the amount ordered may not meet the needs of the district.

New textbooks are delivered to the district's warehouse. Warehouse personnel distribute new and surplus books to campuses in June and July. The distribution of books is based on the annual textbook report and requisition form. The textbooks delivered during June are based on the April order. If additional textbooks are ordered in July, they may not be available until August.

FINDING

Focus groups with principals, assistant principals, and teachers highlighted a lack of textbooks. According to the focus group participants, some classrooms did not have required textbooks in November 1999. Some of the comments include:

- bilingual workbooks have to be used several times by different students;
- schools are not held accountable for lost textbooks. Some pay for lost textbooks, other don't;
- district distributes and tracks textbooks manually. A bar coding system would be much more effective;
- the district does not have textbooks for Advanced Placement courses;
- workbooks and support materials are not available.

Exhibit 8-9
AISD Payments for Textbook Losses
1997-98 through 1998-99

School Year	Total Losses	% Increase from Previous Year
1996-97	$145,388	N/A

1997-98	173,288	19%
1998-99	257,366	49%
Average	$192,014	N/A

Source: AISD Materials Management Department.

The principal is the custodian of all textbooks at each campus. Some principals assign specific staff members to carefully control textbook activity within the school. The principal or designee is responsible for the textbooks at their school. The textbook record and price list is sent to the schools to reconcile with the school's information, but there are rarely any changes made by the principal or the principal's designee. However, when the warehouse goes to pick up the textbooks, the school does not have the textbooks and so they are not available to be redistributed to other schools that need them.

The district is not eligible for replacement of lost textbooks until it pays TEA for missing books. The district pays for lost textbooks prior to September 1 of each year, giving individual schools time to locate missing textbooks. Replacement textbooks are ordered at that time. Lost textbooks are considered part of the district or school's inventory until TEA is paid for them. Books may not be available on the first day of school if replacement books are ordered at the end of August, or in September.

Recommendation 116:

Require principals to follow the textbook inventory guidelines in the *Guide to Textbooks*.

Campuses should be required to carefully control textbook activity by:

- taking an annual inventory of all instructional materials, including pupil editions and both traditional and electronic instructional media systems;
- maintaining all textbook records and a statement of current charges for lost textbooks;
- keeping all extra instructional materials in a controlled bookroom, and sending payments for lost and destroyed textbooks to the textbook coordinator; and
- initiating mandatory textbook inspection by teachers, particularly at the end of the school year.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs principals to implement textbook inventory procedures.	May 2000
2.	The principals assign one staff person as a textbook coordinator to maintain and control the textbook activity.	June 2000
3.	The textbook coordinator checks the inventory in the campuses' bookrooms. A complete inventory of a campus' bookroom is conducted if a discrepancy is found.	September 2000 - February 2001
4.	The textbook coordinator reconciles inventory with the price list.	May 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

AISD paid TEA more than $257,366 for lost textbooks in 1998-99. With tighter inventory controls, the district could cut textbook losses by 20 percent and save $51,473 a year.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Require principals to follow the textbook inventory guidelines in the *Guide to Textbooks.*	$51,473	$51,473	$51,473	$51,473	$51,473

Chapter 8

C. WAREHOUSE SERVICES

An efficient warehouse operation should ensure that all purchases and deliveries to schools and departments are complete and timely; inventory levels are sufficient to meet requests for supplies from individual schools and departments; property and equipment are properly accounted for and controlled; and surplus or obsolete property is properly disposed of and removed from district records.

The warehouse foreman is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the unit and reports to the director of Materials Management. The warehouse operates with 26 full-time-equivalent (FTE) positions. Two of the positions were added during the 1999-2000 budget process. During each summer, about 15 temporary staff positions are added to meet the demand for textbook deliveries and annual warehouse inventory. **Exhibit 8-10** provides the organization structure for warehouse services.

Exhibit 8-10
Warehouse Services
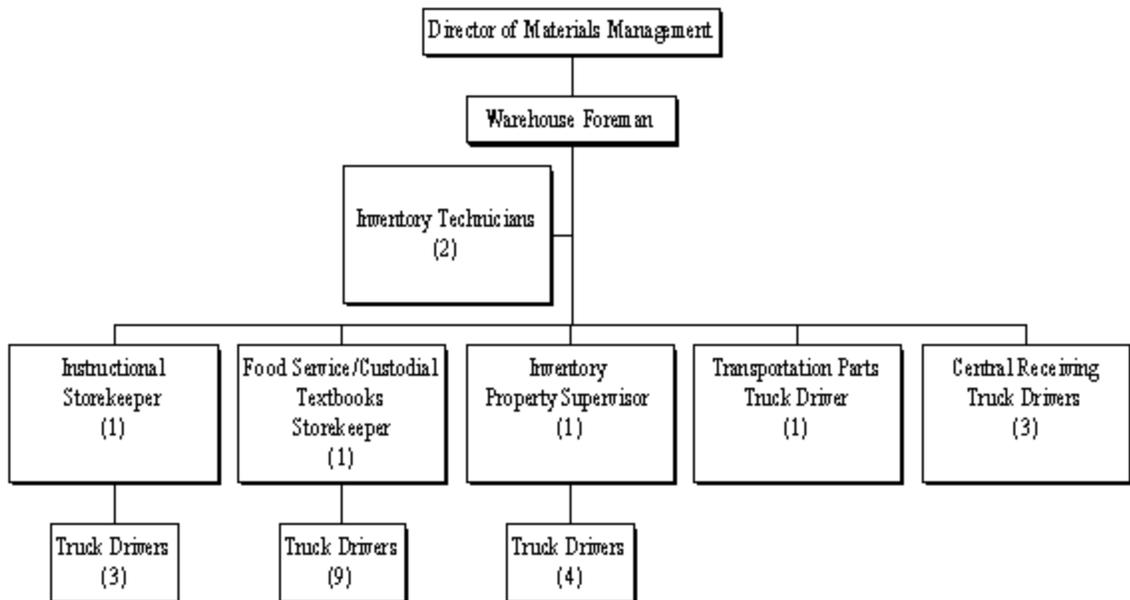
Source: AISD Materials Management Department.

AISD warehouse operations are housed in two different locations: the Central Warehouse has 76,500 square feet for storing instructional items, dry food commodities and food supplies, surplus and obsolete items,

textbooks, custodial supplies and archived paper records. AISD Food Services warehouses its frozen food at Grocery Supply in San Antonio. Grocery Supply receives and delivers frozen food supplies as part of their warehousing contract. A 16,380 square-foot cold and frozen food warehouse was approved in the 1996 bond program, and should be open some time in 2000. The frozen food warehouse space will be built as an addition to the Central Warehouse. With the addition of the frozen food warehouse space, eight new positions will be added: one inventory technician, three warehouse workers and four delivery drivers.

Exhibit 8-11
Warehouse Square Footage by Section

Section	Sq. Ft.	Number of Pallets
Food Service	15,600	1,003
Custodial	7,350	542
Books	5,850	270
Instructional	19,500	1,549*
Furniture	18,200**	1,278
Central Receiving	625	99
Transportation	875	Bins
Staging	8,500	270
Total	**76,500**	**5,011**

Source: Material Management Department.
*Includes 250 pallets of archived records and 50 pallets for Data Services.
** Includes 10,000 square feet of floor space for auctions.

Exhibit 8-12
AISD Warehouse Services Operating Budget
1997-98 through 1999-00

Category	1997-98 Actual	% of Actual	1998-99 Actual	% of Actual	1999-2000 Budget	% of Budget
Payroll	$874,840	88.9%	$746,305	91.2%	$710,369	82.9%
Purchased & Contracted Services	57,653	5.9	16,851	2.1	50,741	5.9

Supplies & Materials	9,663	0.9	9,671	1.2	6,800	0.8
Capital Outlay	42,000	4.3	45,403	5.5	89,281	10.4
Total	$984,156	100%	$818,230	100%	$857,191	100%

Source: AISD Materials Management Department.

Warehouse orders, capital outlay items that cost more than $300, and items such as VCRs that can be easily stolen are delivered to the Central Warehouse. These items are bar-coded and entered into the assets system by Financial Services.

The warehouse makes deliveries to each campus and department once a week. For a campus to order an item from the warehouse, an individual must enter requisition information on the Warehouse Requisition System (WREQ). The WREQ transaction issues requests for items to the AISD warehouse. After the requisition is input into the WREQ, the order is printed at the warehouse on the next business day. Warehouse orders should be entered at least three working days prior to the school or department's scheduled delivery day.

Warehouse personnel conduct an annual inventory at the end of June. When a discrepancy is identified, the warehouse foreman reviews the records to determine if an entry error occurred. If there has not been an entry error, the item is recounted by a different person. The item may go through three different counts to verify the inventory number. After three counts, the warehouse supervisor and director of Materials Management determine what type of inventory adjustment should occur. In addition, the district's independent auditing firm completes a sample audit of the warehouse inventory each year.

FINDING

Fleet maintenance for AISD is performed at two different sites. The transportation inventory is kept at the Central Warehouse. When the Transportation division requires an item from inventory, it is requested through the warehouse requisition system, then a runner from Transportation picks the item up at the warehouse on a daily basis.

If a part is required immediately and is not available at the warehouse, the Transportation Division purchases the part from local vendors. A runner picks the part up from the local vendor or the part is delivered directly to the fleet maintenance shop.

As a result, parts are purchased from outside vendors on an ongoing basis, in addition to the warehoused parts. Some districts achieve a better value by routinely acquiring their transportation parts from outside vendors.

Exhibit 8-13 shows the number of items and dollar value of items not requested from the transportation inventory since 1996-97.

Exhibit 8-13
Transportation Inventory
Not Requested

Not Requested Since	Number of Items	Value of Items
1996-97	1,148	$83,552
1997-98	141	11,584
1998-99	144	9,328
Total	**1,433**	**$104,464**

Source: AISD Materials Management Department.

In addition, there are eight pallets of small parts that are not part of the inventory but have not been sold in auction. These items are not necessary and are taking up valuable warehouse space while parts are purchased from outside vendors on an ongoing basis.

Recommendation 117:

Sell obsolete transportation inventory and open the acquisition of transportation parts to competition.

Review transportation inventory and sell unused and obsolete items keeping only specialized parts for buses such as seat belts.

Transportation inventory could be outsourced. There are two different options available to the district, including a turnkey operation for warehousing parts for vehicle maintenance or outsourcing the supply of replacement parts. There are firms that provide centralized turnkey parts operations for vehicle maintenance shops. A firm could provide personnel management, and parts and supplies necessary to run an efficient and effective on-site parts operation that covers all hours worked by the facilities including overtime due to peak demand and emergency operations. This type of operation could cover all the parts that are necessary to maintain, repair, and operate transportation vehicles.

AISD could outsource the supply of replacement parts and maintain a limited inventory of frequently used parts, supplies, lubricants, filters, and the belts. AISD could continue to warehouse specialized parts for buses such as seatbelts.

City of Austin outsources its fleet replacement parts to CarQuest. A contract can be designed to address the need for standard parts and requirement for delivery of the parts. If the delivery requirements cannot be met.

A request for bid can be written with specifications of common supply parts used, delivery locations, and time frames. The bid can also be written to estimate the sampling of common parts and not make guarantees that all parts will be purchased.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the director of Materials Management to identify all obsolete and seldom - used transportation inventory.	June 2000
2.	The director of Materials Management, with the help of the Transportation director, prepares a list of obsolete and seldom used transportation inventory that should be removed.	August 2000
3.	The Superintendent reviews and approves the list and the director of Materials Management directs the warehouse foreman to remove the items from the inventory.	September 2000
4.	The warehouse foreman removes the transportation items from the inventory.	September 2000
5.	The superintendent directs the director of Materials Management and the director of Transportation to develop a request for bid to outsource the supply and delivery of transportation parts.	June 2000
6.	The director of Materials Management and director of Transportation prepare a request for bid for the supply and delivery of transportation parts.	June - July 2000
7.	The director of Materials Management and director of Transportation advertise and competitively bid the request for bid for supply and delivery of transportation parts.	August 2000
8.	The director of Materials Management and director of Transportation tabulate and evaluate the bids received for transportation inventory.	September 2000

9.	The director of Materials Management and director of Transportation make a recommendation for award of contract.	September 2000
10.	The superintendent reviews the recommendation of award of contract.	October 2000
11.	The superintendent places the contract on the school board agenda for approval.	October - November 2000
12.	AISD board approves the bid to outsource transportation parts inventory.	October - November 2000
13.	The superintendent directs the director of Materials Management to sell all transportation parts except identified specialized parts in auction.	December 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

The district could save $10,446 if obsolete and seldom-used inventory was sold for 10 cents on the dollar.

Outsourcing the transportation parts could eliminate a warehouse worker. Based on the average salary of a warehouse truck driver position at $25,181 and $5,659 for benefits, this recommendation would result in an annual savings of $30,840. Due to lag time in implementation, only partial savings for eight months would be realized during the first year ($30,840 ÷ 12 = $2,570 x 8 = $20,560).

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Sell obsolete transportation inventory.	$10,446	$0	$0	$0	$0
Open the acquisition of transportation parts to competition.	$20,560	$30,840	$30,840	$30,840	$30,840
Total Savings	**$31,006**	**$30,840**	**$30,840**	**$30,840**	**$30,840**

FINDING

The warehouse stores surplus furniture and obsolete items for the district. The central warehouse does not have a computer inventory listing of surplus and used furniture, but instead employs a manual tracking system. Furniture and surplus items occupy an estimated 18,200 square feet of the

warehouse. Items in the warehouse are auctioned off quarterly. About 10,000 square feet in the warehouse is occupied by items specifically identified for the auction.

There are furniture and surplus items that have been in the warehouse for more than three years and have not been requested by the schools or administrative departments. The furniture is considered usable but not desirable. As a result, the campuses order new furniture rather than taking it out of inventory. There is no formal process in place to evaluate surplus furniture prior to ordering new furniture. New furniture is ordered without investigating the quantity or quality of usable furniture in inventory.

Exhibit 8-14
Classroom Furniture
In AISD Warehouse
October 1999

Type of Furniture	Quantity	New Purchase Price
Student Desks	1,846	$39.00
Student Chairs (various sizes and colors)	870	$11.31 (average)
Combination desk and chairs	120	$31.99
Round Tables	60	$65.69

Source: AISD Materials Management Department.

In 1998-99, almost $600,000 was spent on classroom furniture. This estimate includes purchases for new schools. Most of the classroom furniture was purchased without determining if the inventory was available in the warehouse.

Recommendation 118:

Develop and implement a policy and procedure governing the use and disposal of surplus classroom furniture.

Procedures for using furniture from the warehouse, rather than purchasing new classroom furniture, will need management's full support including AISD board members, central administration and campus administration.

A formal procedure should be developed and implemented to ensure current inventory is used before new furniture is purchased. A formal policy should be created that includes a time limit for furniture in the warehouse-for example, if desks are not used in one year, they should be sent to the auction.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the director of Materials Management to develop a formalized procedure for locating surplus furniture located in the warehouse before ordering new classroom furniture and identifying items for auction.	July 2000
2.	The director of Materials Management develops formalized procedure for identifying classroom furniture located in the warehouse prior to ordering new classroom furniture and prepares a list of items for auction.	July - August 2000
3.	The superintendent approves the procedures and the director of Materials Management trains personnel from campuses and district administration on the new procedures.	August 2000
4.	The superintendent implements the formal procedure.	September 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

The warehouse has $89,614 worth of classroom furniture. Assuming at least 50 percent of the furniture is useable and the district would use it before ordering new furniture, this recommendation would result in one-time savings of $44,807. This would also free up about 4,000 square feet in the warehouse. The district could save more money in the future if classroom furniture is not sent to the warehouse, but used until it is ready for auction.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Develop and implement a policy and procedure governing the use of surplus classroom furniture and disposal.	$44,807	$0	$0	$0	$0

FINDING

AISD warehouse is organized into eight different sections: Food Services, Custodial, Books, Instructional, Furniture, Central Receiving, Transportation and Staging. Within each section, items are located based on stock number. There is no formal picking system for filling orders generated at the warehouse. A picking system requires shelves and areas containing warehouse stock to be sequentially numbered to help the warehouse technicians retrieve stock. Sections are organized by stock number, however, the aisles and shelves are not clearly labeled. If a person

was not familiar with a particular section, it would take him or her longer to find a specific item there.

Recommendation 119:

Clearly label all the Warehouse aisles and shelves to facilitate efficient removal of stock.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Chief Financial Officer instructs the director of Materials Management to clearly label all aisles and shelves.	June 2000
2.	The director of Materials Management directs the warehouse foreman to clearly label all aisles and shelves.	June 2000
3.	The warehouse foreman labels aisles and shelves.	July 2000
4.	The warehouse foreman continues to monitor and revise the labeling of the aisles and shelves.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 9
COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

This chapter discusses AISD's computers and technology function in five sections:

A. Technology Planning
B. Infrastructure, Hardware and Software
C. Technical Support
D. Staff Development
E. Instructional Technology

The responsibilities of technology services operations in Texas public school districts vary. Some offices support administrative workers only, while others, like AISD's, are responsible for supporting both administration and instruction. To achieve its technology-related goals, a school district must be organized to use and support existing and new technologies. A well-managed information services department has a clearly defined strategic plan based on appropriate goals and organizational schemes; clearly assigned responsibilities; well-defined procedures for developing new applications; and the ability to meet and anticipate customer needs.

Important elements of technology services include network support services, which support the district's information technology infrastructure, including a Wide Area Network (WAN) connecting district facilities; Local Area Networks (LANs) in schools and administrative offices; and, in some cases, the telephone system. Management information systems (MIS) typically supports business and student information systems, including application purchases and development, database administration, software maintenance and computer operations. Frequently, this group also provides support for ad hoc and end user reporting (management reports printed by customers). Instructional technology helps integrate technology into the curriculum.

BACKGROUND

In October 1999, AISD's departments for MIS, Network Systems & Support (NSS), Instructional Technology (IT), Accountability, School to Career, and Student Services were combined in a single Accountability and Information Systems Technology Department. The department oversees data submissions for Public Education Information Management Systems (PEIMS), the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), and the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). The department also manages programs that assist students in entering the modern workplace as well as

maintaining the student master file of the student information system (all student-related data, such as home addresses, grades, class schedules). In addition, the department is responsible for the organization's business systems, its networks, and its phones.

Since 1996, a number of committees, teams and groups have been formed to advise district management on technology issues. These included the Technology Advisory Committee (established October 1998), the Technology Steering Committee (established October 1998 and discontinued February 1999), a broad-based technology advisory committee (which met in 1996 and 1997), and principal focus groups on technology (which met from 1997 through 1999).

As of January, 2000, the technology services function had 96 full-time employees plus six contractors. Of these, 17 positions (17 percent) were vacant. In addition, the deputy superintendent of Accountability and Information Technology Systems has asked for 58 new positions, (of which half will be campus-based data entry clerks) at an annual cost of $2.5 million. **Exhibit 9-1** illustrates the organizational structure of the AISD Accountability and Information Systems Technology Department.

Exhibit 9-1
Accountability & Information Systems Technology Department
Organization Structure
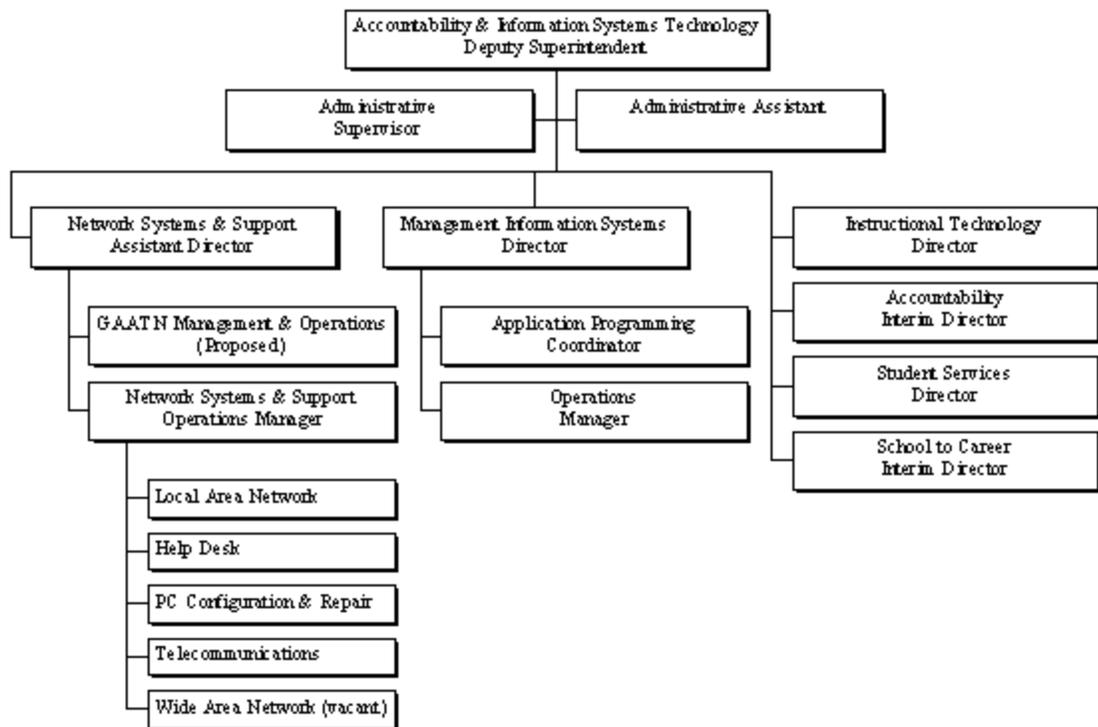
The director of Management Information Systems (MIS) oversees a staff organized into two sections: Application Programming and Systems Operations. The programming staff reports to a coordinator, while the Systems Operations staff reports to a manager.

Application Programming is responsible for developing and supporting the district's business and student information systems.

Systems Operations is responsible for scanning district forms, data entry, and the management of outsourced data entry. A Help Desk and Application Programming share responsibility for administering 2,000 on-line accounts (of which more than 900 are active at any given moment).

The assistant director of Network Systems & Support (NSS) oversees seven departments. The technology infrastructure project management team and its subcontractors report to the assistant director through a network manager. The technology infrastructure project team is completing a facilities upgrade needed to connect PC/Mac workstations to the district's WAN. The project is intended to wire every classroom to support six data ports and one video port plus a telephone and a public address outlet.

Wide Area Network supports the district's portion of the Greater Austin Area Telecommunications Network (GAATN), including administration of Cisco 1010 ATM switches that connect the fiber optic segments, Cisco Catalyst 5000 switches, and Cisco 1900 switches installed in all district wiring closets.

Local Area Network supports the administration, maintenance, and security of the district's 300+ servers located on 99 campuses. These are a combination of application servers, file and print servers installed at server farms at the 11 high schools, 11 Lotus Notes servers, and the implementation and maintenance of almost 7000 Lotus Notes users. The section supports 9,000 authorized users (with about 1,000 active users during any single day).

Telecommunications operates the district's telephone system, including 108 Nortel Meridian switches, more than 10,000 telephones, and all network wiring in the walls of the district's facilities. New infrastructure wiring has been completed on 82 campuses; telephone systems have been installed at 67 campuses. With a telephone and a public address outlet planned for every classroom, Telecommunications will support almost

10,000 phones, over 100 Nortel switches, and over 100 public address systems when all infrastructure work has been completed.

The Help Desk staff fields all calls for technical support into the HEAT software system, a help desk call tracking system. Between May 3 and September 30, 1999, the Help Desk fielded 8,198 calls with a spike of 769 work orders---called trouble tickets---issued during the week of August 8, 1999. Of the requests submitted between May and October, 7,365 work orders were completed and entered into the software as being complete. PC Configuration and Repair technicians are responsible for the district's network from the wall to the desktop; in other words, for PC/Macintosh configuration, installation, printer installation, desktop software installation, and PC-to-network connectivity. With the completion of the infrastructure project, PC Configuration and Repair will be responsible for 25,000 PCs in 5,000 classrooms.

The director of Instructional Technology (IT) provides training and support for teachers, campus technologists (staff who help teachers use technology in classroom curriculum), and students. IT supports the Educator Technology Competencies program and the District and Campus Technology Leadership Teams, who are responsible for deciding how to use technology on the campuses.

Exhibit 9-2 provides an inventory of AISD business and student information systems.

Exhibit 9-2
Inventory of AISD Information Systems

Function or Process	Product(s) Currently Used	Comment
Attendance	Columbia ™ COBOL/CICS	PEIMS (Student Attendance)
Grades	Columbia ™ COBOL/CICS	Report Cards, PEIMS (Course Completion)
Scheduling	Columbia ™ COBOL/CICS	PEIMS (Course Enrollment)
Health Records	CICS COBOL II	-
Registration	CICS COBOL II	PEIMS Enrollment
Assessment	CICS COBOL II	TAAS
Program Participation	CICS COBOL II	PEIMS Enrollment

Bilingual Education	CICS COBOL II	PEIMS
School-to-Career	Microsoft Access	-
Special Education	CICS COBOL II	PEIMS, Special TEA Reports
Gifted and Talented	CICS COBOL II	PEIMS
At Risk	Derived with COBOL II	PEIMS
School Leaver	Derived from registration system and campus input	PEIMS
Payroll	CICS COBOL II	PEIMS, TRS, IRS
Leave Accounting/Leave Office	CICS COBOL II	-
Personnel Records Management	CICS COBOL II	PEIMS
Salary Administration	CICS COBOL II	IRS
Employee Relations	CICS COBOL II	-
Personnel Services	CICS COBOL II	-
Personnel Records	CICS COBOL II	-
Substitute Office	SubFinder™	-
Recruiting and Staffing	CICS COBOL II	New system authorized
Administrative/Professional Employees	CICS COBOL II	PEIMS
Classified Employees	CICS COBOL II	PEIMS
Financial Reporting	Oracle/CICS COBOL II	PEIMS, Audit Report
Treasury	Oracle/CICS COBOL II	-
Budget Office	Lotus/Oracle/CICS COBOL II	PEIMS
Activity Funds	COS bookkeeping, (Quicken ™)	PEIMS
Office of Community Business	CICS COBOL II	-
Risk Management	CICS COBOL II	-

Medicaid	CICS COBOL II	Federal
Office of Comptroller	Oracle/CICS COBOL II	-
Accounts Payable	CICS COBOL II	-
Benefits	CICS COBOL II	-
Purchasing	CICS COBOL II	-
Materials Management Warehouse/Equipment Inventory	CICS COBOL II	-
CAD for attendance boundaries	ArcView	-
Transportation-School Bus Routes	Ecotran	State Transportation Division
Nutrition	SNAP	TEA Food Service
Food Services-Point of Sale	SNAP	-
Textbook Inventory		State Textbook Reports
Mail Services	CICS COBOL II	-
Geographic Information System	ArcView	-

Source: Draft of Deputy Superintendent of Accountability and Information Systems Technology's presentation to the AISD Board, February 14, 2000.

Some of the major systems include:

Automated Libraries is a districtwide system for automating local library management functions and supporting resource sharing, collection development, interlibrary loans, and future shared research databases.

Nineteen NovaNet labs allow students who have dropped out or are at risk of dropping out to earn graduation credits using computer-based curriculum.

The Greater Austin Area Telecommunications Network is a WAN built between 1993 and 1996 by a consortium of Austin area organizations, including AISD, the Austin Community College, the City of Austin, the Lower Colorado River Authority, the Texas General Services Commission, Travis County, and the University of Texas at Austin that links all AISD schools over a large bandwidth network.

ASTRO.net is the name given to the network that will result from the infrastructure work funded by the 1996 bond election and discussed throughout this chapter. In summary, ASTRO.net will provide:

- Six data, one voice and one video drop (a cable hookup to the network) per classroom;
- Three data drops and 1-12 port hubs (plug-ins for the network) per library;
- One data drop in each cafeteria, plus a voice/data drop for the cafeteria manager;
- One data drop in each gymnasium;
- One data drop in each theater;
- New voice and data cabling in administrative offices;
- Wiring closets to support campus cabling;
- Heating, Ventilation, and Air-Conditioning (HVAC) in the main wiring closets and multiple servers (called server farms);
- Sufficient electrical capacity and conditioning to support the planned technology;
- A PA/Intercom system for each school;
- Ten server farms located at the high schools and shared by all schools;
- Districtwide e-mail for teachers and administrators; and
- Video technology upgrades in 29 schools.

A consortium of public entities is proposing the construction of an 800 MHz radio network to improve coordination between AISD Police and other law enforcement agencies.

Exhibits 9-3 presents Texas Education Agency (TEA) data for 1998-99 comparing AISD with its peer districts on aspects of information technology.

Exhibit 9-3
1998-99 Peer District Data

	Total Expenditures	Information Technology Expenditures	Students	Teachers
Austin	**$391,433,926**	**$5,193,011**	**79,496**	**4,851**
Fort Worth	$399,055,390	$3,348,191	77,956	4,415
Pasadena	$201,130,925	$3,199,916	41,240	2,405
Northside (Bexar County)	$319,886,383	$2,687,506	61,308	3,984
Corpus Christi	$197,684,634	$2,596,227	40,290	2,476

Alief	$200,080,688	$1,782,495	41,056	2,531

Source: Texas Education Agency, November 1999.
Note: Total expenditures and information technology expenditures represent dollars actually spent during 1998-99. Student and teacher counts represent actual reported amounts to TEA for 1998-99.

Exhibit 9-3 shows that AISD, Fort Worth, and Northside (Bexar County) are closest to AISD in total dollars spent, in students taught, and in teachers employed.

Exhibit 9-4 compares AISD with its peer districts on information technology dollars spent per student and per teacher.

Exhibit 9-4
1998-99 Information Technology
Expenditure Comparisons

	Information Technology as Percentage of Total Expenditures	Information Technology per Student	Information Technology per Teacher
Pasadena	1.59 %	$78	$1,330
Austin	**1.33 %**	**$65**	**$1,070**
Corpus Christi	1.31 %	$64	$1,048
Northside (Bexar County)	0.84 %	$44	$675
Alief	0.89 %	$43	$704
Fort Worth	0.84 %	$43	$758

Source: Texas Education Agency, November 1999.

Whether compared on a per-student or on a per-teacher basis, AISD most closely resembles Corpus Christi ISD, a district almost half AISD's size in every other respect.

In 1993, TSPR performed its first review of AISD. An exhibit in that report compared AISD to eight major Texas urban districts on 1992 information technology expenditures per student. **Exhibit 9-5** updates these data and shows changes over time. In 1991-92, only San Antonio spent less per student on information technology. By 1998-99, AISD had increased its IT spending per student by 175 percent and moved from seventh to fourth place.

Exhibit 9-5
1998-99 Information Technology Dollars Spent per Student Enrolled
And Percentage Change between 1993 and 1998-99
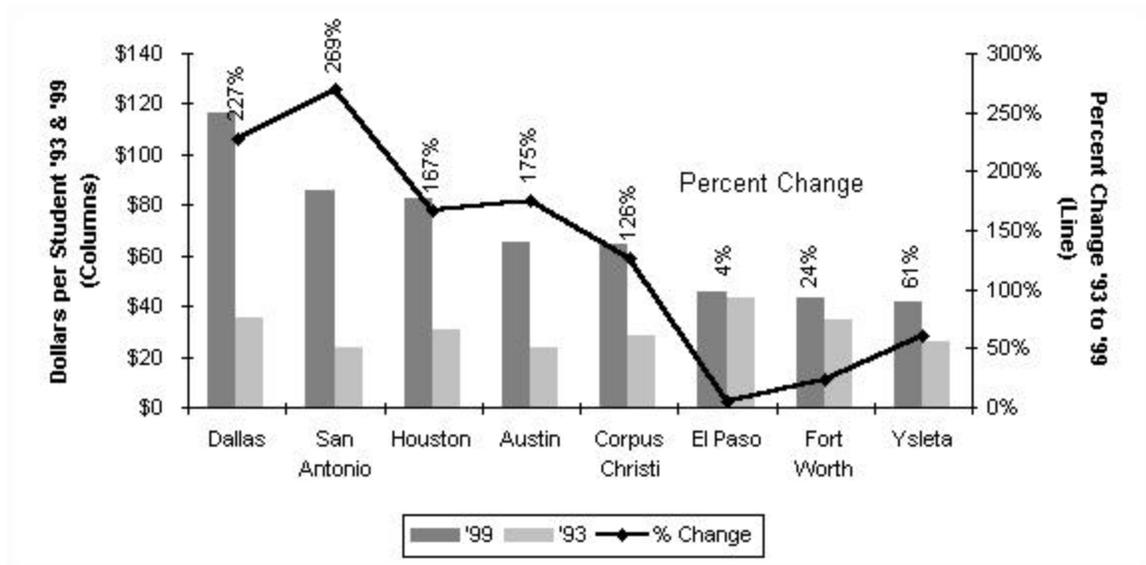
*Sources: Texas Education Agency, November 1999 and Texas School
Performance Review Report 1993.*

Exhibit 9-6 graphically represents percentage changes between the 1996-
97 and 1998-99 school years.

Exhibit 9-6
1998-99 Peer District Data
Percentage Change Between 1996-97 and 1998-99
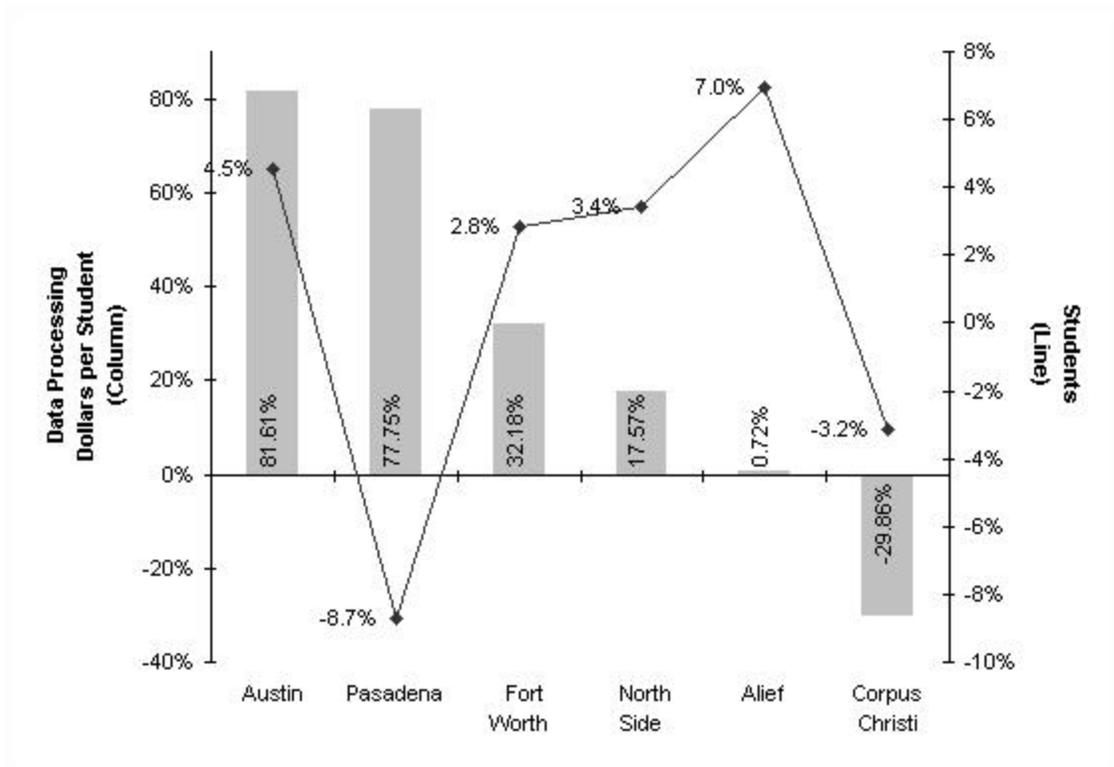
Source: Texas Education Agency, November 1999.

Exhibit 9-6 shows little direct correlation between changes in student population and spending on information technology over the three reporting periods. AISD has dramatically increased its spending on information technology during a period in which student enrollments rose by only 1.5 percent per year. Fort Worth and Northside, AISD's closest peers, are spending less than half of AISD's per-student rate.

Exhibit 9-7 compares AISD's technology services staffing with that of its peer districts.

Exhibit 9-7
Technology Staffing Levels
AISD versus Peer Districts 1998-99

	Austin	Alief	Corpus Christi	Northside	Pasadena
Technology Support	**87**	24	60	66	31

Staff:					
• Information Systems	**25**	9	15	7	19
• Network Support	**28**	4	28	4	5
• Instructional Technology	**8**	5	4	10	7
Technology Budget 1998-99	**$9.2M**	$4.2M	$4.2M	$2.8M	$4.4M
Students	**78,000**	41,500	40,363	62,500	40,004
Campuses	**99**	36	62	79	51
District Employees	**9,172**	4,901	4,995	7,827	4,650
Ratio of Students to Campuses	**788:1**	1153:1	651:1	791:1	784:1
Ratio of Students to Technology Support Staff	**897:1**	1729:1	672:1	947:1	1290:1
Ratio of Campuses to Technology Support Staff	**1.14:1**	1.5:1	1:1	1.2:1	1.65:1
Ratio of District Employees to Technology Support Staff	**105:1**	204:1	83:1	119:1	150:1

Sources: Self-reported AISD and Peer District Data, Texas Education Agency.
Notes: Ft. Worth peer district data unavailable; as presented here, technology budgets do not include capital expenditures; Northside's technology budget does not include instructional technology.

Alief ISD appears to have realized significant efficiencies compared to the remainder of the group. Only Corpus Christi ISD's staffing ratios are consistently lower than AISD's, and AISD's technology budget is over twice as large as its peer districts.

Chapter 9

A. TECHNOLOGY PLANNING

The Texas Education Code, Section 11.252, 3 (D), requires that each school district improvement plan include provisions for the integration of technology into instructional and administrative programs. Some districts compile these plans, in compliance with the law, with few of the elements required to guide a district's efforts to use and improve its technology effectively. For example, technology plans normally contain goals and strategies for instructional technology but contain little about the effective use of technology to automate or streamline administrative functions. TSPR regularly observes that improved automation and integration of administrative functions can streamline operations and eliminate excessive paper shuffling that drains district resources from the classroom.

The best plans contain clear goals, objectives, and action plans for technology projects, assign individual responsibility for implementation steps and identify milestone dates for completion.

The board should receive regular progress reports on the implementation of major technology projects and updates on performance measures to hold its managers accountable. Budgets must be tied to the technology plan. The district's technical personnel develop the vision for a technology plan, but if it is not shared or understood by the board it remains unfunded. A technology plan should be a joint effort throughout the district organization, and its priorities should be priorities of the board and the administration, with funding committed to each goal as needed.

Careful planning is critical to the success of any venture. Planning for the use of new educational technologies is particularly important due to several factors:

> **Equity**: The level of technological resources available to each school in a district can vary. Careful planning can help ensure that all schools receive adequate support.
>
> **Change**: Technological change continues to accelerate. Failure to take advantage of new technologies can leave the district with obsolete equipment. By failing to use an adequate planning horizon (of at least three to five years), the district may find itself jumping from one automated technology to another.

Funding: Planning must address how projects will be funded.

Credibility: The public is eager for its tax dollars to be spent effectively. Planning makes it possible to demonstrate that proposed strategies have been well thought out.

Training: The adoption of new technologies requires effective and sufficient training.

To apply IT effectively, a school district must have an extensive computer network connecting modern computers, administrative and instructional software, and up-to-date operating systems. The district must provide effective, ongoing training; adequate technical support; and an ample professional staff capable of administering a technology-rich environment. Each of these components should be in a district's technology plan.

FINDING

The district has no comprehensive plan for replacing its outdated information systems or managing its technology projects. AISD has a history of failed technology projects and technology plans.

AISD has produced or been provided with numerous plans for using technology:

- ProTech Mainframe Redevelopment Effort (1988);
- Greater Austin Area Telecommunications Network (July 1989);
- American Management Systems Implementation Plan (1995);
- Teacher Technology Competencies (May 1997);
- Technology Plan - 1996-2001 (Winter 1998);
- Citizens Financial Oversight Committee (CFOC)-Enterprise Data System (EDS)
  (June 1998); and
- Y2K Remediation Effort (October 1998).

In the late 1980s, a Houston-based software development company, ProTech, was hired to rewrite the district's business and student information system. The district's plan was to rewrite the system to take advantage of relational database management technologies, which allow for faster information searches of large amounts of data. The general ledger and accounts payable systems were completed before it was determined that the mainframe equipment ProTech had recommended would not support additional software modules for functions such as purchasing, finance, or accounts receivable. In 1995, the district chose American Management Systems' (AMS) COBOL/Oracle software

package to replace ProTech's and the district's own COBOL/VSAM applications. The general ledger and accounts payable modules were installed and run for six months before they were removed and replaced with the original applications because the district could not adjust to the new software.

The Enterprise Data Systems (EDS) project is intended to address the district's information systems needs by providing software systems that can share data. In Phase I of EDS, the district was to detail its existing finance and human resources workflow processes, describe how a commercial off-the-shelf solution could support them, and identify a preferred software solution. In Phase II, the district was to purchase, install, and implement a commercial financial and human resources software package. Phase III envisioned the addition of the student information systems to the database infrastructure.

The Teacher Competencies program has developed eight of 13 competencies in technology use. The CFOC's EDS recommendations to replace the district's financial, human resources, and student information systems have been delayed because of concerns over cost.

The board tabled the selection of a specific software vendor after a year of process definition and preparatory work because the actual costs of the project far exceeded the original staff projections.

In September 1999, AISD released a request for proposals (RFP) for a student information system to replace its existing system. The new deputy for Accountability and Information Systems Technology started on the first of October, and shortly thereafter halted this RFP, stating that it failed to provide for an integrated information system and allowed for inadequate timelines to permit the new system to be tested prior to implementation. On November 22, 1999, the district released a substantially revised RFP, this one for an information systems needs assessment and recommendations. This RFP addressed the improvement of all district information systems, extended the timeline, prohibited the selected vendor from bidding on the implementation of the identified systems, and required a review and incorporation of all previous analysis work. The needs assessment project will culminate in the development of specifications and statements of work for the new system, rather than involving the vendor with bid selection and implementation, as had the previous RFP. Bids were received on January 18, 2000 and a recommendation for the winning vendor was taken to the Board of Trustees on February 14, 2000; the needs assessment project outlined in the RFP was then awarded to Moak, Casey and Associates.

On September 13, 1999, the AISD Board of Trustees voted to raise the district property tax rate by 12 cents. Half of the annual increase of $34 million was earmarked for technology. The district's press release announcing board approval of the tax increase said in part, "This tax rate will provide approximately $17 million in one-time improvements to the district's technology and data systems..." The exact number was later set at $16.7 million annually.

The current state of information systems can be summarized as follows:

- Information systems are dysfunctional and antiquated, and the data stored in them is not trustworthy;
- Inaccurate data reporting is costing the district state and federal dollars;
- Staff lack the software, hardware, and skills to access the information they need; and
- Lack of access to timely, accurate data often hinders program planning or evaluation.

All mainframe systems except the financial systems were developed over 10 years ago using COBOL, a 1960s era programming language, and VSAM, a 1970s hierarchical file system. A district manager said the payroll system was developed by a programmer in 1976 and is "... held together by bailing wire and staples." The student information system is a stand-alone PC application running under DOS - an operating environment largely replaced in 1993 by Microsoft's Windows.

A systems support specialist for The School System/Columbia software (the software the district uses for managing information on students) said the master-scheduling module could be used only by staff that fully understand its capabilities because it either fails or must be 'tweaked' to function properly. Two principals scheduled classes manually this term, an inefficient use of their time. Student data are keyed into the Columbia software on campus and loaded into mainframe files. If a school changes a code, mainframe programs fail, and the school must be called for new code definitions. Processes by which student grades and attendance information are corrected require changes to campus data and multiple manual changes to files on the district's mainframe computer.

Reported problems include improperly distributed report cards, PEIMS data errors, and attendance reporting problems. During a meeting with principals, the new superintendent was forced to ask them to prepare report cards by hand for the first few reporting periods while MIS corrected report card problems. The district lost almost $2 million in federal funding because of underreporting the number of at-risk students through PEIMS by 30 percent.

In April 1998, allegations of tampering with TAAS and dropout data surfaced in the news media. In a settlement with the Travis County Attorney's office, AISD agreed to begin tracking and reporting student dropout statistics in conformance with National Center for Education Statistics standards; and supplement its dropout prevention efforts with a new five-point Dropout Prevention and Reduction Plan. The mainframe systems store data in VSAM files that are accessible only to COBOL or SAS programmers, require specialized training to use, and are not easily learned by a typical user of information systems.

All organizations need software systems that are integrated. All district systems must be able to share data. The systems cannot store redundant data. If redundant data are necessary, programs must be developed to detect and eliminate inconsistencies and create a seamless interface for all users. If data captured on campus must be transferred to central administration, the transfer must be electronic and verifiable. Data from all systems must be accessible to users. To allow non-technical users access, data must be consistent and user-friendly, with on-line help tools available. A districtwide set of reporting tools and techniques must be available to all users. The information system must allow the user community to assume responsibility for its own data and to easily check and correct data. The system must fully support applicable federal and state accounting, information management, and reporting requirements, such as TEA's Financial Accountability System Resource Guide for information systems, PEIMS data standards, and TEA rules and regulations.

Based on the superintendent's stated plans and the district's December 1999 RFP, the district appears to be reactivating its plans to replace all or part of its financial, human resources, and student information systems, but again, without a comprehensive strategic and implementation plan.

The deputy superintendent's estimates for 1999-2001, from her presentation to the AISD Board in February 2000, approach $23 million in expenses for new systems and data remediation. On February 13, 2000, the *Austin American Statesman* reported that the deputy superintendent expected new software to cost $15.9 million and fixes for data problems to cost $1.2 million over the next two to three years.

AISD has no clear process for funding its technology plans; integrating them with the district's overall strategic plan; assigning responsibility for various tasks; measuring progress against clearly defined milestones; or initiating corrective action when a project deviates from plan.

An audit of AISD's data by Evaluation Software Publishing (ESP) and published on December 21, 1999, identified these same alternatives and

recommended either that the district "make Columbia and the current mainframe systems work for at least two more years" or "convert as soon as possible to software available from Region 13 Education Service Center." Concerning Region 13 capabilities, ESP expressed concern about its capacity and flexibility, but agreed that this solution "could provide an immediate bridge solution until a long-term alternative can be implemented."

Recommendation 120:

Establish a plan to replace AISD's business and student information systems and dedicate funding to complete that mission.

AISD should create a separate bank account to deposit and track the annual $16.7 million the district has set aside for replacing its antiquated technology systems. Over five years the board would accumulate $83.5 million to spend solely on replacing the district's information systems. The district should specifically designate this account for the Technology Replacement Project and should report to the board, on a monthly basis, all account transactions including what the money is spent on, who received the money, when the transaction occurred, interest accrued, and what part of the technology plan the expenditure relates to.

Exhibit 9-8 outlines the money currently established by AISD's tax increase to fund the business and student information technology replacement project. **Exhibit 9-8** breaks the annual amount into how a typical district might divide the funding between business technology, support, maintenance, training and instructional technology. Once a plan is in place and the dollar amount needed to fund the plan is determined, the district may then want to reassess the amounts dedicated to the program and reallocate resources as appropriate. But, this should not be done until all costs are considered and planned for.

Exhibit 9-8
Projected AISD Technology Replacement Funds Availability
2000-2001 through 2004-2005

Technology Area	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	Total
Business Technology	$8,350,000	$8,350,000	$8,350,000	$8,350,000	$8,350,000	$41,750,000
Support, maintenance and training	$6,680,000*	$6,680,000	$6,680,000	$6,680,000	$6,680,000	$33,400,000

Instructional Technology**	$1,670,000	$1,670,000	$1,670,000	$1,670,000	$1,670,000	$8,350,000
Total	**$16,700,000**	**$16,700,000**	**$16,700,000**	**$16,700,000**	**$16,700,000**	**$83,500,000**

Sources: AISD and TSPR.
Note: *Forty percent of the annual $16.7 million budget. **Ten percent of the annual $16.7 million budget.

In the interim, AISD should contract with a third-party provider to deliver a temporary solution. One well-tested solution specifically designed for Texas school districts is provided by the state's Regional Educational Service Centers (ESCs). Other organizations providing alternative solutions include ADP Payroll, Oracle Business Online, and the West Texas Data Recovery and Operations Center.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Technology Advisory Committee (TAC) meets and develops a comprehensive plan to replace AISD's business and student information systems that includes projected costs by year.	May 2000
2.	The TAC presents the plan to the superintendent.	June 2000
3.	The superintendent presents the plan to the board.	June 2000
4.	The board approves the plan.	June 2000
5.	The director of Purchasing and the deputy superintendent for Accountability and Information Systems Technology develop a Request for Proposals to replace the information systems based on the plan and the needs assessment.	June 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

Another large school district in Texas had to replace its entire business and student information systems and spent $10 million on hardware, software and consulting support for the installation and another $1.6 million for annual support starting in the second year of the contract. Total five year costs were $16.4 million. AISD licensing costs should be less because it is a smaller district. However, AISD's could incur more costs, since they may have additional costs associated with temporary solutions for immediate problems.

The district has raised taxes to create a fund of $83.5 million over five years (from 1999-2000 to 2003-2004) to fund its information systems replacement project. This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Technology Services is not staffed to implement new information systems, organized to support new information systems or equipped to effectively plan for technology change.

Maintaining adequate technical support for computer technology is a chronic problem not only for school districts but for most businesses as well. The fact that most school districts own and must support both Windows-based PCs and Macintosh/Apple computers further broadens the need for technical expertise. Even the largest districts do not seem to have the resources to hire all of the technicians, trainers, and other support personnel they need.

TSPR has found that the most successful districts use a multilevel approach to computer support that relies first on knowledgeable, campus-based personnel with an interest in technology for training and troubleshooting, before sending in technical staff to address a problem. Killeen ISD (KISD) uses this multi-tiered approach. In 1991, KISD brought community leaders, business, administrators, technologists, parents, and teachers together to develop a districtwide technology vision. Members served on a task force that developed a technology mission for the district and a comprehensive strategic plan that outlined goals, objectives, strategies and action plans for improving and expanding the district's use of technology. The district hired a campus technologist for every school. The campus technologist works with teachers to get technology into the classroom to improve teacher and student performance. Campus technologists understand the teacher's needs and works with the teacher and the information technology staff to find the right "technology fit" for each teacher.

Network Systems and Support requires an average of 28 days to respond to a request for help, according to Help Desk reports.

One manager told of a technician arriving, "trouble ticket" in hand, surveying the situation, deciding he (the technician) did not have the knowledge to deal with the problem, and returning the ticket to the queue for reassignment. TSPR also heard several reports of technicians arriving on site with a stack of trouble tickets - each one for a different school, some halfway across the district.

Exhibit 9-9 shows the calculations used to estimate the number of technicians that must be available to service help desk calls (or trouble tickets). NSS needs 40 technicians to service the current level of requests. On average, NSS pays technicians $34,672 and managers $61,819 per year.

Exhibit 9-9
Network Services Staffing Calculation

Variable	Count
Staff Count	34
Average Calls Closed per Week	335
Average Hours to Close Each Call	4
Average Calls Opened per Week	400
Required Staffing Level	40

Source: AISD Network Systems & Support, October 1999. Note: Staff counts exclude vacant positions.

The infrastructure project to connect classrooms to the WAN is consuming scarce technical talent. The Instructional Technology staff spends a third of its time installing e-mail applications. PC Configurations is lending two technicians to the effort. LAN Support, in addition to installing 63 new servers, has two full-time equivalents working on the project. Telecommunications, in addition to its wiring responsibilities, has provided two technicians. WAN Support's staff of eight is fully committed to the infrastructure work.

Sixteen full-time employees dedicated to infrastructure work represent 32 percent of the NSS staff. None of the 16 is available to handle the day-to-day problems of 20,000 PCs and 10,000 phones or the growing demands to support the infrastructure itself.

Sam Rayburn, Tahoka, and Wylie ISDs all use school-to-career program participants to support their technology. Many private corporations use technical service providers to supplement the abilities of their internal staff.

Companies like Northrup-Grumman, Computer Sciences Corporation, IBM, and Comdisco provide services ranging from complete outsourcing of the technology function to supplementary internal help desk employees to disaster recovery support.

Recommendation 121:

Reorganize Technology Services to better align it with an improved planning model and a multi-tiered technical support structure.

Exhibit 9-10 presents the proposed organizational structure.

Exhibit 9-10
Accountability & Information Systems Technology Department
Proposed Organization Structure
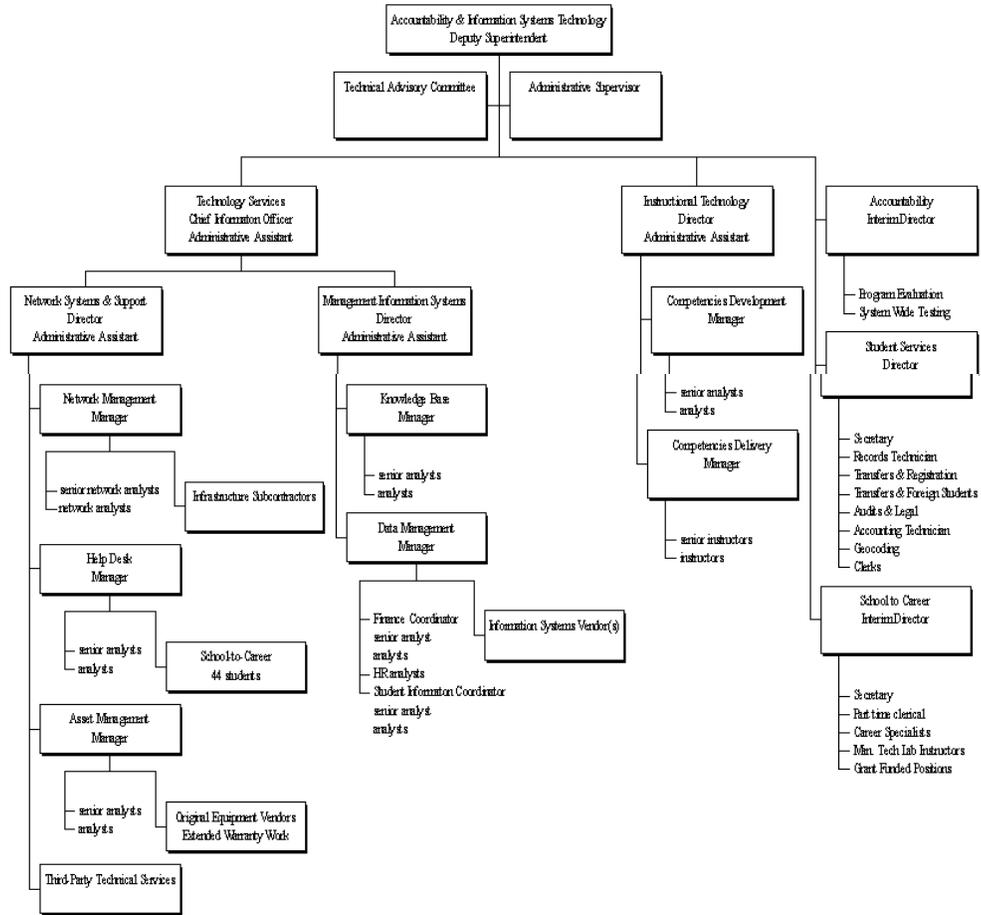
Source: TSPR.

Instead of trying to do everything in-house, the district should build a small team of professionals that manages the work of others. The first tier of the multi-tiered system should be campus-based school-to-career students who could resolve technology problems not requiring extensive technical expertise. The second tier should be an escalation procedure for applying the district's knowledge base of technical information to more difficult problems. The third tier, handling the most difficult problems, would be provided by third-party technical service providers - original equipment vendors providing warranty service, network support firms, and subcontractors that worked on the infrastructure project.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Technology Advisory Committee creates a working group to plan for and oversee the transition to the new organizational structure.	August 2000
2.	The working group reviews and revises the proposed structure to better align it to meet AISD's future needs.	September 2000
3.	With the infrastructure work competed, the working group re-aligns NSS staff to match current workloads.	September 2000
4.	The working group combines the LAN, WAN, and telecommunications teams into a single Network Management Department.	September 2000
5.	The working group authorizes instructional technologies to begin developing the second set of technical competencies.	October 2000
6.	The working group begins preparing for the release of excess staff.	October 2000
7.	Using the planned three-tiered support structure as a basis, the working group plans for and begins changing NSS to better support campus- and vendor-based support teams.	December 2000
8.	The working group authorizes Human Resources to begin recruiting technical trainers.	December 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

In total, 3 managers and 23 technology staff positions would be eliminated in this reorganization. Forty-four high school students would be hired to perform technology services, and an outside vendor would be hired to perform some technology services.

If the district hires four students (handling about 25 percent of the trouble tickets) per high school to work two hours each per day at $10 per hour,

the district will spend $158,400 (four x two hours x five days x $10 x 36 weeks x 11 high schools) for nine months of support. If 15 percent of all calls are referred to a third-party provider and each call takes four hours (at $100 per hour) to complete, the district will spend $960,000 (16,000 trouble reports x 15 percent x four hours x $100/hour) each year for external support. Central support would then handle 60 percent of the total calls, amounting to 9,600 calls per year.

Network Systems & Support pays technicians about $39,618 per year ($34,672 salary plus $4,946 in taxes and benefits) and managers approximately $69,113 ($61,819 salary plus $7,294 in taxes and benefits) per year. Reducing staffing by 23 technicians and 3 managers would save the district almost $1,118,553 (23 staff x $39,618 = $911,214 + 3 managers x $69,113 = $207,339) per year.

By hiring students (- $158,400), eliminating positions (+$1,118,553) and hiring a third party technology firm (- $960,000), the district would improve responsiveness and service of its technology staff at no additional cost to the district.

Chapter 9

B. INFRASTRUCTURE, HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE

Technology infrastructure is the underlying system of cabling, telephone lines, hubs, switches, routers, and other devices that connect the various parts of an organization through a wide area network. This infrastructure allows users to access people and information throughout their organization and beyond.

A WAN provides its users with electronic mail and Internet access, and connects local area networks throughout the district. A LAN typically connects all the users within a single building. By connecting LANs to a WAN, all LAN users gain access to others in the district as well as to the electronic world beyond. A district that has every user connected through a LAN to a WAN has established the infrastructure needed to take full advantage of present telecommunications capabilities and those that will be available in the future.

FINDING

The Greater Austin Area Telecommunications Network (GAATN) is a WAN built between 1993 and 1996, with final acceptance in 1998, by a consortium of Austin-area organizations including the Austin Community College, AISD, the City of Austin, the Lower Colorado River Authority, State of Texas General Services Commission, Travis County, and the University of Texas at Austin.

GAATN consists of more than 300 miles of fiber optic cable configured as two super- and six sub-rings. Each logical sub-ring was actually constructed as three physical rings to improve redundancy, thereby reducing the possibility of a widespread network outage. The two super-rings support the equivalent of OC 12 or 622 million bits per second (Mbps) of data transfer capacity (bandwidth). The sub-rings support OC 3 bandwidth (155 Mbps). The super rings connect one another and the sub-rings into one logical network. The sub-rings connect each campus/facility into the network.

AISD's portion of GAATN is based on Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM), a transfer mode that organizes information into cells. An original design objective for GAATN was to combine voice, data, and video on the same 'wire.' According to the ATM Forum, an international non-profit organization promoting the use of the technology, ATM is the only standards-based (i.e., not proprietary) technology that has been designed

from the beginning to accommodate the simultaneous transmission of data, voice and video.

Fiber segments are connected to one another via Cisco LightStream 1010 ATM switches. The 1010s are located in main distribution frame (MDF) wiring closets on AISD campuses and at the Carruth facility. The 1010s connect to one or more Cisco Catalyst 5000s that link the ATM- and fiber-based wide area network to the Ethernet- and fiber/copper-based LAN found on each campus. The LAN consists of Category 5 (high capacity) cable that runs from the switches in the MDF (or intermediate distribution frames [IDF] if certain distance limitations are exceeded) to outlets (nodes) in the classrooms. These 10/100 Mbps Ethernet nodes are connected to the network interface card found in each PC or Macintosh.

Using this infrastructure, AISD can transmit data, voice, and/or video between systems installed at campuses and other entities at very high speeds.

With the capacity available from GAATN, AISD can develop and deliver unprecedented educational capabilities, including video conferencing, distance learning, electronic textbooks, an Intranet (an "Internet" restricted to AISD staff), online homework assignments, real-time communications (via voice, e-mail, and video conferencing), and much, much more. With the technical infrastructure available from GAATN, a community network linking parents, teachers, students and administrators becomes a very real possibility.

Few organizations possess even a fraction of the networking power available from GAATN.

COMMENDATION

GAATN is a state-of-the-art wide area network capable of delivering virtually unlimited volumes of data directly to any computer system anywhere in the district.

Chapter 9

C. TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Technical support significantly influences how effectively technology is used in the classroom. Teachers, even those who are experienced computer users, may encounter technology-related difficulties that interrupt their planning or classroom activities. Unless they receive quick responses to their questions, their effectiveness can be diminished.

FINDING

The assistant director of Network Systems & Support says documentation for her area is "woefully inadequate." NSS has thoroughly documented the WAN's physical and logical components and has well defined, though not necessarily written, processes for reporting and acting on reported problems. It is documentation covering process and procedure--how the systems have been changed in the past and how they operate-- that concerned the assistant director.

When the interim director of Accountability assumed her responsibilities in October 1998, the district had few written procedures for preparing PEIMS or TAAS data submissions.

Evaluation Software Publishing, Inc., in its December 1999 report, recommended that a "problem log for each list or report should be built of all past and current problems reported by campuses." EPS also recommended an expanded Help Desk "to provide assistance to campus and central staff who have problems or questions related to using information systems." The expanded Help Desk should "log every call/issue, route the user to the appropriate source of assistance, and document follow-up."

In February 2000, the deputy superintendent for Accountability and Information Systems reported to the AISD Board that "Staff members are provided little by way of procedures, training, or support, often relying on one another for the answers to questions and then receiving incomplete, conflicting, or incorrect guidance."

The district currently pays analysts an average of $52,256 per year and managers and average of $72,500 per year.

A knowledge base is a database designed to hold information contained in technical and procedural documents, data models and schemas, trouble tickets and resolutions, business processes and models, technical

competencies and course materials, statistics covering technology operations and administration, and more.

Recommendation 122:

Create a knowledge base of information and make it available via GAATN to anyone with a need to use it.

A team of technical writers should be made responsible for identifying a good knowledge-based, Intranet-aware database application. The specialists will be responsible for installing the application, testing it and working with Instructional Technology to develop training materials for both technical and non-technical staff.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Technology Advisory Committee creates a working group to plan for and oversee the development of a knowledge base.	August 2000
2.	The working group authorizes Human Resources to recruit one manager, two senior analysts, and three analysts for the team.	September 2000
3.	The working group selects and purchases a software application.	December 2000
4.	The team, in conjunction with Instructional Technologies, prepares competency materials and assessment tests for the knowledge base.	January 2001 and continuing
5.	The working group defines the policies and procedures that will govern database use.	March 2001
6.	The team publicizes the knowledge base to district staff.	March 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

A database license of this type costs $20,000 for a districtwide site license and requires an annual maintenance fee equal to 20 percent of the purchase price or $4,000.

The cost for five analysts will average $293,620 per year ($52,256 salary + $1,947 in insurance + $3,998 in FICA + $523 worker's compensation x five analysts). The cost of a new manager will be $80,726 per year ($72,500 salary + $1,947 in insurance + $5,553 in FICA + $726 in worker's compensation).

First-year costs of $20,000 for software, $293,620 for five analysts, and $80,726 for a manager would equal $394,346. Dropping the software purchase cost and adding the software maintenance fee for all subsequent years would produce an recurring expense of $378,346 ($394,346 - $20,000 + $4,000).

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2002-04	2004-05
Purchase software.	($20,000)	($4,000)	($4,000)	($4,000)	($4,000)
Create a knowledge base of information, organize it according to industry standards, and make it available via GAATN to anyone with a need to use it.	($374,346)	($374,346)	($374,346)	($374,346)	($374,346)
Net Cost	**($394,346)**	**($378,346)**	**($378,346)**	**($378,346)**	**($378,346)**

Chapter 9

D. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Training is a critical factor in determining whether technology is used effectively. Studies indicate that it may take three to five years for a teacher to acquire an appropriate level of expertise in educational technology. Planning and support for technology-related training must take this into account.

Teachers need continuous opportunities to expand their technological skills and to interact with other teachers so that they can share new strategies and techniques.

Other training is just as critical for technical support staff. Rapid technological change makes it easy for specialists to fall behind. Sufficient time and funding for continuing training is essential if technical support is to remain effective.

FINDING

AISD has a program for developing and assessing the technological competency of the teaching staff, but no comparable program for IT or administrative workers.

The District and Campus Technology Leadership Teams (DTLT/CTLT) are the primary campus training agents.

TSPR's interviews and focus groups with technical staff, campus administrators, and interested external organizations yielded the following:

- Administrators complained about their inability to provide the training their staffs need to work effectively with computers.
- Formal technology training programs are in such demand that staff in one administrative department have developed their own "TechnoLunch" brown bag for professional development. Technical competencies are difficult; there is "no way to pick it up and do it on your own."
- A MIS manager said "training is each individual's responsibility."
- During the AMS implementation, administrative users did not receive enough training to actually learn the system.
- HEAT (the help desk software) training is informal and ad hoc, conducted mostly through handouts and quick reference guides.
- Complaints about the Help Desk staff center on their lack of knowledge about the desktop products they are trying to support.

- Some principals said teachers are confused about the difference between PCs and Macs, trying to use disks formatted for one in the other.

Recognizing the need for teaching technology, AISD, the University of Texas at Austin College of Education, the Region XIII Education Service Center, and Leander ISD created the Teacher Technology Competency Committee to study the problem. In the committee's report, teacher competencies were defined as:

a set of technology standards that defines proficiency in using computer technology in the classroom. The competencies consist of computer-related skills grouped into four general domains: (1) Basic Technology Operation, (2) Personal and Professional Use of Technology Tools, (3) Social, Ethical, and Human Issues, and (4) Application of Technology in Instruction.

AISD has adopted this approach in its Educator Technology Competencies (ETC) program. The Teacher Technology Competency Committee report states that "mastery of the Teacher Technology Competencies is demonstrated entirely by performance-based assessments. These involve satisfactory completion of a series of tasks that give evidence of proficiency in each skill." Classroom instruction is available, but the model incorporates self-paced instruction and assessments to ensure that competencies are being learned. The intent of the ETC program was to ensure that the university and the district had common expectations for pre-service and in-service teachers.

In practice, AISD found that teachers move through five well-defined stages as they master the use of technology in the classroom. The district's Educator Technology Competencies Institute manual defined these stages as entry (lack of experience with any computer technology); adoption (teachers begin to think about how to use technology to teach); adaptation (the first complete integration of technology into classroom activities); appropriation (first uses of technology to accomplish real work); and, invention (experimentation with new instructional patterns).

Instructional Technologies staff earn approximately $45,000 per year. Managers earn approximately $91,000 per year.

Recommendation 123:

Expand the Educator Technology Competencies (ETC) and DTLT/CTLT programs to include administrative and technical staff.

Expanding the ETC program to include administrative staff would make classroom instruction and course materials available as formal training tools and informal self-study aids. The assessment component ensures that administrative staff actually learn the technologies.

To expand the program, Instructional Technologies should add four facilitators and one manager and should reorganize into two departments, Competencies Development and Competencies Delivery.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Technology Advisory Committee creates a working group to develop an action plan for expanding the ETC and DTLT/CTLT programs.	August 2000
2.	The working group and Instructional Technology review the policies, procedures, materials, goals, and objectives to the two programs.	December 2000
3.	The working group tells Instructional Technology to adapt the programs to accommodate the broader group.	January 2001
4.	Instructional Technology develops policies and procedures by which administrative and technical staff can participate in the ETC and DTLT/CTLT programs.	March 2001
5.	Instructional Technology tests a new competency/assessment set.	May 2001
6.	The working group authorizes Instructional Technology to make the new programs available to all.	June 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost for four facilitators would cost $203,356 per year ($45,000 salary + $1,947 in insurance + $3,442 in FICA + $450 worker's compensation x four analysts). The cost of a new manager would be $67,137 per year ($60,000 salary + $1,947 in insurance + $4,590 in FICA + $600 in worker's compensation). The staffing increase would cost the district $270,493 annually ($203,356 + $67,137).

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Expand the ETC and DTLT/CTLT programs to include administrative and technical staff.	($270,493)	($270,493)	($270,493)	($270,493)	($270,493)

Chapter 9

E. INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

The instructional technology function is responsible for developing and disseminating strategic guidelines for the integration of technology into classroom, campus, and district instructional and administrative programs. Instructional technology workers, therefore, are responsible for defining the technical infrastructure as it relates to instruction, preparing teachers to use technology in their classrooms, supporting technologies used for instruction, and conducting technology planning related to instruction.

FINDING

Focus groups and survey respondents said:

- "Teachers don't have technology skills."
- "There is a lack of integration of technology into the curriculum."
- "Teachers don't know how to use computers."
- "Teachers are not technology proficient."
- "Few teachers are tech certified."
- Technology "should be fully integrated, thought of as curriculum tools, not separate stand-alone stuff."

A third of Instructional Technology's staff time is spent installing e-mail software on desktops around the district. More time is spent fixing technology problems on campuses or answering questions about printers and networking. The Instructional Technology staff even maintains a database of information about the district's PC configurations and locations. Instructional Technology also has primary responsibility for selecting hardware and specifying the configuration for annual PC purchases. All of these duties more appropriately fall under the jurisdiction of Network Systems & Support.

The original plan was to use the District and Campus Technology Leadership Teams (DTLT/CTLT) as the primary campus training agents. Substitutes would be used to provide the time for team members to work with new technologies. "But, then the pendulum swung away from using substitutes and now no time is available (except the teacher's own time) for DTLT/CTLT team members to do technology," reported an Instructional Technology staff person.

Instructional Technology has also developed the following programs since 1996.

Educator Technology Competencies: During 1997, Instructional Technologies developed course materials and assessment tests for five of 12 competencies initially identified as necessary to help teachers master the use of technology in the classroom. Of 12 competencies envisioned for the Educator Technology Competencies (ETC) program, only eight have been developed since the ETC's inception in 1997. Only 41 percent of teachers have passed assessments and been given extra computers for their classrooms.

Technology Leadership Teams: The District Technology Leadership Team and the Campus Technology Leadership Teams were developed to "help create a 'critical mass' of teachers who would help lead their schools toward successful integration of technology into their classrooms."

Classroom Integration: Working with the Curriculum Department, Instructional Technology is assisting DTLT teachers in planning their classes using technology and to select software that supplements the curriculum. 125 DTLT and 500 CTLT classrooms have a full complement of five computers.

MAESTRO: During 1997-98, 25 DTLT and 25 Curriculum Support Team members were paired to share technology/teaching experiences, to ensure the technology integration model matched district curriculum.

Teachers of Technology (TOTs): TOTs is a professional development program intended to ensure that teachers receive their computer equipment as they complete their competencies, and that they begin using the technology in the classroom. In February 1998, 500 TOTs had received laptops and printers and 400 had completed the available competencies.

Technology Integration in Education Grant: This state grant gave the district the funds to create a CD-ROM product, "A Classroom View: Word Processing," showing how AISD teachers have incorporated technology into their classroom lessons. The 1997-98 grant provided $585,000 worth of equipment and five part-time staff members. "A Classroom View" received recognition at the National School Board meeting in September 1998.

List Server: Instructional Technology supports an e-mail list on which faculty and staff can post questions about and lessons learned from technology. The server is available to anyone in the district with an e-mail account and supports continuing conversations about specific topics.

Recommendation 124:

Put Instructional Technology staff back to work helping teachers integrate technology into their curriculum.

Instructional Technology's staff spends too much time supporting technology to effectively teach technology. The reorganization of technology services will provide the support resources to allow Instructional Technology staff to support teachers in integrating technology into the classroom.

Instructional Technology should no longer install software, specify hardware purchases, or fix technology problems. Instead, it should focus its energies on executing its plans.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Accountability and Information Systems Technology directs the executive director of Instructional Technology to review all of her department's tasks.	September 2000
2.	The executive director identifies any activity that does not directly support the integration of technology into the district's curriculum.	October 2000
3.	The executive director meets with other technology department heads and arranges for the reassignment of these activities.	October 2000
4.	The executive director instructs her staff to concentrate their efforts on developing and supporting the remaining competencies in the ETC program.	October 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 10
STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

This chapter reviews the Austin Independent School District's (AISD) Department of Pupil Transportation functions and focuses on the following topics:

A. Organization and Staffing
B. Routing and Scheduling
C. Fleet Maintenance
D. Safety
E. Yellow Pages Test of Student Transportation

The Texas Education Code authorizes but does not require Texas school districts to provide transportation for students between home and school, from school to career and technology training locations, and for extracurricular activities. In the area of transportation services, the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) also requires a school district to treat students with disabilities the same way as it treats students in the general population. In addition, IDEA requires school districts to provide transportation to students who must travel to receive special education services.

BACKGROUND

The state reimburses Texas school districts for transporting regular, special education and career and technology program students. The Texas Legislature sets state funding rules, and the Texas Education Agency (TEA) administers the program. School districts receive funding for transporting regular education students living two or more miles from the school they attend. The state does not reimburse districts for students living within the two-mile radius of the school unless hazardous walking conditions exist between the student's home and the school. For example, if a student must cross a major highway without a crossing signal, the circumstances would qualify as a hazardous condition, and the cost of transporting that student would be reimbursed by the state. A school district must use local funds to cover actual cost incurred that is more than the reimbursable state allotment.

For regular education students, the state reimburses districts for qualifying transportation expenses based on linear density, which is the ratio of the average number of regular education students transported daily to the number of miles traveled daily for those students. TEA has defined seven linear density groups, and allocates per-mile reimbursements to school districts based on the district's linear density grouping.

Reimbursable miles are the miles driven on routes with students on board; deadhead miles or maintenance miles are not reimbursable. TEA evaluates these group assignments every two years by recalculating linear densities. **Exhibit 10-1** shows the linear density groupings and the associated reimbursement per mile.

Exhibit 10-1
Categories of State Linear Density
Reimbursement for Regular Education Routes
1998-99

Category	Reimbursement per Mile	Linear Density Range		
1	$0.68	.000	-	.399
2	$0.79	.400	-	.649
3	$0.88	.650	-	.899
4	$0.97	.900	-	1.149
5	$1.11	1.150	-	1.649
6	$1.25	1.650	-	2.399
7	$1.43	2.400	-	9.999

Source: Texas Education Agency.

AISD has been assigned to the fifth highest linear density group for the last several years with densities ranging from 1.192 to 1.665 and reimbursements of $1.11 per mile for regular education transportation. The district's actual cost for regular education was $2.044 in 1997-98. AISD operated 1,138,382 reimbursable regular education miles in 1997-98.

The state's reimbursement for special education transportation is $1.08 per mile regardless of linear density. All transportation for special education, except certain field trips, is eligible for state reimbursement. In 1997-98, the district's actual cost for special education was $2.24 per mile. AISD operated 2,066,603 reimbursable miles in 1997-98.

AISD offers transportation because of federal desegregation requirements and special programs such as alternative schools, bilingual education, magnet and pre-kindergarten programs, all of which are reported to TEA as regular education miles. Miles for routes that service these programs are reimbursed at the regular education rate determined by the linear density group. In 1997-98, AISD operated 595,156 miles for alternative programs,

48,924 miles for bilingual programs, 449,172 miles for desegregation purposes and 32,508 miles for pre-kindergarten programs.

Since 1995-96, AISD has contracted with Capital Metro to transport all magnet students to the magnet schools. Capital Metro operates 31 routes that each average 31.5 miles daily. The district is eligible for reimbursement for these miles at the regular education rate determined by its linear density.

AISD also provides transportation services for its career and technology program. In 1997-98, the district operated 10,516 miles for the career and technology program. The reimbursement per mile for the career and technology program is based on the costs for regular education program miles for the previous fiscal year as reported by the district in the *TEA School Transportation Operation Report*. In 1997-98, AISD received $2.00 reimbursement per mile for the career and technology transportation miles.

In 1997-98, TEA provided slightly more than $5 million in transportation funding to AISD.

Exhibit 10-2 displays the general characteristics of AISD compared to peer districts. The Transportation peer districts were chosen based on their similar linear density group and differ from peer groups used elsewhere in this report.

Exhibit 10-2
AISD and Peer Districts Statistics
1998-99

District	Regular Education			Special Education			Linear Density
	Annual Riders*	Annual Miles	Operation Costs**	Annual Riders*	Annual Miles	Operation Costs**	
North East (Bexar County)	2,834,100	2,780,455	2,102,303	259,920	1,213,076	2,102,303	1.65
Edinburg	2,155,140	2,018,240	3,116,012	44,280	224,276	424,910	1.51
La Joya	2,631,780	2,194,200	3,317,278	37,260	283,540	447,128	1.50
Killeen	1,712,700	1,862,672	2,800,649	188,460	444,996	1,125,207	1.41
United	1,330,560	2,313,466	3,230,705	88,020	438,746	895,712	1.17

Peer Average	2,132,856	2,233,807	2,913,389	123,588	520,927	999,052	1.45
Austin	**2,845,800**	**3,648,010**	**8,164,367**	**418,140**	**2,754,218**	**5,970,074**	**1.31**
% Different from Peer Average	33%	63%	180%	238%	429%	498%	-10%

Source: TEA School Transportation Operation Report, 1998-1999; TEA School Transportation Route Services Report 1998-1999. *Average annual riders calculated by multiplying daily riders by 180 school days. **Costs exclude capital outlay and debt service.

AISD has more annual miles and riders than the peer districts, which accounts for the higher operations costs. AISD, however, has a lower linear density than its peers. While AISD has more annual miles than its peers, its number of annual riders does not increase as much as the miles, which results in a lower linear density.

Exhibit 10-3 compares AISD's transportation operating statistics and costs for 1998-99 with those of a group of peer school districts in Texas. Miles and operation costs used for calculating the cost per mile are taken from the *TEA School Transportation Operation Report* and are derived from odometer readings. These miles include deadhead (miles driven without children in the bus), maintenance runs and other sources of additional miles.

Exhibit 10-3
AISD and Peer District Cost Statistics
1998-99

	Regular Education		Special Education	
District	**Cost/Mile**	**Cost/Rider**	**Cost/Mile**	**Cost/Rider**
North East	0.76	0.74	1.73	8.09
United	1.40	2.43	2.04	10.18
Killeen	1.50	1.64	2.53	5.97
La Joya	1.51	1.26	1.58	12.00

Edinburg	1.54	1.45	1.89	9.60
Peer Average	1.34	1.50	1.95	9.17
Austin	**2.24**	**2.87**	**2.17**	**14.28**
% Different from Average	67%	91%	11%	56%

Source: TEA School Transportation Operation Report, 1998-1999; TEA School Transportation Route Services Report 1998-1999.

AISD's cost statistics are significantly higher than its peer districts. For regular education, AISD has the highest cost per mile and cost per rider of any peer district.

Exhibit 10-4 shows service indicators for AISD and its peer districts.

Exhibit 10-4
AISD and Peer District Service Indicator
1998-99

	Regular Education		Special Education	
District	**Riders/Mile**	**Riders/Bus**	**Riders/Mile**	**Riders/Bus**
La Joya	1.20	95.56	0.13	12.18
Edinburg	1.07	75.78	0.20	12.30
North East	1.02	56.23	0.21	13.01
Killeen	0.92	52.57	0.42	23.80
United	0.58	70.40	0.20	19.56
Peer Average	0.96	70.11	0.23	16.17
Austin	**0.78**	**59.89**	**0.15**	**11.17**
% Different from Average	**-19%**	**-15%**	**-35%**	**-31%**

Source: TEA School Transportation Operation Report, 1998-1999; TEA School Transportation Route Services Report 1998-1999; average annual riders calculated by multiplying daily riders by 180 school days.

One of the reasons that AISD's costs are higher is that AISD's riders per mile for both regular education and special education are much lower than those of its peers. AISD's riders per bus for both regular and special education are also below those of its peers.

Exhibit 10-5 displays a five-year history for AISD's transportation service provided by TEA's transportation operation reports.

Exhibit 10-5
AISD Regular and Special Education Transportation Operation Costs
1994-1995 through 1998-1999

Item	1994-1995	1995-1996	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	Percent Change*
Operation Costs						
Regular Education	$8,026,978	$6,554,180	$6,333,872	$6,140,502	$8,164,367	2%
Special Education	$4,613,313	$5,372,892	$5,709,444	$5,827,139	$5,970,074	29%
Total	**$12,640,291**	**$11,927,072**	**$12,043,316**	**$11,967,641**	**$14,134,441**	**12%**
Annual Miles						
Regular Education	3,953,862	3,452,425	3,636,974	3,495,481	3,648,010	-8%
Special Education	2,858,092	2,966,590	2,933,846	2,759,553	2,754,218	-4%
Total	**6,811,954**	**6,419,015**	**6,570,820**	**6,255,034**	**6,402,228**	**-6%**
Cost Per Mile						
Regular Education	$2.03	$1.90	$1.74	$1.76	$2.24	10%
Special Education	$1.61	$1.81	$1.95	$2.11	$2.17	35%
Annual Riders						
Regular Education	5,962,680	3,303,180	3,389,940	3,045,420	2,845,800	-52%

Special Education	362,520	454,500	432,180	425,880	418,140	15%
Cost Per Rider						
Regular Education	$1.35	$1.98	$1.87	$2.02	$2.87	113%
Special Education	$12.73	$11.82	$13.21	$13.68	$14.28	12%

Source: TEA School Transportation Operation Report, 1994-1999; TEA School Transportation Route Services Report 1994-1999; costs exclude capital outlay and debt service. *Percent change from 1994 to 1999.

Operating costs have increased since 1994-1995, while the number of miles has decreased. Riders have decreased for regular education, but have increased for special education. The cost per mile and the cost per rider have increased due to the operations cost increasing without a proportional increase in miles and riders.

Exhibit 10-6 shows AISD Transportation operation costs over the past five years categorized by type of expenditure. The chart also shows the percent change from 1994-1999.

Exhibit 10-6
AISD Transportation Operation Costs by Type of Expenditure
1994-1995 through 1998-1999

	1994-1995	1995-1996	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	Percent of 1998-1999 Total	Percent Change*
Salaries and Benefits	$10,018,508	$9,856,516	$10,329,640	$10,498,459	$12,502,562	89%	25%
Purchased/ Contracted Service	$218,057	$293,111	$353,166	$418,116	$431,612	3%	98%
Supplies and Materials	$1,479,789	$1,343,501	$1,024,637	$852,648	$1,011,258	7%	-32%

Other Expenses	$923,937	$433,944	$335,873	$198,418	$189,009	1%	-80%
Total Costs	$12,640,291	$11,927,072	$12,043,316	$11,967,641	$14,134,441		12%

*Source: TEA School Transportation Operation Report, 1994-1999; TEA School Transportation Route Services Report 1994-1999; costs exclude capital outlay and debt service. *The percent increase or decrease from 1994 to 1999.*

The cost of salaries and benefits as well as contracted services have increased while supplies and materials and other expenses have decreased. Operations costs overall have increased 12 percent since 1994, because the cost of salaries and contracted services have increased more than supplies and other expenses have decreased.

Exhibit 10-7 shows AISD extracurricular miles as a percentage of total miles in comparison to its peer districts.

Exhibit 10-7
AISD and Peer Districts Extracurricular Miles
1998-1999

District	Total Miles	Extracurricular Miles	Percent Extracurricular
Killeen	2,307,668	470,477	20%
North East	3,993,531	249,270	6%
Edinburg	2,242,516	581,910	26%
La Joya	2,477,740	496,000	20%
United	2,752,212	549,815	20%
Peer Average	2,754,733	469,494	17%
Austin	**6,402,228**	**262,874**	**4%**
Percent Difference	132%	-44%	-

Source: TEA School Transportation Operation Report 1998-1999.

AISD's percentage of extracurricular miles is considerably lower than that of its peer districts. The district's total extracurricular miles are lower than

most peer districts and the total annual miles are much higher than the total for the other districts.

Exhibit 10-7 shows AISD's miles from 1994-1999 categorized by.

Exhibit 10-8
AISD Total Miles of Service
1994-1995 through 1998-1999

Type of Miles	1994-1995	1995-1996	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	Percent Change*
Route Miles	5,000,336	5,523,109	5,695,294	5,422,155	5,653,670	13%
Extracurricular Miles	251,535	253,017	246,568	260,867	262,874	5%
Non-School Organization Miles	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Other	1,560,083	642,889	628,958	572,012	485,684	-69%
Gross Annual Miles	6,811,954	6,419,015	6,570,820	6,255,034	6,402,228	-6%

*Source: TEA School Transportation Operation Report, 1994-1999; TEA School Transportation Route Services Report 1994-1999; costs exclude capital outlay and debt service. *Percent increase or decrease from 1994 to 1999.*

Route miles and extracurricular miles have increased since 1994, but other miles driven without students on the bus have decreased more significantly resulting in gross annual miles decreasing from 1994-1999.

Chapter 10

A. ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING

The Department of Pupil Transportation provides student transportation from home to school and for special trips and maintains and services all school buses. The department is spread among three facilities: a main transportation office and two bus terminals. The central office houses the director, assistant director and all administrative functions. The operational side of the department is divided between the two bus terminals. The north terminal at Nelson Field services all of north Austin and the south terminal at Saegert Field services all of south Austin.

The director of the Department of Pupil Transportation reports directly to the chief financial officer. The assistant director, the terminal supervisors of operations, the purchasing technician, the accounting clerk, the central schedulers and a secretary report directly to the director. The purchasing technician works directly with the Purchasing Department and the warehouse to ensure all supplies and parts are purchased as needed. The accounting clerk handles various reporting functions within the department including tracking all accidents and student injury incidents, time reporting to payroll and manages the activity fund. The central schedulers are responsible for creating and maintaining all the routes in the district.

Two supervisors work at each of the two terminals. The supervisors of operations manage all employees located at their terminal. Their responsibilities include time keeping, training, disciplinary action and route bidding. The shop foreman, the base schedulers, the dispatchers and the driver/coordinators report directly to the supervisors of operations.

The shop foreman oversees the assistant shop foreman and the mechanics who maintain the school bus fleet. The shop handles work order requests and preventive maintenance jobs. The schedulers coordinate routes between the central schedulers and the drivers. This job includes scheduling drivers for charter routes provided by the special trip coordinator. The driver/coordinators, otherwise known as lead drivers, are responsible for handling issues such as route conflicts among the drivers, training new drivers and covering routes for absent drivers and monitors.

Exhibit 10-9 illustrates the 1999-2000 organization structure of the Department of Pupil Transportation for AISD.

Exhibit 10-9
AISD Department of Pupil Transportation
1999-2000 Organization Structure
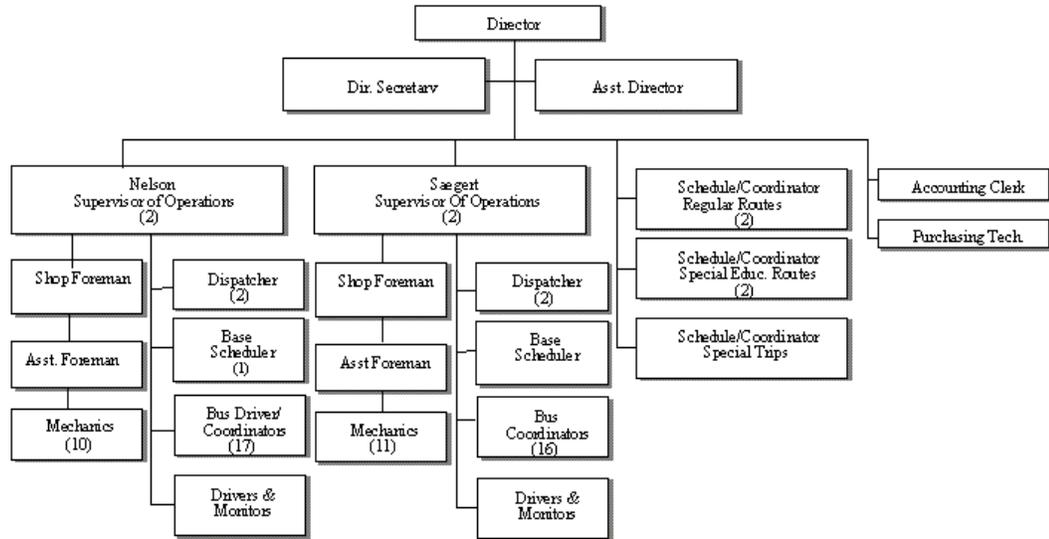
Source: AISD director of Pupil Transportation.

FINDING

AISD bus drivers accumulated 19,569 hours of overtime in 1998-99 for a total of $316,434 in overtime expenditures. All of the bus drivers are considered part-time employees. Each driver is only guaranteed the time for his normal morning and afternoon trips. For example, a typical driver will drive a two-hour route in the morning and a two-hour route in the afternoon for a total of four hours a day.

Many drivers have additional duties within the department, such as helping in the shop or washing buses, or they drive charter or field trip routes to make up additional hours, but those hours are not guaranteed. The director of Transportation has assigned 58 drivers to 'additional duties' such as helping the central schedulers, washing buses and helping maintain work orders. The purpose of this practice is to allow these bus drivers to work full days and minimize the overtime worked by these areas of transportation.

Some of the additional hours that drivers work are spent driving charter trips between morning and afternoon routes. AISD operates many charter routes (mostly field trips) during the day between normal bus routes. During 1998-99, the department handled more than 7,000 field trip requests for more than 200,000 miles. Assigning drivers to these charter routes is based on a rotation according to employees' seniority. Charter

routes are optional; drivers are not required to drive charter routes. Many drivers rely on these extra hours, however, for income because they are only guaranteed work for fours hours a day, nine months out of the year.

Exhibit 10-10 displays the overtime hours and associated cost for 1998-1999.

**Exhibit 10-10
AISD Overtime
Hours and
Expenditures
1998-99**

Position	1998-1999 Overtime Hours	Average Overtime Rate	Total Overtime Expenditures
Dispatcher	426.5	$25.43	$10,846
Driver	19,569.2	$16.17	$316,434
Lead Driver/Driver Coordinators	3,855.4	$20.43	$78,766
Mechanic	3,951.5	$21.67	$85,629
Monitor	1,654.1	$14.29	$23,637
Scheduler	1,559.2	$27.38	$42,691
Total	**31,015.9**		**$558,003**

Source: AISD Transportation Department.

The department spent significant money on overtime pay, even though the drivers' additional duties are designed to help reduce the amount of overtime by other employees (mechanics, schedulers and dispatchers) in the department since the drivers should have extra hours. The overtime by many department employees is caused by the fact that they are required to drive routes regularly due to driver absences.

Recommendation 125:

Reallocate additional duties and charter trips to reduce driver overtime.

Most drivers are not full-time employees and do not work 40 hours a week. If certain drivers are working overtime, the department's work is not

allocated properly. The director of Transportation should assess what is causing drivers' overtime.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Pupil Transportation determines all tasks in the department that are not assigned to a budgeted full-time position (such as bus washing, data entry, charters, and scheduling).	May 2000
2.	The director of Pupil Transportation develops and communicates a policy for assigning extra duties that describes the new policy to the department and to the drivers.	June 2000
3.	The director of Pupil Transportation quantifies the number of hours needed to complete each of the tasks identified in step 1.	July 2000
4.	The director of Pupil Transportation assigns drivers the additional duties based on the estimated number of hours for each task and the number of hours allocated to the driver's route.	August 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of this recommendation is derived from estimating the savings in driver overtime costs. If the district can reduce driver overtime by 50 percent, the savings would be $52,738 (50 percent x 19,569 hours x $5.39 average driver overtime increased rate). The district could achieve even greater cost savings if it could eliminate these overtime hours altogether.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Reallocate additional duties and charter trips to reduce driver overtime.	$52,738	$52,738	$52,738	$52,738	$52,738

FINDING

The Department of Pupil Transportation reports trouble in recruiting and maintaining an adequate number of bus drivers. As of October 1999, the district had 330 bus drivers on its payroll. The district operates approximately 340 daily routes for students between home and school. The district has been consistently short 10 drivers to cover the daily regular and special education routes since August 1999. Driver/coordinators act as substitute drivers on the unassigned routes.

As of October 1999, 30 driver/coordinators were on the payroll. The department experiences a turnover rate of 22 percent and an absentee rate

of 9 percent. In addition to the 10 unassigned routes, a daily average of 31 routes is left uncovered because of absent drivers. Just to cover average absences, the department would need a substitute driver pool of 31 drivers. The high number of absences and the driver shortage requires all driver/coordinators to drive routes daily, which takes away from their other duties.

In October 1999, almost all driver/coordinators as well as most mechanics were driving routes daily. As shown by overtime reports, mechanics are working an average of five hours overtime a week driving a route. The 30 driver/coordinators have averaged two hours of overtime a week for 1999-2000 school year. For 1998-99, driver/coordinators worked 3,855 overtime hours for a total of $78,766 in overtime expenditures, and mechanics worked 3,951 overtime hours for a total of $85,629 in overtime expenditures.

TSPR found examples of incentive programs in Corpus Christi ISD and Cypress Fairbanks ISD. Corpus Christi ISD gives drivers an additional $150 for zero absences and $100 for one absence during the year. The director of Transportation at Corpus Christi ISD reported that while the district's absentee rate is 9.8 percent, it has decreased in the last two years. Cypress Fairbanks ISD has reduced its absentee rate to less than 6 percent.

Another way to reduce absences is to award paid personal time and vacation time by years of service. Instead of advancing employees their leave time like AISD does, most private sector companies require the employees to earn their time off. Corpus Christi awards paid time off by the amount of service already given to the district. For example, an employee only receives the full amount of time off if the employee has worked the entire previous year.

Recommendation 126:

Implement an incentive program to reduce driver absenteeism.

Reducing absenteeism will help to maintain an adequate staff of drivers and substitute drivers to cover the daily routes and will reduce the amount of time supervisors and mechanics spend driving routes.
Driver/coordinators will then be able to concentrate on their primary duties, which are training and driver supervision. In addition, mechanics will be able to complete work orders and reduce the amount of overtime hours they spend driving routes.

Developing an incentive program to discourage absences will reduce the number of cover drivers needed. Once an effective attendance incentive

program is in place, the district should be able to reduce the amount of substitute drivers required.

The director of Pupil Transportation should develop a strategy to reduce absenteeism. The director should consider implementing an incentive program that rewards drivers for perfect or near perfect attendance. AISD would benefit from both a cash-bonus incentive for drivers with good attendance as well as changing vacation time accrual to an earned system in which employees earn their vacation time as they complete periods of work.

The director also should work with Human Resources to evaluate the policy of advancing leave time to employees. The benefit of having paid leave days when an employee begins work encourages absences and increases the district's costs when many of the part-time positions have high turnover rates. Requiring employees to 'earn' their leave days encourages attendance.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Pupil Transportation develops an appropriate incentive program to reduce absences so the district can maintain an adequate daily staff.	June 2000
2.	The director of Pupil Transportation recommends the incentive program to the chief financial officer.	July 2000
3.	Bus drivers are informed of the new absence incentive program.	August 2000
4.	The director of Pupil Transportation evaluates the incentive program to determine success.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

Maintaining adequate driving resources will reduce non-driver positions driving regular routes, allowing those employees to perform their jobs and reduce overtime. Reducing the absentee rate by one percent will eliminate 2,160 hours annually (three extra drivers per day x four hours per day x 180 days) worked by substitute drivers. The average regular rate for mechanics and lead drivers is $14.03 while the average overtime rate is $21.05. The difference between the regular and overtime rates is $7.02 ($21.05-$14.03).

The district would save $15,163 for each percent reduction in the absentee rate, reducing overtime of substitute drivers ($7.02 x 2,160 hours). AISD could reduce the absentee rate by 1 percent the first year and an additional

1 percent in the following year. The savings will be reduced by the cash incentives given for good attendance. If the district awards $100 per driver for the top 10 percent of drivers, the cost would be $3,300 (330 drivers x .1 x $100). The savings for the first year would be $11,863 ($15,163-$3,300). If the district can reduce the overtime by another 1 percent each of the following years, the district would save an additional $15,163 for a total of $27,026 ($11,863 + $15,163).

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Implement an incentive program to reduce driver absenteeism.	$11,863	$27,026	$27,026	$27,026	$27,026

Chapter 10

B. ROUTING AND SCHEDULING

The Department of Pupil Transportation is responsible for creating all routes (including the route to magnet schools that are operated by Capital Metro). Five central Transportation office personnel perform routing and scheduling. Two schedulers are responsible for regular education student routing, two for special education student routing, and one for charter field trip routing. The schedulers are aided by one base scheduler at Nelson Terminal and one base scheduler at Saegert Terminal.

The district operates 334 routes daily that service 22,000 students. In addition, Capital Metro operates 31 routes daily that service 800 students. The district's transportation service area covers 230 square miles.

The district recently purchased a new software package for routing and scheduling. The product is a graphics tool that creates and maintains routes. The special education scheduling coordinators began using the software for all routes during the summer of 1999. Regular education routes are being entered into the new system during the fall of 1999. The schedulers use the software to quickly change routes as needed and produce new route details for the drivers (stops and stop times). The software also helps perform 'what-if' analyses to determine how a certain change will affect the entire route.

FINDING

AISD sponsors more than 7,000 field trips each year to enhance students' educational experience. The district has dedicated a full-time person to scheduling and billing charter field trips, invested programming resources to create special trip scheduling software, and makes an effort to meet all field trip requests.

During 1998-99, Transportation received 7,351 requests for charters for a total of 209,171 miles. AISD has a special trip scheduling coordinator who is responsible for scheduling these field trip requests and ensuring that the department is reimbursed for the trip by the sponsoring activity. The special trip coordinator reports the special trip software is an essential component to making the field trips easily accessible to activity sponsors and for the department to track its reimbursements.

Schools or activity directors have direct access to the field trip software and can request special charter trips from the department by entering the date, time, pick up and delivery locations, and the number of students to

be transported into the field trip scheduling software called TRIP. The software produces a report of all requests for a given day. The special trip routing coordinator provides a list of field trip requests and requirements to the base schedulers at the two bus terminals two days in advance. The base schedulers determine which buses and drivers can accept these requests.

After the trip, drivers fill out a charter slip recording the number of miles and their wait time. This charter slip is then returned to the special trip routing coordinator who then enters the data into TRIP. The TRIP software produces billing statements for the schools or sponsoring activities so that the department is reimbursed for the field trip.

The software can be adjusted to fit the department's field trip policies. For example, the department does not want to provide field trip service during the morning or afternoon regular routes so the TRIP software does not allow an activity sponsor to request a field trip that starts before 9:30 a.m. or ends after 2:00 p.m. In these cases, the sponsor must call and receive approval from the director of Transportation for the charter trip.

The software also is capable of producing annual reports that meet state requirements and reports that help management track expenditures.

COMMENDATION

AISD uses field trip scheduling software that allows schools to request field trips easily and enables the Department of Pupil Transportation to charge these trips easily to the sponsoring program.

FINDING

AISD adopted a staggered bell schedule for its schools' start and end times, but not all schools follow the set schedule. The adopted schedule requires that all elementary schools begin at 7:45 a.m., and all middle schools begin at 8:20 a.m. All high schools should begin at 9:00 a.m. according to the staggered schedule, but individual high schools have adjusted their start and end bell times.

The schools that house magnet programs adjusted their bell times to accommodate Capital Metro because Capital Metro must finish its AISD routes before it begins its normal transportation services. **Exhibit 10-11** describes the bell schedules for the schools within AISD.

Exhibit 10-11
AISD School Bell Schedule

School	Start Time	End Time
All Elementary Schools	7:45 a.m.	2:45 p.m.
All Middle Schools	8:20 a.m.	3:30 p.m.
Anderson HS	8:55 a.m.	4:10 p.m.
Austin HS	9:00 a.m.	4:25 p.m.
Bowie HS	8:30 a.m.	4:27 p.m.
Johnston HS	8:13 a.m.	3:13 p.m.
LBJ HS	8:15 a.m.	3:30 p.m.
McCallum HS	9:00 a.m.	4:15 p.m.
Reagan HS	8:40 a.m.	4:10 p.m.
Travis HS	8:55 a.m.	4:15 p.m.
All Other High Schools	9:00 a.m.	4:10 p.m.
ALC	10:00 a.m.	4:30 p.m.
Clifton	9:30 a.m.	3:00 p.m.
Dill (Special Ed Unit)	7:30 a.m.	2:45 p.m.
Dill	9:00 a.m.	2:45 p.m.
Rosedale Elementary (Special Ed. Unit)	7:30 a.m.	2:45 p.m.
Rosedale Secondary (Special Ed. Unit)	8:30 a.m.	3:30 p.m.

Source: AISD Transportation scheduling coordinators.
Note: Some elementary schools delay start time till 8 a.m. to give students time for breakfast. This does not impact Pupil Transportation.

Staggered bell times allow a transportation department to use its buses efficiently with each vehicle servicing an elementary, a middle school, and a high school. Efficient routes also increase the district's linear density (ratio of riders to miles), which in turn will increase the reimbursement the district receives from the state.

After reviewing a random sampling of AISD's routes, TSPR found that approximately 11 percent of the routes contain one trip, 60 percent contain two trips, and 29 percent contain three trips. TSPR also noticed the percentage of routes that contained three trips was greater for special education routes than for regular education. In most districts, special

education routes are less efficient due to the special needs and individual requirements of each student.

Of the routes sampled that contained only one trip, many were servicing high schools that have an earlier bell time than the originally prescribed, later high school staggered time. The earlier bell time for these schools restricts the department from coordinating trips to these high schools with trips to middle schools because the start times of the high schools conflict with the middle schools.

Recommendation 127:

Require high schools to comply with the staggered bell schedule.

Aligning the bell times of the high schools with the staggered bell schedule will reduce the amount of single trip routes, which will increase the efficiency of student transportation in the district. More efficient routes also will increase the district's linear density ratio, which will provide AISD increased state reimbursements.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent and the board direct all high school principals to comply with the established bell schedule.	September 2000
2.	The high school principals evaluate how the bell time change will affect all school operations.	October 2000
3.	The high school principals begin working with other district departments, such as maintenance, custodial, and athletic departments to adjust schedules for new bell time.	December 2000
4.	Principals send notice of new bell schedule to parents.	March 2001
5.	The scheduling coordinators create new routes based on the new bell times.	June 2001
6.	Transportation notifies parents of new route times.	July 2001
7.	New bell schedules and routes become effective.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

An estimate of 7 percent of all routes (2/3 of the 11 percent single trip routes) can be added to existing routes based on an analysis of existing routes. This will eliminate the need for 24 buses (343 routes x 7 percent) and the need for 24 drivers and one less mechanic. This change would

produce a one-time savings of $24,000 for the sale of the excess vehicles ($1,000 x 24), and a yearly savings of $529,608 from the elimination of 24 driver positions ($22,067 = ($17,514 salary + $4,553 in benefits), and from the elimination of one mechanic's salary and benefits ($30,152 salary + $1,947 insurance + $2,138 Workers Compensation + $2,307 FICA = $36,544) because of the reduction in the number of buses that need to be maintained.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Sell buses.	$0	$24,000	$0	$0	$0
Require high schools to comply with the staggered bell schedule.	$0	$566,152	$566,152	$566,152	$566,152
Net Savings (Costs)	$0	$590,152	$566,152	$566,152	$566,152

FINDING

Transportation charges schools, departments, or organizations for field trips or charter trips during the regular school year at a rate of $1.80 per mile round trip from the pickup location to the trip destination and $6.50 per hour for driver wait time at the destination site. This amount compares to an average actual cost of $2.04 per mile in 1997-98 and an average driver wage of $10.78 per hour. Transportation does not recover its full costs for field and charter trips.

The Transportation Department also charges schools for routes that service any type of summer activity or summer school sessions. Summer routes are charged at a rate equal to the average cost per mile reported for the previous year. This rate has been at least $2.00 for regular education programs during the past five years. Miles from the bus terminal to the pickup site and from the pickup site back to the terminal are deadhead miles and are not charged to the school or activity. Trips that deliver students from the school to their homes after activities are also not charged to the schools.

According to TEA reports, AISD operated 260,867 extracurricular miles during 1997-98. A report generated from the TRIP software shows that only 217,068 of those miles were charter trips for which the department received reimbursement from the sponsoring activity. Deadhead miles that are not charged to the sponsoring activity account for the difference in the two figures. AISD does not receive reimbursement from the state for miles servicing extracurricular activities.

Sponsoring schools pay for instructional field trips. Sponsoring departments pay for extracurricular trips for school-sanctioned events such as athletics or band competition. Some of these trips are paid from district-budgeted funds; others are paid for from funds generated by a club or a sponsor. Both the director of Transportation and the special trips scheduler told TSPR that many of the AISD schools have local business partners who have 'adopted' the school. Many of the field trips are sponsored by the school's business partner, or the trip expenses are covered by the partner's donations into a general activity fund.

Because most of the field trips cannot be combined with other routes and the bus must be present in the case of an emergency, the drivers for charter routes sit at the field trip site and wait for the return trip. The department must pay the driver for this time. The availability of these charter trips greatly helps the department provide its employees with additional income that in turn helps the district maintain its staff.

For a field trip, the bus usually picks the students up at the sponsoring school. The miles driven from the terminal to the school are considered deadhead miles because the bus has no riders aboard during those miles. The department does not charge schools or activities for the deadhead miles or the driver time spent driving the deadhead. A report of field trip miles from TRIP shows that for approximately every five miles that are chargeable, one mile is not chargeable. This mileage is a significant amount of 'free' miles.

In the 1997-1998 school year, AISD operated 217,068 chargeable charter miles and 43,799 deadhead miles on charter trips. According to the 1997-98 TEA report, the average cost per mile for AISD was $2.04. Charging $2.04 per mile rather than $1.80 will produce an additional $0.24 per mile for miles with students on the bus and an additional $2.04 per deadhead mile.

Transportation does not keep track of the number of hours worked for the charter trips. To estimate the number of hours that schools were charged for driver wait time, TSPR extrapolated from a TRIP report, determining the approximate number of wait hours for 1998-1999 was 111,000 hours. Transportation would receive an additional $4.28 per hour if they charge the average driver hourly rate.

The director and the charter trip coordinator told TSPR that the school's 'adopt-a-school' business partner funds many of these charter trips. In these cases, the district would realize a cost savings because other departments would not have to reimburse transportation. Because transportation bills the school directly for the field trip, the department cannot quantify the number of trips that are funded from external sources.

AISD's Department of Pupil Transportation also provides transportation for other organizations outside of the district in an attempt to foster good will within the Austin community. AISD has provided buses and drivers for University of Texas events, churches, nursing homes, and other local organizations. The director of Pupil Transportation said that the district generally only provides these services to other non-profit organizations in the area. Since the external organizations do not have access to AISD's TRIP software, they must call the special trip scheduler to request service. These requests are scheduled and billed in the same manner as internal charter trip requests. The external organization is charged $1.80 per mile (not including deadhead miles) and $6.50 per hour of driver wait time. Again, in its effort to foster community relationships and the educational opportunities of its students, AISD accommodates almost all charter trip requests.

The special trip coordinator could not determine the exact number of miles of service provided to external agencies. The director estimated that during the school year 5-10 percent of charter trips are for external organizations and approximately 40 percent are for external organizations during the summer. He estimated that for 1998-99, approximately 15 percent of the 217,068 chargeable charter miles, 43,799 deadhead miles, and 110,000 driver wait hours were not for AISD students. This calculates to 32,560 chargeable miles, 6,570 deadhead miles, and 16,500 wait hours.

Recommendation 128:

Increase the cost per mile and the rate for driver wait time charged for field trips to recover the average actual cost per mile incurred by the Department of Pupil Transportation.

Transportation should publish a new field trip policy each year, adjusting the fees based on the average costs for the previous year. Transportation should charge all activities a rate per mile equal to the average cost per mile reported to TEA the previous year. The department also should charge the sponsoring entity a rate that will recover the actual cost of paying the driver's wage.

The department also should include the deadhead miles in the field trip charge. In order for the deadhead charges to be fair among schools (actual cost would be lower for schools closer to the Transportation bus terminals), the department should determine the average distance from the bus terminals to AISD schools and the average time a driver spends reaching the school. This average cost should be a flat fee associated with all field trips.

The district should continue to offer their transportation services to outside organizations as its resources permit. Providing these services fosters community relationships and could develop into other partnership opportunities with non-profit organizations. In most cases, offering these services could provide additional revenue to the district. Offering to operate additional routes also could increase the number of hours that district employees work, which again maximizes employee hours and helps to retain employees because they are working more hours.

Since the district charges only $1.80 per mile ($0 for deadhead miles) and $6.50 for driver wait time, the practice of providing transportation to external organizations creates a loss for the district. The district should charge at least the average incurred cost per mile and the minimum driver wage for wait time to recover the cost of operating the route.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Pupil Transportation recommends to the chief financial officer increasing the cost per mile and the rate per hour of driver wait time to recover actual costs.	May 2000
2.	The director of Pupil Transportation informs district departments and organizations of the change in cost per mile and the rate per driver wait time for field trips.	August 2000
3.	The director of Pupil Transportation places the new rates into effect.	September 2000
4.	The director of Pupil Transportation re-evaluates the cost of the field trips to ensure cost recovery.	Annually

FISCAL IMPACT

Assuming an average yearly charter mileage of 200,000 miles and 40,000 deadhead miles for internal district departments, this change would bring in additional revenue of $129,600 for transportation (($0.24 x 200,000) + ($2.04 x 40,000)). The department estimates a yearly total of 100,000 wait hours by drivers for charter trips. The department would receive an additional $428,000 by charging $10.78 per hour instead of $6.50 per hour (($10.78-$6.50) x 100,000 hours). The annual total savings would be approximately $557,600 for the Department of Pupil Transportation, although this would not be a savings to the district as a whole.

The district can, however, recover an additional $0.24 ($2.04-$1.80) for each mile driven with riders and an additional $2.04 ($2.04 - $0) per mile for deadhead miles for trips provided to external organizations. The district will recover an additional $4.28 per hour of driver wait time

($10.78-$6.50). This change will produce a total savings of $91,837 (($4.28 x 16,500) + ($0.24 x 32,560 miles with riders) + ($2.04 x 6,570 deadhead miles)).

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Increase the cost per mile and the rate for driver wait time charged for field trips to recover the average actual cost per mile incurred by the Department of Pupil Transportation.	$91,837	$91,837	$91,837	$91,837	$91,837

FINDING

The TRIP software that handles requesting and scheduling field trips only allows schools to request buses between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. or after 4:30 p.m. Although this feature represents the field trip policy, the policy has not been updated or re-distributed since 1993. If the TRIP software will not accept the request, the school must call the special trip coordinator to request the trip. The requests that are not entered into the TRIP software, but are routed through the special trip coordinator, are sent to the director for approval. The director told TSPR that to accommodate schools and special activities that foster educational opportunities for students, the district often makes exceptions to the policy and transports students during the peak route times.

Because all drivers within the department have their own route that provides normal transportation from home to school during the peak hours, other staff within the department must be used to accommodate charter requests during peak route hours. Often, this means anyone within the department who has a Commercial Drivers License will be driving a route including the director or assistant director of Transportation. Driving takes away from the supervisory function of many positions within the department and/or induces overtime work.

AISD has withdrawn charter privileges from some organizations because they have abused the district's vehicles. There are no general guidelines for the use of the vehicles during the charter trips or policy for the types of events for which the district will provide charter service.

Recommendation 129:

Amend and enforce the field trip policy regarding the acceptable times and acceptable use policies for field trip requests.

The field trip scheduling software does differentiate between peak and off-peak field trips, but a call to the district can often sidestep the policy. The department should inform all AISD departments, organizations, schools, and teachers about the differences in peak and off-peak field trips and how it affects the transportation services when these policies are not followed.

The field trip policy should list all known events for which transportation will make an exception to the normal policy. The policy also should include the rates that the department will charge for the charter trips, update trip costs annually, and charge a premium rate for field trips scheduled not in accordance with the policy, scheduled during peak times, or not scheduled in advance to discourage schools from making these type of field trip requests.

The department's charter trip policy must establish the priority of providing transportation for AISD students between home and school and ensure the quality of service and equipment for this goal. Thus, the policy also should include a special section for expected behavior on charter trips and guidelines for external organizations when requesting a charter bus. Guidelines outlining students' expected behavior will help keep the buses in better condition for regular transportation services.

Organizations that cannot follow district policies should not be allowed to charter buses from AISD in the future.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Pupil Transportation develops a new charter trip policy.	June 2000
2.	The director of Pupil Transportation presents recommendations for changing the procedures for field trips and an implementation schedule to the chief financial officer.	July 2000
3.	The director of Pupil Transportation prepares actual cost statistics from 1999-2000 to determine new field trip rates.	August 2000
4.	The director of Pupil Transportation provides the new field trip policy to departments, organizations and schools, advising them to plan field trips in advance and encouraging them to schedule trips during off-peak times.	September 2000
5.	The director of Pupil Transportation provides the new field trip policy to external partnering agencies, describing the new rules for accepting charter trips, the expected behavior on the bus, the appropriate activities for which AISD will provide transportation service, and the new rates.	September 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Transportation implemented a new automated routing and scheduling software package in the spring of 1999, and the special education schedulers began using the software to create their routes for the fall of 1999. The software vendor reported that during the software installation, AISD received six hours of training via PCAnywhere and conference phones and 1.5 days of on-site training when the vendor was in Austin. According to the software representative, AISD has only used about 2/3 of the training it is eligible to receive from the software installation package.

The scheduling coordinators reported they did not have enough time to train on the new software because of the deadlines for inputting route information; employees were forced to learn the software as they created their routes. This situation caused approximately six straight weeks of work with no days off and enormous overtime to input all special education routes before the start of school.

By October 1999, the four scheduling coordinators had accumulated 710 overtime hours at an average overtime rate of $27. Now that they are actively using the software for route changes and new route creation, they report that the new software requires more time to complete a given task than before the software implementation. This reason for the amount of time necessary to complete a task is most likely because they are learning the software as they work and are not yet proficient with the software.

AISD is not using all of the capabilities of the software primarily because the employees have not learned how to integrate the tool into their business process. A software representative said the software was developed to be a tool to help those who knew how to route. It is not a system that is going to create all the stops and routes for the district based on mathematical models like some of the other automated routing software programs on the market. The scheduler-coordinators should be able to create better routes by combining their routing knowledge with the tool.

Because they do not have access to timely and accurate student information, the employees are not using the software to maintain student information for regular education routes. Since all special education routes pick students up at their residence, the special education schedulers do input student information into the system. The schedulers are not using the new software to help coordinate routes. They still use a paper-based process of a route grid to display the multiple trips a certain route may

operate. The software, being graphically oriented, greatly helps coordinate and combine routes when used properly.

Recommendation 130:

Provide routing coordinators additional training on the new routing and scheduling software.

Transportation personnel received limited training on the new software. The routing coordinators were forced to learn primarily by trial and error. Because of time constraints, they have not explored all of the system's capabilities. The coordinators could benefit from the new system if they are trained properly on all of its functions. Using the software to its full capacity is likely to increase the productivity of the routing coordinators as well as indicate areas where better route coordination is possible. The department should first use the remainder of the training that was provided with the software installation and then assess whether additional training is needed. The software representative believed that the remainder of the training the district has already purchased should be adequate.

Proper use of the software should eliminate the need to work overtime for the schedulers.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Pupil Transportation schedules training for the scheduler-coordinators.	June 2000
2.	The scheduler-coordinators receive training on the automated routing and scheduling software.	July 2000
3.	The scheduler-coordinators use the automated routing and scheduling software to create efficient routes.	July 2000
4.	The director of Pupil Transportation eliminates routes based on software scheduling.	August 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

Training is included with the purchase and installation of the software package, therefore there is no additional cost. Additional training for the scheduling coordinator should eliminate the need for overtime to complete the routing. Eliminating overtime will produce a savings of $19,170 (710 overtime hours of four scheduling coordinators for 1999 x an average overtime rate of $27).

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Provide routing coordinators additional training on the new routing and scheduling software.	$19,170	$19,170	$19,170	$19,170	$19,170

FINDING

Transportation does not have timely or accurate access to census data and thus cannot use this data to prepare efficient routes or predict vehicle and staffing needs. The director said the department has relied on the fact that AISD's student population has remained fairly static over the last few years.

The director reported the district's routes and stops have remained relatively unchanged over the past few years. The regular education scheduling coordinators described the process of creating routes at the beginning of the school year. They start with all the routes from the previous year and a ridership survey taken the last month of school. The ridership survey provides them an idea of the number of students on each route. The scheduling coordinators then adjust the routes if a route appears under or overused.

The department does not have an accurate record of each stop's use so it can eliminate stops that are not used or create new stops when stops are over-crowded. They do not have a good picture of where each student actually lives or how many of the students at a given stop will be moving up to a new school (for example, a fifth grader who is graduating from elementary to middle school).

The district publishes a list of stops servicing each school at the beginning of the school year so parents can determine the closest stop to the school. The schedulers must rely on parent phone calls to indicate cases where there is not a stop close to the child's residence and trust drivers to report stops where there are no students or where routes are overcrowded. This process creates a lot of confusion and changes at the beginning of every school year, because the routes are adjusted for capacity and timing.

To have a record of the children on the bus for emergency purposes, the department performs a roll call once a month beginning the first week of school. Each rider must fill out a card indicating his name, address and contact information. The cards are compiled into a list for each route. During future roll calls, the driver checks the riders against the list, adding any names not on the list.

This process is time and paper intensive and also does not ensure accurate records of students on the bus. It is difficult for elementary students to fill out the appropriate information on the rider information card. TSPR witnessed a roll call during its site visits in November 1999. The entire roll call process was lengthy and delayed the scheduled routes. Close to 50 percent of the students on the bus were not on the rider list, and the driver had to record the child's name before leaving the bus. Many of these children did not speak sufficient English to tell the information to the driver.

A representative from the automated routing and scheduling software company reported that AISD did not purchase the module of the software that provides integration between the routing product and the student information system. This module can be used to bring in the student census data out of the student information system to provide timely student demographic information for creating routes.

The module also can also provide an interface between routing information and the student information, such as each student's assigned route, so that schools can view this data. The software representative said that it was unusual for a client not to use the system's rider pin-mapping function. Most clients use the rider demographics to create the routes.

Rider demographics relate directly to route efficiency and the district's linear density. AISD had a linear density of 1.307 for 1998-1999, which entitled the district to $1.11 per mile reimbursement.

Recommendation 131:

Obtain student census data including resident address, grade, and attending school and use information to create efficient routes.

The district should be able to produce detailed census information for the students in the district. This information should be provided to the Department of Pupil Transportation so routes can be created to meet the needs of the current student population.

Transportation could take advantage of the system capabilities of the automated routing and scheduling software and print rider reports for each route. This change would minimize the amount of time the driver must spend during roll calls and provide the department immediate access to current rider records in cases of emergency.

With student census and demographic information, schedulers can create more efficient routes, which will result in a higher linear density that will increase the district's state reimbursement.

Transportation cannot create efficient routes if it does not have knowledge of the students who need transportation. The routing software should be used to match student population information with stops and routes. Ideally, staff should obtain an electronic file that contains student information for the upcoming school year. This file can be loaded into the routing software so that the routing coordinators can graphically see representations of all students in the district. They can then use the graphics tool to determine the best areas for stops and how to coordinate routes. They should be able to see which students are riding each bus and so eliminate the need to perform the lengthy roll-call process.

If it is not possible to obtain timely student information for the upcoming year, the department would still benefit from the census data of the previous school year. This data will give the schedulers an idea where the student population resides.

The district also should purchase the census integration module for the routing software so student demographics can be input into the system. Using the routing software with the student census information will greatly improve the efficiency of the routes, minimize parent calls for changes, decrease the amount of time to create routes and provide better records of student ridership. More efficient routes will result in higher linear density and possible elimination of some routes. Eliminating routes will achieve a cost savings for the district, and higher linear density will be provide more revenue for the district based on state reimbursements.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Pupil Transportation recommends to the Information Technology Department integrating the routing system with the student census information.	May 2000
2.	The director of Pupil Transportation contacts software vendor to request installation of the census integration module.	May 2000
3.	Software representatives install module at the district.	June 2000
4.	Software representatives work with the Information Technology Department to integrate the software module with student census data.	July 2000
5.	Software representatives train scheduler-coordinators on the new module.	July 2000
6.	The director of Pupil Transportation receives census data and imports it into the routing system to create new routes.	August 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

If the district improves one level in the linear density, it will receive an additional $0.14 per mile reimbursement from the state. Assuming the same number of riders, AISD would need to reduce the total number of annual miles by 265,389 miles to reach a linear density of 1.650. Based on 180 school days and 340 routes, the average reduction in miles would need to be four miles per route.

Regular education reimbursable miles for 1998-99 were about 2.4 million miles. Increasing the linear density to this group requires a reduction of 265,000 miles. The savings will be $298,900 ($0.14 x 2.135 million miles). The increased linear density results from more efficient routes. The software module to integrate the routing software with student data will cost $2,500 to purchase and $250 a year for maintenance. The net fiscal impact is approximately $298,650 ($298,900-$250). The savings will not be achieved until 2001-2002.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Obtain student census data including resident address, grade, and attending school and use information to create efficient routes.	$0	$298,900	$298,900	$298,900	$298,900
Purchase software.	($2,500)	($250)	($250)	($250)	($250)
Total Net Savings (Costs)	($2,500)	$298,650	$298,650	$298,650	$298,650

Chapter 10

C. FLEET MAINTENANCE

The Department of Pupil Transportation is responsible for maintaining all school buses within AISD. A team of two mechanics perform fleet maintenance at each of the two bus terminals. AISD owns 466 buses that are serviced by 23 mechanics. Each mechanic is responsible for servicing approximately 20 buses.

The district purchased 187 new buses in 1997. Before this purchase, the average age of AISD's fleet was 14 years. The drivers experienced frequent breakdowns, and the mechanics were busy servicing the fleet to keep the buses operational. With the purchase of the new buses, the district now operates a fairly young fleet with an average age of 8.8 years. The mechanics have experienced a lighter work load, and the drivers report pride in driving the new buses.

The drivers are responsible for completing a work order when their bus needs service. The mechanics responsible for the bus then complete the work order. AISD uses an automated Fleet Maintenance software program, which tracks all maintenance performed on buses. The automated fleet maintenance system is also used for determining when preventive maintenance is required on all vehicles. This determination is made based on the mileage of the vehicle, which is tracked through the automated fleet maintenance program by work orders and fueling records.

FINDING

AISD's automated fleet maintenance software ensures that preventive maintenance is performed on the buses as required by mileage standards. A vehicle's mileage is recorded each time a work order is entered into the system and whenever the vehicle is fueled. This system provides a fairly current and accurate picture of the fleet's mileage.

Each day, one of the bus drivers generates a report from the system detailing all vehicles due for preventive maintenance. The report gives mechanics a grace period for completing the work. Once a vehicle's mileage surpasses the mileage guideline for the preventive maintenance, the bus will be dead-lined (taken out of service) until the maintenance is completed. The mechanics prioritize the preventive maintenance based on the mileage. The shop foreman said few buses are dead-lined due to incomplete preventive maintenance.

Preventive maintenance is important in properly maintaining the district's fleet. Performing regular oil changes and brake checks minimize vehicle break downs and accidents, which provides better safety and service to AISD students.

The shop foreman requires mechanics to record all the hours they worked on work orders. When a mechanic drives a route, a work order is entered into the department's automated fleet maintenance software indicating the number of hours spent and the task. All state inspections, vehicle servicing, preventive maintenance, service calls and hours spent cleaning the shop are recorded into the software. This practice allows the shop foreman and other department supervisors to obtain a clear picture of the tasks that are completed by the mechanics. The foreman can justify why the mechanics may need overtime to complete vehicle maintenance by showing the number of hours the mechanics are spending driving routes rather than servicing vehicles.

COMMENDATION

AISD uses the automated fleet maintenance software to maintain a record of each mechanic's time and track all preventative maintenance.

FINDING

According to one shop foreman, mechanics complete two to three work orders a day. A sampling of work order records confirmed that the average AISD mechanic completes approximately 2.3 work orders a day. Many of these work orders are preventive maintenance work and state inspections, which require little of the mechanic's time. The 2.3 work order average does not include work orders in the system that indicate the mechanic drove a route. The sampling of work orders showed that on average, a mechanic spends 1.8 hours a day driving a route. Payroll records indicate that for the first six pay periods of 1999-2000, mechanics average 4.9 hours overtime a week.

Recommendation 132:

Eliminate four mechanic positions and increase the remaining mechanics' productivity by no longer requiring them to drive buses.

If the mechanics stop driving routes, they will have an additional five hours of working time a week (10 hours driving routes - 5 hours average overtime). Each terminal carries a staff of 11 mechanics. This change would save an additional 55 hours of mechanic's time a week per terminal. The shop foreman should develop performance goals for its mechanics to

meet industry standards. In addition to the time saved by not driving routes, the mechanics should be more effective. The district should eliminate two mechanic positions per base.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Pupil Transportation recommends to the chief financial officer eliminating four mechanic positions.	May 2000
2.	The chief financial officer recommends to the superintendent and the board eliminating four mechanic positions.	June 2000
3.	The superintendent approves eliminating the four positions.	July 2000
4.	The director of Pupil Transportation works with the director of Human Resources to eliminate the four positions over a period of a year.	August 2000- August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

The average AISD mechanic has a yearly salary and benefits of $36,544 for a total savings of $146,176 ($30,152 salary + $1,947 insurance + $2,138 workers compensation + $2,307 FICA) = $36,544 x 4 mechanics). The recommendation will not be fully implemented until 2001-2002. First year savings represent one-half of the savings.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Eliminate four mechanic positions and increase the remaining mechanics' productivity by no longer requiring them to drive buses.	$73,088	$146,176	$146,176	$146,176	$146,176

FINDING

All work orders are entered into the fleet maintenance program after the mechanic has completed the work on the vehicle. Until the data entry clerk enters the results of the work order, the entire fleet maintenance process (excluding preventive maintenance) is a paper-driven process.

This process relies heavily on the driver and the mechanic to maintain accurate records of the work order requests until the entire job is complete. Many times, mechanics cannot complete work orders immediately because parts must be ordered. Mechanics, as well as the shop foreman,

must rely on the paper work orders to determine the backlog of work and to prioritize the work.

While this practice does allow transportation to maintain an accurate history of the work that has been completed on each vehicle and the amount of work performed by each mechanic, it does not allow the department to take full advantage of the automated fleet maintenance system.

Recommendation 133:

Enter all work orders into the automated fleet maintenance system as soon as they are requested.

The automated fleet maintenance system is capable of managing the back log of work orders. All work orders should be entered into the system as soon as they are reported. The priority of the service should be entered into the system at that time as well. The shop foreman should use the software to assess the backlog of work orders and integrate the priorities of service requests and preventive maintenance requirements. The foreman also should be able to re-assign work among mechanics to even out the work load.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The shop foremen at each terminal works with the director of Pupil Transportation to determine the new work order process.	May 2000
2.	The shop foremen explain the new policy to all mechanics and the data entry clerk.	June 2000
3.	The data entry clerk begins the new work order process by entering all work orders into the system when drivers request them.	July 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

Entering the work orders into the software when they are reported can be accomplished with existing resources. The fiscal impact of this recommendation would be measured by the amount of time saved in managing the paper work orders until they are completed and the ability to better assign work among available mechanics. The shop foremen will be able to manage the operations of the shop by using the capabilities of the automated fleet maintenance system and will no longer need the assistance of an assistant foreman to manage the shop whose duties could be reassigned to other maintenance areas. The entire shop should be able to experience less overtime as tasks are distributed more evenly across resources.

Chapter 10

D. SAFETY

FINDING

The district provides substantial training for new drivers, but limited ongoing training. The director of Pupil Transportation and the supervisors of operations reported that drivers receive 29 hours of training after they receive their Commercial Drivers License (CDL). This time includes 20 hours of Texas School Bus Driver Certification Course, eight hour defensive driving course, and one hour of alcohol and drug awareness course.

New drivers also receive training on district and department procedures and route specific training in CPR and first aid. The department provides student management workshops during staff professional development days, but the classes are not required. After this initial new driver training, the drivers receive 12 hours of refresher training every three years. This training is eight hours in a state certification refresher and four hours in defensive driving refresher courses.

Proper training enables drivers to provide safe transportation and avoid preventable accidents. In 1998-1999, AISD recorded 135 accidents. There were 54 preventable, 61 non-preventable and 20 that were not categorized. Preventable accidents can be minimized with properly trained drivers.

AISD also records student incidents in relation to safety accidents. In 1998-1999, AISD had 85 student accident incidents on the school bus. These incidents include students slipping on the steps to the bus, students being hit by other students, students being hurt by flying objects, and other accidents.

The Texas Department of Public Safety section of the Texas Administrative Code describes suggested curriculum and time appropriations for school bus driver safety training. The curriculum rule suggests the following time allocations for training in addition to the hands-on behind-the-wheel driver training:

- Introduction--.5 hour
- The School Bus Driver's Image--1.5 hours
- Preventive Maintenance--3.0 hours
- Traffic Regulations and Driving Procedures--1.5 hours
- Defensive Driving--3.0 hours
- Safety and Emergency Procedures--3.0 hours

- First Aid--1.5 hours
- Procedures for Loading and Unloading Students--3.0 hours
- The Special Education/Handicapped Child--1.5 hours
- Awareness of the Effects of Alcohol and Other Drugs--1.5 hours

Recommendation 134:

Provide drivers more ongoing training opportunities and institute minimum training requirements.

Re-training drivers will improve the drivers' performance immediately and will foster an atmosphere focused on safety within the department. Departmental performance and overall service delivery should improve significantly as the drivers are better trained to manage the vehicles and the students. A trained driver will help reduce the number of accidents and student incidents.

The primary benefit from an increased training program for drivers will be improved safety. Emphasizing the need for training and safety will help drivers create a safe environment in which to transport students.

Some incidents are unavoidable, but the number of incidents can be reduced with proper training and an emphasis on safety. The drivers can be trained in student management to better control the behavior of students while on the bus. Drivers also can learn safety techniques that will reduce the number of student injuries.

Drivers should receive training on driving the vehicle, district and department policies, student discipline management, and safety. Drivers should be encouraged to attend all staff development workshops and should be required to attend a minimum number of hours of continued training each year. Drivers should be encouraged to constantly improve their attention to safety and strengthen their ability to provide effective transportation service.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Pupil Transportation recommends to the chief financial officer increasing the training program for all drivers.	May 2000
2.	The chief financial officer recommends to the superintendent and board increasing training for drivers.	May 2000
3.	The superintendent and board approve increased training for drivers.	June 2000
4.	The director of Pupil Transportation assigns the training and	June 2000

	safety specialists to prepare additional curriculum for new driver training and ongoing training.	
5.	The training and safety specialists train new drivers.	July-August 2000
6.	The training and safety specialists schedule workshops, behind-the-wheel and classroom training for existing drivers.	September 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact is the cost of paying for each driver's time to receive training. The fiscal impact includes 10 additional hours of training for each driver. The average wage for a driver is $10.47 per hour. The district has approximately 290 continuing drivers per year (365 average drivers - 75 new drivers a year). The cost of providing continued training would amount to $30,363 (290 x 10 x $10.47). Training will be conducted by district staff.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Provide drivers more ongoing training opportunities and institute minimum training requirements.	($30,363)	($30,363)	($30,363)	($30,363)	($30,363)

FINDING

Student discipline on buses is a problem in AISD. Public responses to TSPR inquiries reported that buses are seen with students shouting out the windows and throwing things at passing cars, throwing trash within the bus and students prohibiting other students from sitting in available seats.

The district has developed a comprehensive policy governing the expected behavior of bus riders, the expected behavior of bus drivers and the expected interaction between the child and the driver. This policy includes the procedure for reporting policy violations and the consequences associated with such violations.

The director of Pupil Transportation said the driver is responsible for reporting incidents to the school principals. The director or the supervisor of operations may be involved when incidents require meeting with principals and/or parents to resolve issues. The driver maintains the referral form and should receive confirmation from the principal about the student's discipline. Many drivers and department employees stated the

drivers are not always notified of the student's discipline from the principal. This makes it difficult to maintain accurate records of incidents on buses and the results. Student discipline incidents are not tracked at a department level. The director of Pupil Transportation did not have summary level information about student incidents.

AISD purchased 12 video surveillance cameras and 120 camera boxes. The director of Transportation and several bus drivers reported that student behavior has improved since the introduction of the black boxes and cameras, but the department was not able to produce any statistical data that supported the claim.

Recommendation 135:

Create a tracking system for recording student incidents on buses and analyze trends to respond to any recurring problems quickly.

Accurately tracking student incidents becomes vital for the supervisors and director so they can address patterns of behavior in students, schools or on certain routes. The department would also be able to better gauge how its employees were managing students if they had access to incident patterns and statistics.

Providing a disciplined environment relates directly to the students' safety and learning environment. Student's safety is often jeopardized as drivers are forced to operate the vehicle while trying to respond to discipline issues. The bus experience must set an appropriate environment for the student to begin their educational journey for the day. Drivers must create an environment on the bus in which students follow safety rules and are appropriately disciplined when rules are violated. The drivers must have the support of administrators and parents in punishing students when violations occur.

Because the district is not tracking student discipline incidents, it cannot address recurring issues or problems. The district also cannot judge whether or not its riding regulations are appropriate and effective in creating a safe riding environment.

When a driver issues a student referral, it should be recorded by the date, student, school, driver and route into the tracking system before being transmitted to the school administrator. The database should be updated with the discipline taken and the date of each action.

The district should design the database to generate a number of reports to analyze different trends. District and transportation administration should

be able to evaluate discipline issues and act to correct the problem. For example:

- The district can identify students who consistently cause problems and set up a parent conference.
- Drivers who have difficulty maintaining discipline on the bus can be given student management training.
- District administration can identify and address schools that consistently have students with discipline issues or schools that do not respond with appropriate punishment.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Pupil Transportation requests the assistance of the Technology Department to set up a database to record and print reports on student referrals.	June 2000
2.	The director of Pupil Transportation assigns one of the training and safety specialists the job of entering student referrals in the new database as a part of the daily job requirements.	August 2000
3.	The director of Pupil Transportation assigns the training and safety specialist to analyze student referrals to identify trends and problems and report to management.	August 2000
4.	The training and safety specialist enters student incidents as they occur.	Daily
5.	The training and safety specialist analyzes the discipline incident database and reports trends and problems to management.	Weekly

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 10

E. YELLOW PAGES TEST OF STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

FINDING

Comptroller Rylander believes that all goods and services provided by school districts should be put to the "Yellow Pages" test. That is, government should do no job if there is a business in the Yellow pages that can do that job better and at a lower cost.

Since 1997, AISD has achieved savings by using a private contractor to transport its magnet students. The AISD Board of Trustees approved a contract in 1997 to use Capital Metro to operate routes that to serve all magnet programs within the district. The magnet routes transport students from all over the Austin area to one middle school (Kealing) and two high schools (Johnston and LBJ). The district pays Capital Metro $225,000 annually (1997-2000) and will annually pay $250,000 in the future (2000-2002) to transport these magnet students.

The 1997 request for board approval of the contract reported that a recent audit of Capital Metro found the cost incurred by Capital Metro for the AISD magnet routes to be approximately $736,000 (greatly exceeding the amount that AISD pays for the contracted services).

The route sheets for 1997-1998 showed that the average mileage per Capital Metro route was 30.5 miles and the average route time was 81 minutes. Based on the average route miles and average operating cost per mile of $2.04, these routes would cost $347,000 for AISD to operate.

Research shows that between 30-40 percent of school districts are using private contractors to provide all or some of the district's transportation services. The National School Transportation Association reports the success several districts have had contracting and recommends all districts evaluate the option. The National School Transportation Association agrees that privatization will not benefit all school districts, but comparisons should be made to determine if a private contractor can provide better and/or cheaper service than the district.

AISD already experiences some benefits from privatization through the cost savings it has gained from outsourcing the transportation of its magnet students. According to a private transportation company, a district should ask itself a series of questions to determine if privatization can provide better and cheaper service than the district. AISD is deficient in the following areas:

- AISD does not measure administrator, driver, parent and/or student satisfaction with transportation services.
- All accidents are recorded, but analysis is not performed to identify recurring problems or to compare district accident frequency with state and national averages.
- Driver training is lacking.
- Supervisors and mechanics often drive routes.
- The district does not maximize state reimbursement through accurate documentation, frequent re-evaluation of routing and accurate student counts.
- More than 10 percent of buses in the fleet are older than 10 years.

These items can be summarized in a series of success factors. **Exhibit 10-12** describes the success factors and AISD's status in each area.

Exhibit 10-12
Comparison of AISD Transportation Services to Key Success Factors

Success Factor	Status (AISD's performance against success factor)
Productivity	Student riders per mile and riders per bus below peer average.
	Cost per rider 31 percent higher than peer average for special education routes. Cost per rider has increased 50 percent over past five years.
	Mechanics complete only two work orders per day.
Transportation Cost	Operating costs have decreased over the last five years but not as much as annual miles and riders.
Management Information Systems	Limited use of automated routing and scheduling to create routes.
Management of Staff	Supervisors and driver/coordinators drive routes daily.
	Inconsistent discipline.
Overtime	Overtime expenditures for 1998-99 were $558,003.
Safety	Inadequate driver and monitor training hours.
	Little field supervision (driver/coordinators drive routes daily instead of supervising drivers).
Preventive Maintenance	Fleet maintenance software tracks work orders and ensures preventive maintenance is performed at regular mileage intervals.

Source: AISD Transportation Department and TSPR.

The board has already recognized the cost savings associated with privatizing portions of transportation services by approving the Capital Metro contract. Private transportation providers offer the following:

- Professional transportation management;
- Relief from liability exposures;
- Avoidance of major capital expenditures;
- Regular surveys of satisfaction;
- Better vehicle utilization;
- Student discipline management;
- Detailed billing and budgeting information;
- Increased control over transportation costs; and
- Freedom from payroll and complicated personnel issues.

There are also possible disadvantages to private sector contracting that must be considered by the district:

- If a contractor provides the district school buses, the cost of providing vehicles will be amortized as operating costs over the term of the contract. The annual impact of the cost of vehicles will vary by the length of the contract and the required average age of the school bus fleet.
- If competition is not adequate, the contractor's price may not reflect the cost savings targeted by the district.
- A contractor may under-price a bid to receive the contract and then attempt to raise prices after the contract is awarded.
- If the contract terms are not complete (for example, do not address all the services the district will need during the length of the contract), the cost of additional services can result in higher than expected student transportation expenditures.
- The district may have less control of day-to-day operations and procedures if transportation services are privatized.
- Student transportation services could be in jeopardy if the contractor defaults or if there are contract disputes (specifically in the case of the district selling all vehicles).
- Existing employees of the district will feel uneasy about the transition to a new employer. Wages and benefits may or may not be comparable. Alternatives to protect the benefits of long-term district employees may defeat the contractor's ability to manage and control costs.

A properly structured request for proposal and contract can mitigate some of these disadvantages.

AISD is already experiencing some of these disadvantages with its Capital Metro contract. Capital Metro has complete control over the schedule of

those routes. The magnet schools had to adjust their bell schedules to accommodate Capital Metro's need to have AISD routes finished before Capital Metro public routes. This change required picking up some students as early 6:00 a.m. and some students riding the bus for more than an hour and a half. Capital Metro raised its contract amount from the first year of contracted service, and AISD did not seek other competitive bids.

Recommendation 136:

Conduct a feasibility study for outsourcing Transportation Services and develop a request for proposals.

At the very least, AISD should obtain competitive bids for the transportation of the magnet routes to ensure the best rate, because the Capital Metro contract will be up for renewal for 2002-2003. The district should research issues relating to employee transfers and the purchase of school buses before preparing a request for proposal. The district should allow enough time to prepare a request for proposal that will attract two or more competitive cost proposals.

The feasibility study should include the following steps:

- **Determine the full cost of student transportation.** To determine if privatization will reduce costs, the district should know the exact cost to operate transportation services in-house. Total costs should include the cost of buses and facilities, depreciation of these assets and overhead costs. Administrative overhead costs should be broken into costs that will be avoided with contracted services, costs that will be re-allocated to other district functions and costs that cannot be avoided even with contracted services.

- **Determine if the local market is competitive.** If there are not a sufficient number of prospective bidders, privatization may not generate enough competitive bids to produce price advantages. A successful bidder may not have an incentive to perform well if the market is not competitive.

Decisions should be made concerning the following before a request for proposal is developed:

- **Determine employee status.** Transportation employees would be most affected by a decision to contract student transportation to a private contractor. The transition will create concerns about employment status, seniority status, pay, benefits, retirement benefits and working conditions. The district should determine and

communicate the options to employees. The district's decision should be included in the request for proposal.

- **Decide whether to own or contract for school buses.** The district may choose to retain title to the school buses and then lease the vehicles to the contractor. If the contractor provides the school buses, the district no longer is faced with large capital outlays to replace school buses. On the other hand, if the district does not retain its fleet, transportation services will be in jeopardy should the district at any point decide to resume in-house transportation service. AISD should incorporate provisions into the contract for buying back the buses at market value.

The request for proposal should include contract provisions that describe performance measures and expectations. The contract for services should contain incentive clauses that encourage contractors to find ways to reduce costs while maintaining high quality services in accordance with performance standards. AISD must monitor services provided by a contractor closely and measure performance against set standards.

Exhibit 10-13 suggests possible performance measures for service success factors.

Exhibit 10-13
Suggested Performance Measures for Private Transportation Contractor

Category	Performance Measures
Productivity	Student riders per mile; Student riders per route
Cost	Cost per route; Cost per mile
Safety	Accidents per 100,000 miles of service; Student incidents per 1,000 students transported; Training curriculum for new drivers; Hours of in-service training for each driver
Service Quality	On-time performance; Maximum length of student time on school bus; Average bus occupancy per trip; Number of regular routes cancelled; Number of field trip requests denied
Personnel	Number of route driver positions vacant; Number of monitor positions vacant; Absentee rate for route drivers and monitors; Number of available alternate drivers; Number of available activity drivers; Annual turnover rate
Customer Satisfaction	Annual user survey of parents, school administrators; Student referrals per route; Response time per referral

Vehicle Maintenance	Percent of preventive maintenance inspections completed on-time; Miles between in-service breakdowns; Reported incidents of air-conditioning failure

Source: TSPR.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Pupil Transportation determines the full cost of student transportation with the assistance of the chief financial officer.	June 2000
2.	The director of Pupil Transportation prepares comprehensive contract specifications that include incentives for performance.	July 2000
3.	The chief financial officer holds discussions with Transportation employee representatives about their concerns and the implications of privatizing student transportation and begins developing an employee transition strategy.	August 2000
4.	The chief financial officer and the director of Human Resources compare the advantages and disadvantages of different employee policies under a private contract.	August 2000
5.	The chief financial officer and the director of Pupil Transportation analyze the advantages and disadvantages of purchasing or contracting for school buses.	September 2000
6.	The chief financial officer prepares the request for proposals with the assistance of the director of Pupil Transportation and other department directors as appropriate.	October 2000
7.	The chief financial officer recommends a procurement methodology for obtaining competitive bids for privatizing the transportation operation-including policy recommendations for employees and capital purchases of school buses-to the superintendent and the school board for approval.	November 2000
8.	The superintendent obtains approval from the school board to issue the request for proposals. Selection criteria and evaluation methodology are defined.	December 2000
9.	The superintendent presents the analysis of the proposals submitted by private contractors, an employee transition plan and school bus procurement plan to the board.	March 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

If the feasibility study establishes that privatizing transportation services is possible, the district should issue competitive bids to outsource student transportation. Industry standards usually estimate a savings of 10 percent of operation costs for districts that privatize the transportation function. AISD could save $1.2 million (10 percent of the $12 million annual operating costs) beginning in 2001-2002. However, these savings are not included since it depends on the decisions made by the district.

Chapter 11
FOOD SERVICES

This chapter reviews the Austin Independent School District's (AISD's) Food Services operation in six sections:

A. Yellow Pages Test of Food Services
B. Revenue and Cost Management
C. Organization and Management
D. Student Meal Participation
E. Professional Development and Recognition
F. Facilities and Equipment

Effective school food service programs provide students affordable, appealing and nutritionally balanced breakfasts and lunches. Food Services has four funding sources:

- student and adult meal payments;
- federal reimbursements for all qualified students who eat school meals (reimbursement rates vary for those who receive free meals and those who purchase reduced-price or full-price meals);
- a la carte sales of food items; and
- fees from special catered functions.

BACKGROUND

The Texas School Food Services Association (TSFSA) has identified 10 standards of excellence for evaluating school food service programs. The standards state 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 procurement practices meet established standards;
- provide appetizing, nutritious meals through effective, efficient management;
- maintain a safe and sanitary environment;
- encourage student participation;
- provide an environment that improves employee productivity, growth, development and morale;
- promote a positive image to the public; and
- measure success in fulfilling regulatory requirements.

AISD's Food Services Department serves nearly 10 million meals per year to students in the district in 98 cafeterias, which serve 103 sites. AISD's Food Services operations are subject to Texas Education Agency (TEA) audits, which are conducted every five years, annual Texas Department of Health audits and inspections conducted by the City of Austin Health Department several times a year. Food Services also must file a detailed report with TEA to document its reimbursements from the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program.

Exhibit 11-1 shows 1997-98 and 1998-99 financial data for AISD's food service operations.

Exhibit 11-1
AISD Food Services Department
1997-98 and 1998-99 Budgeted and Actual Financial Information

Category	1997-98 Budget	1997-98 Actual	% of Total	1998-99 Budget	1998-99 Unaudited Actual	% of Total
Revenues						
Gross Sales	$9,789,968	$9,074,502	38.7%	$9,828,930	$9,307,138	39.1%
State Matching Program	883,344	751,561	3.2%	753,096	735,651	3.1%
School Breakfast Program	3,220,200	2,987,377	12.7%	3,212,298	3,045,024	12.8%
School Lunch Program	9,823,000	9,568,245	40.8%	9,872,327	9,669,108	40.6%
After School Snack Program	0	0	0%	0	1,681	0%
USDA Commodities	1,161,000	853,966	3.6%	1,045,000	968,990	4.1%
Other	0	0	0%	0	2,377	0%
Investment Earnings	210,000	203,122	1.0%	170,000	62,887	0.3%
Total Revenues	**$25,087,512**	**$23,438,773**	**100%**	**$24,881,651**	**$23,792,856**	**100%**
Expenditures						

Food	$9,290,400	$9,126,892	36.4%	$11,941,368	$9,606,132	37.6%
Non-food/Supplies	1,494,916	1,504,725	6.0%	932,202	1,146,556	4.5%
Payroll Costs	11,743,587	12,604,574	50.2%	12,471,190	13,090,032	51.3%
Contracted Services	589,608	350,086	1.4%	548,857	428,753	1.7%
USDA Commodities	1,161,000	853,966	3.4%	1,045,001	969,646	3.8%
Gas Utilities	206,584	172,583	0.7%	209,996	143,303	0.6%
Capital Outlay	806,067	438,082	1.7%	650,070	85,348	0.3%
Telephones	49,485	39,513	0.2%	51,925	41,735	0.2%
Other Costs	15,250	8,632	0%	13,500	14,314	0%
Total Expenditures	**$25,356,897**	**$25,099,053**	**100%**	**$27,864,109**	**$25,525,819**	**100%**
Profit/(Loss)	($269,385)	($1,660,280)		($2,982,458)	($1,732,963)	

Source: AISD Food Services Department.

Exhibit 11-2 shows the Food Services percentage of per-pupil expenditures for AISD and its peer districts. The food service function accounts for 5.6 percent, or $334 of AISD's total per-pupil expenditure of $5,973.

Exhibit 11-2
Percent Per-Pupil Expenditure for Food Services
AISD and Peer Districts
1998-99

District	Total District Per-Pupil Expenditures	Food Services Per-Pupil Expenditures/ District Per-Pupil Expenditures
Alief	$5,719	5.10%
Austin	**$5,973**	**5.60%**
Corpus Christi	$5,477	4.80%
Fort Worth	$5,769	4.90%

Northside (Bexar County)	$5,959	4.90%
Pasadena	$5,260	6.50%
Peer Average	**$5,636**	**5.24%**

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

The federal government reimburses Food Services at different rates for each qualifying meal served based on student classifications (**Exhibit 11-3**). Reimbursement amounts from the federal government are in addition to the amount AISD charges students. For example, students paying full price for their school meals qualify AISD to receive an additional $.21 and $.19 for reported breakfast and lunch meals, respectively. For meals purchased by students who pay a substantially reduced-price, AISD receives an additional $.79 and $1.58 for reported breakfast and lunch meals, respectively. AISD receives $1.09 for serving breakfast to each child who qualifies for free meals and $1.98 for serving lunch. For campuses meeting the federal guidelines for severe need, an additional $.21 is reimbursed to the district for breakfast meals served at those campuses.

Exhibit 11-3
1999-2000 Federal Reimbursement Rates
for Breakfast and Lunch

	Breakfast	**Lunch**
Full Price (Paid) Meals	$0.21	$0.19
Reduced--Price Meals	$0.79	$1.58
Free Meals	$1.09	$1.98
Meals for Severe Need Students	$0.21	$0

Source: Texas Education Agency.

The Child Nutrition Programs Division of TEA administers the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs in Texas public schools. To qualify for reimbursements, meals served by Food Services must meet minimum nutrition standards and appropriate nutrient and calorie levels that are required for each age group. The School Lunch and Breakfast Agreement is a legal contract between TEA and each participating school district. The provisions are identical to the provisions of the contract

between TEA and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The following terms are outlined in the agreement:

- serve a lunch and/or breakfast that meets meal requirements;
- maintain proper sanitation and health standards that conform with state and local laws;
- comply with record keeping requirements;
- provide free and reduced-price meals to eligible children;
- provide meals to all children without regard to race, color, sex, handicap, age or national origin;
- comply with financial requirements and provisions;
- accept and use commodities; and
- operate the program on a nonprofit basis.

To extend its agreement, each school district must renew the agreement at the end of each school year.

Chapter 11

A. YELLOW PAGES TEST OF FOOD SERVICES

Comptroller Rylander believes that all goods and services provided by
school districts should be put to the "Yellow Pages test." That is,
government should do no job if there is a business in the Yellow Pages
that can do that job better and at a lower cost.

School food service operations try to provide students appealing and
nutritionally sound breakfasts and lunches while operating on a break-
even basis. Ineffective school food service operations can hinder a school
district's educational function in two ways. First, if food service
departments are not self-supporting, districts may have to use funds from
their general reserves to cover food service losses, which reduces the
amount available for the classroom. Second, if food service departments
fail to ensure student participation, proper food selection and controlled
competitive food sales, students may buy less balanced and less nutritious
food alternatives.

In short, inefficient food service management can impair student
performance by reducing funds available for the classroom and by
reducing students' concentration and achievement due to inadequate
nutrition and improper food choices. A well-managed food service
department is critical to the health and academic success of all students.
Regardless of whether a district contracts out its food service operation or
performs the service in-house, a regular evaluation ensures that the highest
quality meals are served to students at the lowest price.

FINDING

AISD Food Services is not operating in a profitable, self-supporting
manner. Food Services management has not addressed and remedied key
operational deficiencies, which contributed to losses totaling $1,660,280
in 1997-98 and $1,732,963 in 1998-99. At the time of this review, Food
Services was still attempting to resolve several of its operational
deficiencies. **Exhibit 11-4** illustrates and summarizes the current status
and the effect of the department's deficiencies.

**Exhibit 11-4 Evaluation of AISD Food Services by Key Success
Factors**

Key Success Factor	Status
Automation	Point-of-sale implementation behind schedule and

	currently on hold
Financial Self Sufficiency	$3,475,602 decline in Fund Balance from 1997-98 to 1998-99
Timely Financial Report Distribution	Monthly profit and loss statements are currently being distributed to cafeteria managers after minimal reporting in 1997-98 and 1998-99
Labor and Productivity	Limited use of monitoring of meals per labor hour and productivity measures Labor costs recently lowered through a reduction in staffing levels after review by district-appointed task force
Organizational Structure	Current organizational structure does not maximize financial and operational accountability, control and reporting
Free and Reduced-Price Meal Application Processing	Duplicative application processing
Student Meal Participation	Limited efforts to increase student meal participation
Competitive Food Sales	Vending machines, sales by student organizations and snack bars continue to reduce food sales
Employee Training and Awards	Limited training and performance-based incentives exist for Food Services employees
Facilities Renovation	Limited coordination and planning between Food Services management and construction managers

Source: AISD Food Services and AISD Bond Program Coordinator.

Food Services management has not used financial reporting to monitor and control the operation. As a result, Food Services experienced repeated financial losses that went virtually undetected until the performance review began in 1999. Although monthly departmental and campus income and expense statements are distributed, they have not been produced consistently to inform the Food Services director, assistant director, financial supervisor and cafeteria managers of the performance of cafeterias and the department.

When compared to industry standards, AISD high schools and middle schools have been operating at productivity levels far short of those standards. Although Food Services has attempted to reduce staff, no attempts have been made to adopt meals-per-labor-hour guidelines at the secondary level to ensure optimal productivity and staffing.

Food Services has an ineffective organizational and financial reporting structure. The current organizational structure and reporting relationships do not optimize the levels of accountability and information flowing from upper management to cafeteria personnel. This inefficient structure has hindered financial reporting between the financial supervisor and area supervisors and cafeteria managers.

Finally, Food Services has not taken steps to increase student participation in breakfast and lunch programs. The department has not formulated a districtwide strategy to increase student meal participation, reduce competitive food sales and comply with TEA's policy regarding competitive food sales. Competitive food sales have shifted revenues away from Food Services, and some principals are routinely denying access to snack lines as a punishment tool.

Outsourcing a food service operation is a complex and time-consuming process. Nevertheless, managed services companies, or companies that handle the management of the food service operation, usually have a resource team of experts who provide a wide range of services and support that are cost-prohibitive to even the largest school districts. These companies apply food preparation, cost control, marketing, safety and sanitation, facilities planning and design, purchasing and distribution and training and development techniques to a food service operation. Outsourcing places the key tasks of management, purchasing and food preparation and service with a food service management company. A typical food service management company performs the tasks shown in **Exhibit 11-5**.

Exhibit 11-5

Responsibilities of a Food Services Management Company

Functional Area	Tasks
Management	- Assume all present management responsibilities. - Assume normal operating responsibilities including short-term and long-term budgeting and financial planning. - Maintain, compile, analyze and distribute accurate, detailed and timely weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual financial and operating reports. - Prepare all reports mandated by district, state and federal regulatory authorities.
Personnel	- Ensure proper staffing levels are met and maintained. - Train, supervise and evaluate all food service

	employees. • Comply with all federal and state employment laws.
Food Preparation and Service	• Prepare and serve breakfasts and lunches. • Maximize USDA commodity foods in meal preparation. • Comply with all health and sanitary regulations.
Student Participation	• Create, manage and implement promotional activities to increase student participation. • Coordinate and handle practices and conflicts between the food service department and school principals.

Source: School Planning and Management, "To Outsource or Not to Outsource," August 1999; and other industry sources

Although food service management companies typically achieve cost savings for school districts, the primary focus is on the fit between the district and the managed services firm. District officials often examine the firm's track record, its client turnover rate and its results with similarly-sized districts. Districts often pay close attention to the qualifications of the management company including management and operations expertise and experience, depth of management and culinary talent, specialized training and staff development, buying power, financial record keeping and controls and the quality of control systems.

School districts establish measures to evaluate the management company's performance. The company is typically evaluated in light of limitations and problem areas particular to the district or such limitations must be corrected by the district or the management company.

Suggested measures are often used to monitor the performance of the management company as illustrated in **Exhibit 11-6**.

Exhibit 11-6
Suggested Performance Criteria for Management Company

Category	Performance Measure
General Performance	• Financial performance • Number of meals served • Free and reduced-price meal participation based on

	eligibility • Free and reduced-price meal participation based on enrollment • Student and faculty surveys • Nutritional value of meals served • Meal quality and variety
Personnel	• Employee turnover • Employee training and professional development • Employee morale • Absenteeism
Cost Measures	• Meals per labor hour • Payroll divided by total revenue (37-40%) • Food Costs divided by total revenue (37-40%) • Cost per meal • Utilization of USDA Commodities
Safety and Sanitation	• Food preparation and handling practices • Condition of cafeterias, kitchens and storage areas • County Department of Health and Human Services food establishment inspection reports • Food quality

Source: Cost Control Manual for School Food Service Directors; HISD Food Services Manager.

Many school district food service operations have opened themselves up to competition, to determine if they are receiving the best service from each dollar spent, and are now operated by private vendors. For example:

- the Houston Independent School District outsourced their food service operation and increased the number of meals served to students by 1.5 million meals;
- the Atlanta Public School system signed a contract to outsource its food and nutrition services at its 103 schools after comparing in-house versus privatized services; and
- the City of Chicago school district privatized its food service operation after a multistage pilot program in which the district evaluated three potential contractors by outsourcing part of its food service operation to each of them.

Recommendation 137:

Open the Food Services operation to competition by issuing a request for proposals for all or part of the food services function.

The board, the superintendent and administration should open food services to competition by issuing a request for proposal. The district should use a managed competitive bid process to allow the present food service operation to participate in the bidding process. This will allow the district to compare the cost of keeping the food service function in-house to the cost of hiring a management company.

If the district decides to outsource its food service operations, careful attention should be paid to how the management company will handle the current group of food service employees. The transition to outsourcing can create a stressful situation for employees and become a sensitive issue for the district. AISD should develop an employee transition plan and allow employees to take part in the decision-making and planning process. Several steps should be taken to ensure a smooth, efficient transition. These include, for example:

- Keeping responsibility for the payroll and benefits of Food Services employees who have been with the district more than five years;
- Placing control of only new employees, and employees who have been with the district less than three to five years, in the hands of the management company;
- Implementing an outsourcing program on a short-term pilot basis to view results without a completely transferring services to the management company;
- Giving employees one-time financial incentives for transferring to the management company;

AISD should pay close attention to developing and designing the request for proposals and management contract. The decision to relinquish control of an operation is critical and cannot be justified by mere cost measures alone.

AISD may be best served by developing a contract for a one-year term with four one-year options for renewal. This option would allow the district to assess the performance of the management company annually and then cancel the contract if the company's performance does not meet the district's expectations. The contract should contain incentives to encourage the contractor to improve the quality of service. Regardless of which management company is selected, the district must annually

evaluate the terms and conditions of the contract and determine if it is getting the desired result.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent requests and obtains approval from the board to issue a request for proposals for food service operations.	January 2001
2.	The director of Food Services, other appropriate Food Services staff and the chief financial officer draft a request for proposals for food service operations, submit it to the superintendent for approval, who then submits to the board for approval. The request for proposals is approved and published.	March 2001
3.	The director of Food Services, in conjunction with other food services staff, drafts a proposal to bid on AISD's food services operation by conducting a detailed cost analysis.	March 2001
4.	The superintendent and the chief financial officer review the proposals submitted, including the current food service operation, and make a recommendation to the board.	April 2001
5.	The superintendent, chief financial officer and appropriate staff enter into negotiations with employee representatives about potential concerns and sensitive issues surrounding potential outsourcing. The superintendent, chief financial officer and appropriate Food Services staff develop an employee transition plan.	May 2001
6.	The board approves a provider for the district's food service operation, as well as an employee transition plan for present Food Services staff (if the selected provider is a management company).	May 2001
7.	Outsourcing Food Services is performed across the district if the selected provider was a management company.	August 2001
8.	The superintendent, chief financial officer, the board and appropriate Food Services staff evaluate the food service operation annually to ensure the district is receiving the desired results.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

Savings could be achieved through a better organized and more efficiently-managed food service operation, either through a management company or with AISD's improved food service department. If a management company is selected, the size of the cost savings will depend on the management company selected and the type of agreements, provisions and costs contained in the contract.

Chapter 11

B. REVENUE AND COST MANAGEMENT

Food Services generated a profit of $583,609 in 1996-1997. However, figures for 1997-98 and unaudited figures for 1998-99 show the department generated losses of $1,660,280 and $1,732,963, respectively. Food Services ended its 1997-98 fiscal year with a cash reserve balance of $1,775,396. The 1998-99 expenditures continued to surpass revenues as Food Services experienced a $485,458 increase in its payroll costs and a $479,240 increase in its food costs. Although Food Services' total revenues increased by $354,083 from 1997-98 to 1998-99, the department spent $1,732,963 more than it earned in 1998-99. Consequently, the Food Services cash reserve steadily declined from $3,435,675 in 1996-97 to $1,775,396 in 1997-98, and to $42,433 in 1998-99.

In 1999-2000, Food Services continues to lose money. The 1999-2000 expenditure budget was more than $25.8 million. Although total revenues are projected to increase 8.5 percent from $23,792,856 in 1998-99 to $25,816,044 in 1999-2000, Food Services expenditures are also expected to increase 1.3 percent from $25,525,819 in 1998-99 to $25,845,871 in 1999-2000, resulting in expected losses of nearly $30,000 in 1999-2000.

Food Service's financial performance became the focus of public attention in October 1999. According to news reports, AISD's lunch and breakfast program may require $3 million from the district's general cash reserves to cover a Food Services deficit. Officials reported the department incurred a 32-percent increase in food costs due to increased food portions and variety. The director of Food Services said this decision was made because the district wanted more students to participate. Despite these efforts to increase appeal, breakfast and lunch sales increased by only 4 percent. One news report noted that an annual district audit found that Food Services spent nearly $1.8 million more than its revenues in 1998-99.

Food Services began a pilot program with School Nutrition Accountability Program (SNAP) Systems, Inc. to implement a point-of-sale system. A point-of-sale system is an automated cashiering and sales recording system that recognizes student identification numbers, records student account activity, applies a student classification (for example, free, reduced, full) and records all transaction-related information for more accurate and efficient management reporting. This automated system has been installed in 14 schools. SNAP provides improved accounting controls by capturing all necessary information at one time. The SNAP system allows management to track free and reduced-price meals while ensuring the necessary confidentiality.

FINDING

Food Services has implemented point-of-sale systems through a pilot program at 14 schools. The SNAP system includes a keypad on which students enter their payment identification number (PIN) at the point-of-sale. All eligibility status information remains confidential. Since the majority of students enter a PIN number, rather than pay with cash, students eating free or at reduced rates are treated no differently than their classmates who pay full price for meals.

Students who pay for their meals are encouraged to prepay through a Food Services account so they do not have to give cash for their food at every meal. Parents may prepay using cash or checks; credit cards are not accepted.

The system increases serving line speeds because less cash is transacted at the point-of-sale. At the schools using the automated point-of-sale system, free and reduced-price students are automatically recorded and acknowledged by the system. Point-of-sale systems allow for computerized cash register capabilities and simplified pre-payment methods for students and parents.

COMMENDATION

Food Services has begun to use a point-of-sale system to ensure the anonymity of students who participate in free and reduced-price meal programs and speed the flow of students through cafeteria lines.

FINDING

The SNAP point-of-sale system is in place at 14 schools through a pilot program, including eight elementaries, four middle schools and two high schools. The district considered expanding the pilot program, but implementation districtwide has been placed on hold until the district's general technology issues are solved. Nevertheless, a point-of-sale system may be installed at AISD cafeterias independent of districtwide computer software and hardware changes and adaptations. With its manual system, Food Services is not maximizing revenue or effectively managing costs. An analysis of four of the 14 secondary schools included in the AISD SNAP pilot program indicates an average increase in daily sales revenue of $271 per day since the SNAP system was started.

Recommendation 138:

Implement the SNAP automated point-of-sale system at all AISD campuses.

Point-of-sale terminals could reduce the amount of time students spend waiting in cafeteria lines and ensure student confidentiality.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Food Services director, automation coordinator and staff meet with the superintendent and deputy superintendent of Accountability and Information Systems to discuss the continued implementation of the SNAP system.	August 2000
2.	The Food Services director prepares a proposal for board approval and secure approval from TEA so district funds can be used to purchase point-of-sale terminals.	September 2000
3.	The Food Services director purchases the system for continued implementation.	October 2000
4.	Food Services administrative staff begin training on the point-of-sale system.	October 2000
5.	The Food Services director coordinates the continued system implementation so it is fully operational.	January 2001 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementing a point-of-sale system at all remaining campuses would cost $1,008,000 ($12,000 per campus x 84 campuses).

TSPR analyzed four secondary schools in which the SNAP pilot program has been in place and calculated an average increase in daily sales revenue of $271. Implementing a SNAP system at all remaining campuses would result in increased revenues of $3,983,700 (175 serving days x $271 average increased daily revenue = $47,425 yearly revenue increase per campus x 84 campuses = $3,983,700) (84 campuses equals 103 sites less the high school's Alternative Learning Center, less Garza High School, a non-traditional high school, less the Dill campus, a non-traditional school, and less the Clifton Center and Rosedale campuses, schools for students with mental health and mental retardation needs, and less the 14 pilot sites.)

After subtracting food costs at the recommended industry standard of 40 percent of revenues ($3,983,700 x .40 = $1,593,480), Food Services could generate an additional $2,390,220 in revenue ($3,983,700 - $1,593,480 = $2,390,220.)

The $2,390,220 savings equates to an overall revenue increase of 10 percent (1998-99 total revenues of $23,792,856 from **Exhibit 11-1** ÷

2,390,220 = 10 percent.) To be conservative, TSPR reduced the savings to 5 percent, for a savings of $1,189,643 each year.

First-year savings are prorated based on the implementation date ($1,189,643 total annual savings ÷ 9 months food service operation = $132,183 per month x 5 months = $661,000).

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Implement the SNAP automated point-of-sale system at all AISD campuses.	$661,000	$1,189,643	$1,189,643	$1,189,643	$1,189,643
Purchase SNAP systems.	($1,008,000)	$0	$0	$0	$0
Net Savings (Costs)	($347,000)	$1,189,643	$1,189,643	$1,189,643	$1,189,643

FINDING

Food Services lacks adequate financial reporting tools and procedures, which would allow it to inform area supervisors, cafeteria managers and staff of problems, trends and best practices. In November 1999, Food Services began to generate monthly departmental and campus-level income and expense statements, but key operating percentages such as food cost, labor cost and inventory turnover have not been included in the reports.

In the past, monthly income and expense statements have not been regularly generated. Therefore, management has not been able to compare year-to-date and monthly operating information with the budgeted amounts and certain performance criteria.

As shown in **Exhibit 11-8**, food service losses for all AISD high schools totaled $728,450 in the 1998-99 school year.

Exhibit 11-8
1998-99 Food Services Loss Figures for AISD High Schools

High School	Total Revenue	Total Expenditures	Loss
Austin	$495,047	$605,368	($110,321)
Johnston	400,377	497,601	(97,224)

Lanier	328,282	369,338	(41,056)
McCallum	246,174	318,695	(72,521)
Reagan	284,525	352,392	(67,867)
Travis	363,448	420,725	(57,277)
Crockett	470,511	509,024	(38,513)
Anderson	317,572	377,600	(60,028)
LBJ	281,340	362,408	(81,068)
Alternative Learning Center	14,463	43,273	(28,810)
Bowie	501,023	542,449	(41,426)
Garza	75,978	108,317	(32,339)
Total	**$3,778,740**	**$4,507,190**	**($728,450)**

Source: AISD Food Services 1998-99 Profit and Loss Statement by Campus.

AISD's Food Services loss report for 1998-99 emphasizes the need for the timely and continued production of monthly campus-level profit and loss statements and key operating statistics.

According to the *Cost Control Manual for School Food Service Directors*, the number one requirement for cost control management is an accounting system and procedures that provide accurate and timely financial information and reports. Profit and loss statements should be compared each month and to the same month, one year prior, to spot sudden changes or possible errors. Additionally, profit and loss statements should be distributed to each campus within ten days of the end of the month.

Area supervisors and cafeteria managers told TSPR that they had not received monthly profit and loss statements regularly. Cafeteria managers said they have received only five monthly profit and loss statements during the 1997-98 and 1998-99 school years. The majority of cafeteria managers had no indication their cafeterias would incur such large losses. One AISD high school cafeteria manager said that without monthly profit and loss statements, "I have no idea where I stand and cannot be proactive" and "without monthly statements, there is no financial accountability for any of us."

AISD must continue to use and distribute financial reporting information so that each cafeteria is armed with the information necessary to remain

within the tight margins of food service operations. Untimely distribution of profit and loss statements makes it impossible to take prompt, corrective action.

According to the *Cost Control Manual for School Food Service Directors,* seven financial and operating reports must be prepared and then distributed to cafeterias at optimal intervals for sound performance. **Exhibit 11-9** illustrates these seven financial reporting tools, the optimal frequency and whether AISD uses and circulates them to its cafeteria managers.

Exhibit 11-9

AISD Financial and Management Reporting Evaluation

Report/ Description	Uses	Optimal Frequency	Used by the District	Distributed to Cafeterias
Budget: Illustrates a plan for financial management according to each account.	• Allows informed decisions and financial forecasts for the next year through the use of historical, economic and demographic data, projected enrollment, menu changes and changes in operational procedures. • Allows a forecast of financial performance for the next year. • Allows comparisons between actual and forecasted performance.	Annual with monthly monitoring	Yes	Yes
Costing Food & Service	• Allows for informed decision-making about	Daily	Yes	Yes

	purchases and the continuation of products and services.			
Revenue Received from Lunch and Breakfast	• Allows 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.	• Allows a comparison of current balances with balances at the end of the month of the prior year.	Monthly	Yes	No
Profit & Loss Statement: Illustrates what is left after all expenditures are paid.	• Allows identification and analysis of increases or decreases in participation or expenses. • Allows identification of school making a profit or experiencing a loss • Allows administrators to determine where key issues/problems exist	Weekly or Monthly	Yes*	Yes*
Statement of Changes: Shows changes in working	• Allows for the monitoring of net increases in working capital	Annually	Yes	Yes

capital from year to year.	requirements.			
Key Operating Percentages: Trends expenditures and revenues over time.	• Allows management and staff to monitor expenditures over time including: • Food cost percentage • Labor cost percentage • Other costs percentage • Break-even point • Inventory turnover • Participation rates • Average daily labor costs • Average hourly labor costs	Monthly	No	No

Source: Interviews with AISD Food Services staff.
* Not used consistently before November 1999.

Recommendation 139:

Develop and implement accurate, detailed and timely departmental budgets and financial reports, and use these reports to hold individual cafeteria managers accountable for campus profitability.

The Food Services assistant director and Finance Department staff should generate and distribute monthly profit and loss statements and key operating comparison reports no later than 15 days after the end of each month. These reports will enable the staff to compare the department's actual results with budgeted figures and prior-year results.

Area supervisors, cafeteria managers and staff should be able to use these reports to monitor and track key operating and financial measures (for example, student participation, meals-per-labor hours, food costs, salaries and wages and best practices). The Food Services director, assistant director, financial supervisor, area supervisors and cafeteria managers should hold monthly meetings to identify favorable and/or unfavorable trends or variances and handle those situations accordingly. Goals for

improvement should be set for each cafeteria manager and evaluations should contain an element for performance.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Food Services, the financial supervisor, and the assistant director review and establish performance standards for each food service cafeteria cost center and develop budgeted revenues and expenses that are targeted to meet those standards.	August 2000
2.	The director of Food Services, the financial supervisor, and the assistant director obtain campus-level food service budgets, profit and loss statements and key operating statistics from other Texas school districts.	August 2000
3.	The director of Food Services and financial supervisor work with accounting clerks to determine the appropriate report format and staffing needs.	September 2000
4.	Accounting clerks input relevant data on an ongoing basis and generate monthly financial and management reports.	September 2000
5.	The Food Service director, assistant director, financial supervisor, area supervisors and managers hold monthly manager meetings to identify favorable and/or unfavorable trends or variances and handle those situations accordingly.	October 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Compared to industry standards, AISD high school and middle school cafeterias have been incurring excessive payroll costs. An analysis of AISD elementary school, however, shows labor productivity higher than industry standards.

According to the *Cost Control Manual for School Food Service Directors*, payroll costs, including fringe benefits, should be kept under 38 to 40 percent of revenue so that sufficient revenue exists to handle food costs and other expenses. **Exhibit 11-10** shows that Food Services payroll costs across all campuses between 1996-97 and 1998-99 have hovered at about 55 percent of revenue.

Exhibit 11-10

AISD Food Services Payroll Costs/Revenue

Fiscal Year	Payroll Costs	Total Revenue	Payroll Costs/ Revenue	Recommended Payroll Costs/ Revenue	Variance (+/-) Industry Standard
1996-97	$12,807,677	$23,239,251	55.12%	38-40%	+17.12 to 15.12%
1997-98	$12,604,574	$23,438,773	53.78%	38-40%	+15.78 to 13.78%
1998-99	$13,090,032	$23,792,856	55.02%	38-40%	+17.02 to 15.02%

Source: AISD Food Services Revenue and Expenditure Comparisons.

Exhibit 11-11 illustrates AISD Food Services' payroll costs as a percentage of revenue at individual high schools.

Exhibit 11-11

1998-99 AISD High School Cafeteria Payroll Costs/Revenue

Campus	Total Revenues	Payroll Costs	Payroll as a percentage of Revenue
Anderson	$317,572	$212,212	66.8%
Austin	495,047	274,777	55.5%
Bowie	501,023	249,505	49.8%
Crockett	470,511	242,963	51.6%
Garza	75,978	60,814	80.0%
Johnston	400,377	277,351	69.3%
LBJ	281,340	188,415	67.0%
Lanier	328,282	198,933	60.6%
McCallum	246,174	181,893	73.9%
Reagan	284,525	197,083	69.3%
Travis	363,448	227,288	62.5%
Alternative Learning Center	14,463	37,621	260.1%
Total	**$3,778,740**	**$2,348,856**	**62.2%**

Exhibit 11-12 illustrates AISD Food Services' payroll costs as a percentage of revenue at individual middle schools.

Exhibit 11-12
1998-99 AISD Middle School Cafeteria Payroll Costs/Revenue

Campus	Total Revenues	Payroll Costs	Payroll as a percentage of Revenue
Bailey	$333,379	$153,512	46.0%
Bedichek	283,168	159,500	56.3%
Burnet	354,928	145,041	40.9%
Covington	278,485	173,273	62.2%
Dobie	271,499	136,778	50.4%
Fulmore	224,655	151,981	67.7%
Kealing	233,698	149,942	64.2%
Lamar	272,735	156,285	57.3%
Martin	166,925	144,554	86.6%
Mendez	389,504	194,042	49.8%
Murchison	315,611	181,375	57.5%
O. Henry	245,326	146,799	59.8%
Pearce	264,945	157,072	59.3%
Porter	301,970	163,421	54.1%
Small*	25,940	5,755	22.2%
Webb	341,427	170,348	49.9%
Total	**$4,304,195**	**$2,389,678**	**55.5%**

Source: AISD Food Services 1998-99 Year End Profit and Loss Statements by Campus.

* Revenue and payroll cost information for Small Middle School represents one month of operations.

Although excessive payroll costs can be one indicator of overstaffing, the most common productivity measure for school food services is through the number of meal equivalents produced per labor hour (MPLH). This productivity rate is calculated by dividing the number of meal equivalents produced and served in a day by the number of labor hours for that day. MPLH allows a food services department to determine the productivity level of its staff. Although AISD Food Services does not use MPLH to determine the productivity of its operations, TSPR calculated AISD's MPLH using November 1999 staffing and gross income figures.

When compared to industry standards, AISD high schools and middle schools have been operating at productivity levels far short of industry standards. **Exhibit 11-13** compares the MPLH for AISD high schools to industry standards.

Exhibit 11-13
AISD High School 1998-99 Staffing and Recommended Meals Per Labor Hour
November 1999

High School Campus	Number of Meals Served	Number of Staff Hours	Meals Per Labor Hour	Rec. MPLH	MPLH Variance	Hours at Industry Standard	Variance in Hours Worked Vs. Industry Standard +/(-)
Anderson	1,091	84.75	12.87	18	-5.13	60.61	24.15
Austin	1,410	99.00	14.24	18	-3.76	78.33	20.67
Bowie	1,828	114.00	16.04	18	-1.96	101.56	12.44
Crockett	1,382	96.00	14.40	18	-3.60	76.78	19.32
Garza	214	25.50	8.39	12	-3.61	17.83	7.67
Johnston	1,076	100.00	10.76	18	-7.24	59.78	40.22
LBJ	982	86.00	11.42	18	-6.58	54.56	31.44
Lanier	994	81.00	12.27	18	-5.73	55.22	25.78
McCallum	946	83.75	11.30	18	-6.70	52.56	31.19
Reagan	828	74.00	11.19	18	-6.81	46.00	28.00

Travis	1,309	89.00	14.71	18	-3.29	72.72	16.28
Alternative Learning Center	168	12.00	14.00	10.5	3.50	16.00	-4.00
Total	**12,228**	**945.00**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**691.94**	**253.17**

Source: AISD Food Services 11/99 Staffing Report, Cost Control Manual for School Food Service Directors.
Note: Differences due to rounding.

Exhibit 11-13 indicates that only one in 12 AISD high school cafeterias are operating at an optimal productivity rate. Of the 945 daily hours worked, only 691.8 hours fell within industry guidelines for productivity. Interpreted another way, almost 27 percent of the staff hours worked in AISD's kitchens were non-productive when compared to industry standards. MPLH calculations indicate that AISD high schools are not producing a greater number of meal equivalents for each hour that staff work or staff are working too many hours, or the district is employing too many workers to produce the same number of meals.

Exhibit 11-14 compares the MPLH for AISD middle schools to industry standards.

Exhibit 11-14
AISD Middle School 1998-99 Staffing and Recommended Meals Per Labor Hour
November 1999

Middle School Campus	Number of Meals Served	Number of Staff Hours	Meals Per Labor Hour	Rec. MPLH	MPLH Variance	Hours at Industry Standard	Variance in Hours Worked Vs. Industry Standard +/(-)
Bailey	1,115	63.75	17.49	18	-0.51	61.96	1.79
Bedichek	908	62.00	14.65	18	-3.35	50.47	11.53
Burnet	1,160	66.50	17.44	18	-0.56	64.42	2.08
Covington	675	57.75	11.69	16	-4.31	42.17	15.58

Dobie	884	71.00	12.45	18	-5.55	49.11	21.89
Fulmore	650	51.50	12.62	16	-3.38	40.65	10.85
Kealing	813	56.00	14.52	18	-3.48	45.16	10.84
Lamar	826	58.00	14.24	18	-3.76	45.90	12.10
Martin	549	57.50	9.55	15	-5.45	36.59	20.91
Mendez	1,289	71.00	18.15	18	0.15	71.62	-0.62
Murchison	1,190	72.25	16.47	18	-1.53	66.10	6.15
O. Henry	676	62.00	10.90	16	-5.10	42.27	19.73
Pearce	841	60.25	13.96	18	-4.04	46.72	13.53
Porter	840	64.00	13.13	18	-4.87	46.67	17.33
Small	845	69.75	12.11	18	-5.89	46.97	22.78
Webb	891	64.50	13.81	18	-4.19	49.48	15.02
Total	**14,152**	**1,007.75**	**223.18**	**279**	**-56.12**	**806.26**	**201.49**

Source: AISD Food Services 11/99 Staffing Report; Cost Control Manual for School Food Service Directors.

Exhibit 11-14 illustrates in 1998-99 of the 16 AISD middle school cafeterias, only one was operating at the optimal productivity rate. MPLH calculations indicate that of the 1,008 hours worked by staff at AISD middle school cafeterias, only 79 percent or 806.26 hours fell within industry productivity guidelines.

In 1995-96, Food Services began to serve an increasing number of meals to students and faculty on disposable lunch and breakfast trays, dishes and dinnerware. These disposable items should reduce the number of labor hours, but a reduction has not occurred. As automation and/or time-saving tasks are increased, the staffing standards should be changed to reflect increased productivity.

Although Food Services management has tried to reduce staffing levels, no attempts have been made to adopt MPLH guidelines at the secondary level to determine appropriate staffing levels. Without industry-accepted staffing measures, Food Services will not have a clear indicator of the appropriate number of staff at each cafeteria site.

The *Cost Control Manual for School Food Service Directors* recommends the following guidelines for on-site production **(Exhibit 11-15)**. A

conventional system means food is prepared from raw ingredients on the premises with a moderate amount of processed food, while a convenience system uses the maximum amount of processed food available. TSPR's MPLH calculations are based on conventional system guidelines.

Exhibit 11-15
Proposed Staffing Guidelines For On-Site Production
Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH)/Total Hours

Number of Meal Equivalents	Conventional System	Conventional System Total Hours	Convenience System MPLH	Convenience System Total Hours
Up to 100	8	9 -12	9	9 - 11
101-150	9	12 -16	10	11 -14
151-200	10-11	16 - 17	12	14 -16
201-250	12	17 - 20	14	16 - 18
251-300	13	20 - 22	15	18 -20
301-400	14	22 - 29	16	20 - 25
401-500	14	29 -35	18	25 -28
501-600	15	35 - 40	18	28 - 34
601-700	16	40 - 43	19	34 - 37
701-800	17	43 - 47	20	37 - 40
800+	18	47 +	21+	40 +

Source: Cost Control Manual for School Food Service Directors.

Recommendation 140:

Establish Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH) standards to evaluate productivity and modify staffing levels at secondary campuses.

Food Services should adopt MPLH as the standard measure for determining productivity and staffing levels.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Food Services director, assistant director and financial supervisor develop a plan to reduce labor costs.	July 2000
2.	The Food Services director, assistant director and financial	August

	supervisor create training sessions for cafeteria managers on increasing productivity and specific strategies to reduce labor costs.	2000
3.	The Food Services director, assistant director and financial supervisor generate productivity/meals per labor hour records each month. Productivity/meals per labor hours reports are distributed to cafeteria managers each month.	September 2000
4.	The Food Services director, assistant director and financial supervisor require area supervisors and cafeteria managers to develop a plan for each school to increase productivity. Each cafeteria establishes timelines and goals.	October 2000
5.	Area supervisors and cafeteria managers implement the plans for improving each school's productivity.	November 2000
6.	The Food Services director, assistant director and financial supervisor evaluate the progress of the plans every month.	December 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

Reducing staffing to the industry standards would reduce payroll costs in AISD high schools and middle schools by $748,999. In 1998-99, high school cafeteria staff worked a total of 253.2 hours each day, which fell outside industry guidelines for productivity (945 total high school cafeteria staff hours minus 691.8 hours at industry standards = 253.20 hours worked over industry standard).

In 1998-99, middle school cafeteria staff worked a total of 201.5 hours each day over the industry standard (1,008 total middle school cafeteria staff hours minus 806.25 hours at industry standard = 201.75). Total daily hours for high schools and middle schools over industry guidelines for productivity equals 455 hours per day (253.20 +201.75 hours).

The total daily hours over industry standards (455) multiplied by 175 service days per year equals 79,625 hours per year over industry standards (455 hours x 175 days = 79,625 hours).

At an average hourly rate of $9.13 per hour, reducing 79,625 hours would result in savings of $726,976 per year. In the first year, only one-half is estimated as the program is phased in.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Establish Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH) standards to	$363,488	$726,976	$726,976	$726,976	$726,976

evaluate productivity and modify staffing levels at secondary campuses.					

Chapter 11

C. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

AISD Food Services has a full-time director who supervises the department and reports to the chief financial officer. An assistant director reports to the director and oversees the food services purchasing technicians.

A financial supervisor who oversees the food service finances works for 12 months, while six area supervisors and a nutrition education and training supervisor work for 10.5 months and report to the assistant director and director. A secretary III position reports to both the assistant director and the director and works for 12 months. Two accounting supervisors, four accounting clerks who track the free and reduced-price meal program, an accounting technician, an accounts payable technician and a payroll specialist report to the financial supervisor.

Each area supervisor manages between 16 and 18 cafeteria managers. There are approved positions for 112 cafeteria managers and manager trainees, three assistant managers and 651 food service workers in AISD Food Services. Employees work a four-hour, six-hour or eight-hour shift depending on each cafeteria's productivity levels and requirements.

Exhibit 11-16 illustrates the department's current organization structure.

Exhibit 11-16
AISD Food Services Department
Current Organization Structure

```
                                    ┌──────────┐
                                    │ Director │
                                    └────┬─────┘
                                 ┌────────────────┐
                                 │Assistant Director│
                                 └────────┬────────┘
                          ┌──────────┐
                          │ Secretary│
                          └──────────┘
```

| Area Supervisor/ Automation Coordinator | Financial Supervisor | Area Supervisor | Area Supervisor | Area Supervisor | Nutrition Education & Training Coordinator |

Under Area Supervisor/Automation Coordinator:
- Cafeteria Managers
  - Cooks & Servers
- Area Supervisor
  - Cafeteria Managers
    - Cooks & Servers
- Area Supervisor
  - Cafeteria Managers
    - Cooks & Servers

Under Financial Supervisor:
- Accounting Supervisor
  - Accounting Clerk
  - Accounting Clerk
  - Accounting Clerk
  - Accounting Clerk
  - Accounting Clerk
  - Accounting Clerk
- Accounting Supervisor
  - Accounting Technician
  - Accounts Payable Technician

Under Area Supervisor (3rd):
- Cafeteria Managers
  - Cooks & Servers

Under Area Supervisor (4th):
- Cafeteria Managers
  - Cooks & Servers

Under Area Supervisor (5th):
- Cafeteria Managers
  - Cooks & Servers

Under Nutrition Education & Training Coordinator:
- Manager Trainees

Source: AISD Food Services Director.

FINDING

The organizational structure of AISD's Food Services operation is not efficient. The Food Services director and assistant director oversee six area supervisors, the financial supervisor and the nutrition education and training coordinator. The area supervisors and the financial supervisor do not meet regularly to monitor the cafeterias' financial performance.

In addition, the current structure and reporting relationships do not maximize financial and operational accountability, and control and reporting from the financial supervisor to the area supervisors and vice versa. Because both the financial supervisor and the area supervisor positions are on the same organizational level, the financial supervisor does not have direct authority over the area supervisors and, as a result, the levels of financial reporting between the parties has been minimal for the last two years.

Recommendation 141:

Rename the financial supervisor position to assistant director of Food Services Finance and realign the reporting relationship of this position to also include the chief financial officer.

Food Services must be reorganized so that the financial supervisor is placed in a position of authority over the area supervisors to ensure timely supervision and financial monitoring of the area supervisors' performance. AISD should place the current position of financial supervisor on the same level as the Food Services assistant director. Under the proposed organizational structure, the financial supervisor's title should be changed to assistant director of Food Services Finance and should be accountable to both the Food Services director and the chief financial officer. The assistant director of Food Services Finance should ensure that key financial and operating measures are analyzed and tracked. The duties and salary of the current assistant director will remain unchanged. Under the new proposed organizational scheme, area supervisors shall report directly to both the assistant director of Food Services Finance regarding financial operations and the assistant director regarding food service operations. The assistant director of Food Services Finance, assistant director, area supervisors and cafeteria managers should continue to hold monthly manager meetings in which the assistant director of Food Services Finance provides information on any identifiable trends. Such trends should include any increases or decreases in key operating measures such as participation rates, meals per labor hour, the percentage of the revenue spent on food, salaries and wages, which schools are managing and increasing participation and ideal practices. Performance measures should be tracked and analyzed by the assistant director of Food Services Finance and reported to the director, assistant director and all area supervisors. The restructured organization in the central office of Food Services is shown in **Exhibit 11-17**.

Exhibit 11-17
AISD Food Services Department

Proposed Organizational Structure
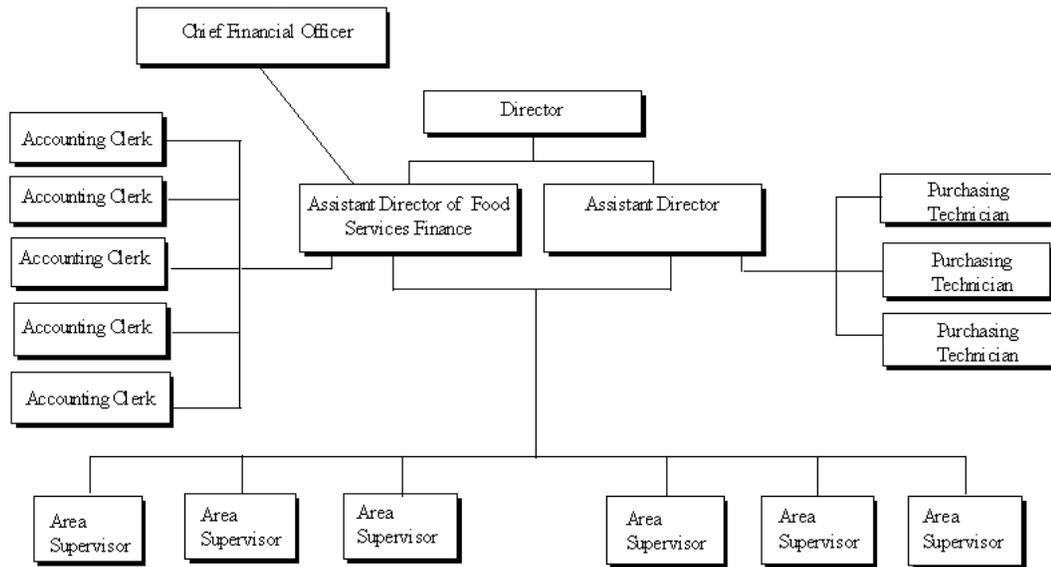
Source: TSPR.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Food Services director meets with the chief financial officer to review the proposed changes to the Food Services department.	August 2000
2.	The Food Services director updates the job description for the assistant director of Food Services Finance to include the revised reporting relationship which now includes the chief financial officer.	August 2000
3.	The new organization structure takes effect.	September 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 11

D. STUDENT MEAL PARTICIPATION

Increasing student meal participation is important to a school district not only because a district increases its federal reimbursements for every student who participates in meals, but it ensures more students receive the nutrition they need to perform well during the school day.

As in many districts, a much larger percentage of AISD students participate in the lunch program than in the breakfast program. In addition to lunches, the department operates snack bars and an a la carte lunch program, offering items such as pizza, hamburgers and sandwiches at the district's secondary schools. The district uses a variety of prepackaged/preprocessed food products and foods made from scratch.

Exhibit 11-18 shows daily lunch and breakfast participation rates for the first nine months of 1998-99.

Exhibit 11-18
Average Daily Participation in Breakfast and Lunch
August 1998 - April 1999

Month	Average Daily Attendance	Average Daily Lunch Participation	Daily Participation Rate	Average Daily Breakfast Participation	Daily Participation Rate
August	76,196	34,881	45.78%	13,142	17.25%
September	76,486	37,758	49.37%	15,342	20.06%
October	74,922	38,684	51.63%	15,948	21.29%
November	69,498	35,573	51.19%	14,658	21.09%
December	72,350	37,818	52.27%	15,553	21.50%
January	73,086	38,478	52.65%	15,265	20.89%
February	75,653	38,451	50.83%	15,574	20.59%
March	69,436	36,860	53.08%	15,205	21.90%
April	70,300	38,273	54.44%	15,204	21.63%

Exhibit 11-19 illustrates October 1999 breakfast and lunch participation rates by campus level in AISD. This exhibit is a snapshot in time: Annual figures are reflected in **Exhibit 11-20**.

Exhibit 11-19
AISD Food Services Department
October 1999 Participation Rates by Campus

Campus Level	Lunch Participation	Breakfast Participation
High School	17%	7%
Middle School	31%	12%
Elementary School	76%	29%
District Total	**52%**	**20%**

In **Exhibit 11-20**, the 1998-99 overall lunch participation totaled 53 percent, while the overall breakfast participation rate averaged 22 percent. In comparison, AISD peer districts reported average lunch participation and average breakfast participation of 60 percent and 18 percent respectively.

Exhibit 11-20
Average Lunch and Average Breakfast Participation
1998-99 AISD and Peer Districts

District	Average Lunch Participation	Average Breakfast Participation
Austin	**53%**	**22%**
Alief	48%	18%
Corpus Christi	59%	14%
Fort Worth	58%	19%
Northside	76%	17%
Pasadena	57%	24%
Peer District Average	**60%**	**18%**

Federal law allows schools participating in the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program automatic eligibility for free and reduced-price breakfasts and lunches for certain children without additional application or eligibility determination. TEA provides each district direct certification information on those students who are certified eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals. The list is compiled using the most current student demographic information from the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data reports and the food stamp office. Children are listed in alphabetical order according to the school where they are enrolled and are eligible to receive free meals for the current school year without further application.

Each district participating in the program annually must verify a 3 percent random sample of applications approved for benefits. Households whose children are directly certified through the PEIMS file are exempt from any verification requirements. Direct certification reduces a district's application process and its verification effort. TEA sends to each district the student information file and detailed instructions about how the file should be used and how to address exceptions.

FINDING

AISD Food Services promotes innovative and comprehensive nutrition education. The Food Services staff includes five registered dietitians who work closely with the American Heart Association, The University of Texas Health Extension Center and the Associated Milk Producers. The department works to inform teachers and parents of the latest nutrition research and encourages students to improve their diets.

Every year, Food Services participates in the Texas School Breakfast Week Program. During that time, the nutrition education and training coordinator sends information to area principals about the nutritional importance of breakfast and the positive learning effects stemming from participation in the school breakfast programs. The department also sends promotional materials and ideas to cafeteria managers to help emphasize the importance of good nutrition.

Food Services also participates in the Child and Adolescent Trial for Cardiovascular Health (CATCH). CATCH is an elementary school-based intervention program that promotes non-smoking, increased regular physical activity and food that is low in sodium and saturated fat.

COMMENDATION

Food Services recognizes the importance of good nutrition, participates in state and federal programs, and promotes innovative ideas to ensure students eat nutritious food.

FINDING

Food Services employs clerks who spend approximately 45 percent of their time processing paperwork for students who qualify for pre-certified free and reduced-price meals, scanning applications for errors and assigning proper student identification numbers. The work is performed each year from August to November.

However, AISD uses direct certification to qualify students for free and reduced-price meals. TEA gives the district a list of students who live in households that qualify for food stamps and were enrolled in the school district during the prior year. Children are listed alphabetically according to the school where they were enrolled and are eligible to receive free meals for the current school year without further application.

AISD principals provide applications to all AISD students regardless of the direct certification for the federal free and reduced-price meal program. Applications are distributed through double-sided applications printed in English and Spanish to all students at registration. The application process is duplicative to the direct certification process and is not needed.

Exhibit 11-21 shows the average number of students approved for free and reduced-price meals in the 1997-98 and 1998-99 school years.

Exhibit 11-21
AISD Students Approved for Free and Reduced-Price Meals
Through Application or Direct Certification
1997-98 and 1998-99 School Years*

Category	1997-98	1998-99	Change (+/-)
Free	31,873	33,460	+1,587
Reduced-Price	6,304	5,646	-658
Total	**38,177**	**39,106**	**+929**

Source: AISD Food Services; Reimbursement Claim Worksheets.

*October 1997-98 and 1998-99.

Food Services employs four full-time, 10 month clerks to process the free and reduced-price meal applications as well as two to three temporary clerks who are hired for 2.5 months. Although AISD Food Services uses direct certification data from TEA, its application processing clerks receive close to 1,000 applications a day during peak periods (August to October).

Processing clerks receive a large number of applications from pre-qualified students. According to the accounting supervisor, of the 35,000 applications received each year, 6,000 to 7,000 applications are from students TEA has already directly certified. Free and reduced-price application processing clerks spend approximately 15 percent of their time in duplicative effort processing applications.

After families have returned completed applications to the schools, a campus application representative employed at each school is supposed to place a student identification number on the application. Food Services receives 6,000 to 10,000 applications per year from schools in which the application representative has not placed a student identification number on the application.

The students whose applications do not have an identification number, if approved, are placed on free or reduced-price status but given a temporary seven-digit identification number and placed in a category known as "the bad file." The free and reduced-price application processing clerks then move students out of the "bad file" when their student records can be verified and a valid identification number can be placed on their application. Processing clerks spend approximately two hours per day processing and verifying student identification numbers to move students from the "bad file."

Recommendation 142:

Reengineer the free and reduced-price meal application process and eliminate redundant processes.

Food Services and school principals must work together to reduce duplicative efforts. Food Services staff and school principals must work together to ensure that pre-approved students are not reprocessed and that application representatives at each school have scanned applications for errors and inserted a student identification number on each application.

Through reengineering the free and reduced-price meal application process, Food Services could eliminate one of its 10 month free and reduced-price meals processing clerks.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Food Services director and AISD principals discuss the School Lunch and Breakfast Agreement guidelines for distributing applications to children who have been directly certified.	June 2000
2.	The Food Services director and AISD principals adopt standard practices for distributing and processing free and reduced-price meal applications.	July 2000
3.	The Food Services director and AISD principals agree on practices for distributing and processing free and reduced-price applications.	August 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

The reduction of a free and reduced-price meal processing clerk would result in annual savings of $23,159 ($19,524 average salary plus $3,635 in benefits).

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Reengineer the free and reduced-price meal application process and eliminate redundant processes.	$23,159	$23,159	$23,159	$23,159	$23,159

FINDING

Five AISD high schools have one lunch period that may vary from 40 minutes to one hour (McCallum, Crockett, LBJ, Travis and Lanier). Because these high schools enroll between 1,550 to 3,053 students, it is nearly impossible for all students to obtain a lunch meal at the cafeteria during the single lunch period.

During a TSPR on-site visit, the cafeteria at Crockett High School was overly crowded, and students had to stand in long lines before getting served. Some students spent 30-40 minutes of their lunch period in line, leaving them with a limited amount of time to eat lunch. Because of the long waiting period, many students decided to eat from vending machines, eat off campus or purchase food from school and/or student organization food sales.

Food Services staff members attribute relatively low lunch participation rates at high schools to the single lunch period. Cafeteria personnel at Crockett High School said that the single lunch periods have caused a $500 to $600 per day drop in lunch revenues. AISD high schools with one

lunch period had some of the lowest lunch participation rates with an average of only 11 percent.

Recommendation 143:

Establish multiple lunch periods at all AISD high school campuses.

At least one additional lunch period should be added to all AISD high schools that have only one 40-minute lunch period. For those schools serving 1,500 students or more, a third lunch period is advisable. Additional lunch periods should help reduce crowding in high school cafeterias as well as the amount of time that students must wait in line. As a result, the number of students who eat lunch at high school cafeterias should increase.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Food Services director coordinates with Curriculum and Instruction and the superintendent to establish additional lunch periods.	June 2000
2.	The Food Services director gains approval from the board for additional lunch periods at high schools that have one 40-minute lunch period and 750 students or more.	July - August 2000
3.	The Food Services director and area supervisors work with high school principals to implement additional lunch periods.	August 2000
4.	The Food Services director, supervisors and managers prepare campus lunch schedules and work programs for Food Services personnel.	August 2000
5.	The Food Services director implements a second lunch period for all high schools with more than 750 students, and a third lunch period for all high schools with more than 1,500 students.	August 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

AISD operates a large number of vending machines in high schools and middle schools. Food Services does not control the vending machines, and in all but one of the 10 campuses visited, the machines were operating during meal times. Students routinely purchase food and sodas from the vending machines rather than from the cafeteria. **Exhibit 11-22** shows the locations and types of vending machines at several AISD campuses.

Exhibit 11-22
Examples of Vending Machine Location and Type

School	Locations	Types
Webb Middle School	In cafeteria	1 soft drink machine 1 snack machine
Mendez Middle School	Just outside cafeteria doors	2 soft drink machines 2 snack machines
Austin High School	In hallway outside cafeteria and inside cafeteria	2 soft drink machines 2 snack machines
LBJ High School	In cafeteria	2 soft drink machines

Source: AISD Food Services.

In addition to locating vending machines in and close to the cafeteria, booster organizations, teacher groups and adopt-a-school programs frequently sell food items in direct competition with the cafeteria. The cafeteria manager from McCallum High School said that during a two-week period, fund-raisers caused cafeteria revenues to drop more than $600 per day. The cafeteria manager at Crockett High School said that booster clubs order out for pizza two to three times per week. These competitive sales have drawn as much as $400 per day from cafeteria sales.

At the high school level, cafeteria managers reported sales reductions from competitive food sales ranging from 19 percent to 63 percent. At middle schools, cafeteria managers reported reduced sales ranging from 15 percent to 28 percent.

The TEA *Administrator's Reference Manual*, Section 16.1, states, "School districts must establish rules or regulations as necessary to control the sale of foods in competition with meals served under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. Such rules and regulations shall prohibit the sale of foods of minimal nutritional value in the food service area during the breakfast and lunch periods. The restricted foods may be sold, at the discretion of local school officials, in other areas of the school campus throughout the school day."

Recommendation 144:

Establish rules or regulations to control competitive food sales as required by the Child Nutrition Program and as outlined in the TEA *Administrator's Reference Manual*.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Food Services director, area supervisors and the principals meet and review the Child Nutrition Program policies on vending machines and rules governing fund-raising events during meal times.	August 2000
2.	The Food Services director, area supervisors and the principals develop new guidelines for vending machine placement and rules governing fund-raising events in close proximity to the cafeterias.	September 2000
3.	The Food Services director and area supervisors monitor cafeterias for compliance with the Child Nutrition Program's competitive food policy.	September 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Several school principals have routinely denied access to snack lines as a way to punish students. At Mendez Middle School, the cafeteria manager said that for the previous three-week period the principal at Mendez had not allowed snack bar access to all 6th graders, the 7th grade boys and all 8th graders. Students were barred from purchases at the snack lines because they had failed to properly clean and remove the trays from their tables. According to the cafeteria manager, closing these snack lines cost Food Services an average of $150 to $200 per snack line per day for a total of $400 to $500 per day across all snack lines.

At Dobie Middle School, the principal had not allowed the two snack bar lines to serve food for the previous three weeks. Snack bar lines were closed to all students indefinitely because some grade levels left the cafeteria dirty. This action caused a $500 per day decline in sales revenues and a total loss of sales of $7,500. Moreover, cafeteria staff remained underused, costing Food Services.

According to Section 4.1 of the TEA *Administrator's Reference Manual*, "USDA policy prohibits the denial of meals as a disciplinary action against any student who is enrolled in a school participating in the child nutrition programs. Disciplinary action which indirectly results in the loss of meals is allowable (e.g., a student is suspended from school). When the withholding of meals is the disciplinary action or if the disciplinary action directly results in the loss of meals, it is inconsistent with the law and is not allowable."

Recommendation 145:

Comply with the guidelines for disciplinary action required by the Child Nutrition Program and outlined in the TEA *Administrator's Reference Manual***.**

When considering a disciplinary action against any student, it is important AISD principals ensure that such action is consistent with TEA policy.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Food Services director, area supervisors and principals review the Child Nutrition Program policies on the denial of meals as a disciplinary action.	July 2000
2.	The Food Services director, area supervisors and principals create new guidelines to ensure Child Nutrition Program policies on the denial of meals as a disciplinary action are followed.	August 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

AISD has low breakfast participation at many campuses and has low lunch participation at some schools in the district. Low participation in breakfast and lunch programs results in reduced revenues and profits.

AISD has initiated few programs to increase its breakfast participation. At Oak Springs Elementary, a pilot program has increased breakfast participation by 33 percent by extending the breakfast period by 15 minutes to 45 minutes by rescheduling the start of classes from 7:45 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. Late students are allowed to participate in breakfast with permission from their teacher. Students who receive permission to eat late breakfast must go through the breakfast line and obtain a hand stamp. This lets the teacher know that the student actually went through the breakfast line.

In September 1999, the cafeteria manager at Austin High School began to locate a breakfast cart in the hallway during breakfast hours to increase participation. During its first week, breakfast participation increased by 40 percent.

Food Services has not made plans to expand these programs to all elementary and high schools.

Recommendation 146:

Develop districtwide programs to increase student participation in breakfast and lunch meals.

Food Services must develop districtwide programs to boost its student participation in breakfast and lunch programs. Some breakfast pilot programs used by peer districts include:

- locating breakfast carts/kiosk stations in easy-access/high traffic locations where students tend to congregate each morning before class;
- implementing a brown bag or "grab and go" breakfast program that provides students a quick breakfast meal, which can be eaten in the cafeteria, at the snack bar or in the classroom (pending a principal's approval);
- increasing the amount of time in which all cafeterias serve breakfast to 45 minutes and allowing late students to participate in breakfast meals (pending principal approval);
- introducing breakfast clubs, such as the "Awesome Breakfast Challenge Club," to increase student interest in breakfast by offering incentives such as inexpensive toy prizes, guest appearances by cartoon-like characters such as TEA's "Earl E. Bird" and special breakfast items; and
- working with the district Transportation Department to ensure students arrive at school in time to eat breakfast before class.

The district should monitor increases in student participation to adjust staffing levels within industry standards for the production of meals per labor hour.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Food Services director investigates innovative programs and reports ideas to increase student participation to the superintendent.	June 2000
2.	The Food Services director develops a plan to incorporate innovative ideas and programs.	July 2000
3.	The Food Services director and area supervisors work with principals to implement innovative programs.	August 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

Increases in revenue will depend on the type of programs selected by Food Services.

Based on gross sales for 1998-99 **(Exhibit 11-1)** and projecting a 5 percent yearly increase in gross sales, AISD could generate an additional $465,357 ($9,307,138 x .05) annually in gross sales if elementary, middle and high schools achieved higher participation in their free and reduced-price and paid breakfast and lunch meal programs.

After subtracting food costs at the recommended industry standard of 40 percent of revenues ($465,357 x .40 = $186,143), Food Services could generate an additional $279,214 in revenue ($465,357 - $186,143).

Additional increases in revenue may also be achieved by adding multiple lunch periods at high schools with only one lunch period, by complying with policies regarding sales of competitive food during meal serving times and by complying with disciplinary action guidelines for the use of food as a disciplinary tool.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Develop districtwide programs to increase student participation in breakfast and lunch meals.	$279,214	$279,214	$279,214	$279,214	$279,214

Chapter 11

E. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND RECOGNITION

Increasing school food service performance requires skillful human resource management that gives employees opportunities for professional growth.

FINDING

Food Services provides a limited number of mandatory training classes for its staff. **Exhibit 11-23** illustrates the training programs available for Food Services employees.

Exhibit 11-23
1998-99 Training Courses for AISD Food Services Staff

Training Program	Training Group	Number of Courses Held	Hours Per Course	Examples of Subjects
Employee Workshops	Cafeteria Managers, Cooks, Servers	1 (3 days)	16	Pricing policy, Ordering, Free and Reduced-Price Applications and Meals Policy, Planning and Production, Money and Safety, Sanitation
Staff Development	Cafeteria Managers, Manager Trainees Cooks, Servers	1	4	Customer Service, Safety and Sanitation, Food Handling
Cashier Training	Cashiers	16 (at various schools)	2	SNAP, point-of-sale and traditional register usage
Manager Trainee	Manager-Trainees	32 (weekly)	1.5	Payroll, Point of Service, Daily Operating Reports, Breakfast and Lunch Requirements, Food Buying Guide, Financial Controls and Ordering, Equipment,

				Personnel, Inventory, Pre-paid sales

Source: AISD Nutrition Education & Training Coordinator.

Mandatory employee workshops are scheduled one week before the beginning of each school year. Area supervisors and guest speakers present information to cafeteria managers, cooks and servers during a three-day period. Staff development training is held once each year and does not fall on a set day or time of the year. Food Services also sponsors cashier training for new and experienced cashiers from November to January. Cashier training sessions allow cashiers from five to seven scheduled schools to attend each training, and no schools are repeated. In addition to scheduled training classes for its staff, Food Services provides weekly training classes during the year as well as "hands on" training for its manager-trainees.

Food Services does not provide direct training on topics and techniques that would allow all its employees to increase efficiency and productivity. The lack of training at all levels in Food Services may have contributed to the operating losses and inefficient uses of resources during recent years. Several Texas school districts and most Regional Education Service Centers have a wide variety of effective training programs. Region 13 offers food service training courses. El Paso ISD (EPISD) offers training courses in subject areas such as culinary techniques, nutrition, catering, marketing and promotions and math **(Exhibit 11-24)**.

Exhibit 11-24
Examples of Training for El Paso Independent School District Food Services Employees

Training	Training Audience	Examples of Subjects
Annual Training	Lunch Room Clerks	• Eligibility Determination Applications • Direct Certification • Pre-K Registration • Procedure for Bar Coding • Communication Procedures • Time Cards
Year-Round Training	Assistant/Manager Trainees	• Menu Planning • Offer vs. Serve • Recipe Management • Equipment Maintenance and

		Use • Competency Assessment and Performance Evaluation
Managers' Meetings	Cafeteria Managers	• Marketing and Promotions • Safety and Sanitation • Culinary Techniques • Finance
In-service Training	Substitute Workers	• Food Services Organization • National School Lunch Program • Description of Duties • Required Uniforms, Hygiene • Serving Requirements • Safety Procedures • Pay and Benefits
Staff Development	Cafeteria Workers	• Culinary Techniques • Preparing Healthy School Meals • Processed Meats • Quick Breads • Pasta and Rice

Source: El Paso ISD Food Services.

Recommendation 147:

Identify training needs and implement specific training programs for food service employees.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Food Services director, area supervisors and cafeteria managers discuss the training needs of cafeteria staff.	June 2000
2.	The Food Services director, area supervisors and cafeteria managers develop the training schedule for cafeteria staff and send staff to training classes offered by the Regional Education Service Center or other training providers.	July 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

Based on peer district averages and using information from the Region 13 Education Service Center (RESC) as an example, Food Services training programs would cost $20 per course per trainee. Food Services could send all of its staff to the individual training courses offered by RESC for an additional cost of $13,020 (651 total Food Services staff members x $20 per course per trainee = $13,020). Nevertheless, Food Services must first identify training needs, determine the appropriate number of training courses and the optimal frequency of classes. These steps can be performed at no cost to Food Services.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Identify training needs and implement specific training programs for food service employees.	($13,020)	$0	$0	$0	$0

FINDING

Food Services has instituted an annual Nutrition and Food Services Awards Ceremony that honors Food Services staff according to years of service and perfect attendance, but does not have any performance-based rewards for its staff. **Exhibit 11-25** illustrates the awards available and the criteria used to evaluate Food Services staff.

Exhibit 11-25
AISD Food Services Employee Award Criteria

General Criteria	Specific Criteria
Years of Service	Service for five years to 35 years
Attendance	Perfect attendance for one year, two years and four years

Source: AISD Food Services Nutrition and Education Training Coordinator.

Recommendation 148:

Expand the Food Services employee reward program to include performance-based rewards that motivate and encourage exemplary employee and financial performance.

Exhibit 11-26 suggests additional employee performance awards for AISD staff.

Exhibit 11-26

Suggested Additional AISD Food Services Award Criteria

General Criteria	Specific Criteria
Work Efficiency and Performance	Demonstrates quality and accuracy of work; follows directions well; is self-motivated; makes suggestions when appropriate; wears proper uniform; practices good hygiene; and uses required safety techniques.
Customer Service	Demonstrates good relationship skills with students, staff and guests.
Attitude	Portrays a positive attitude.
Teamwork	Works well with peers; performs one's share of work; considers the team when making decisions; and assists other employees after completing own assigned duties.
Cafeteria Profitability and Performance Improvement	Identify cafeterias that have attained favorable financial performance, improved sales, increased the number of free and reduced-price meals, or reduced expenses.

Source: El Paso ISD Food Services.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Food Services director determines which performance measures should be used to determine eligibility for awards.	September 2000
2.	The Food Services director gathers feedback from area supervisors and cafeteria managers on performance measures.	October 2000
3.	Area supervisors, cafeteria managers and cafeteria staff are informed of new performance based measures used to determine eligibility for awards.	November 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

Assuming the cost for printing and framing is $21 per certificate, the Food Services Department could give out awards every other month in four categories such as work efficiently/performance, customer service, attitude, and teamwork at a cost of $504 per year ($21 x 6 awards per year = $126 per year per award category x 4 award categories = $504 per year).

Additionally, Food Services could issue a special plaque for cafeteria profitability and performance once per year to the most deserving cafeteria

site at an average cost of $24.00 ($15.00 per plaque + $9.00 engraving costs = $24.00), brining the total cost for incentive awards to $528 per year.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Expand the Food Services employee reward program to include performance-based rewards that motivate and encourage exemplary employee and financial performance.	($528)	($528)	($528)	($528)	($528)

FINDING

AISD cafeterias employ a diverse workforce. According to the assistant director of Food Services, 44 percent are Anglo, 39 percent are Hispanic, 16 percent are African American, and 1 percent are classified as other. Of those classified as Hispanic, a large number do not speak English. According to guidelines set forth by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, employers who hire non-English-speaking employees must provide materials written in their native languages.

Job descriptions, employee handbooks, performance appraisals and recipes are written in English only. Although some of the cafeteria managers are bilingual, the Food Services job descriptions do not require Food Services managers to be bilingual. Employees who are bilingual are often used to translate employee policy, performance appraisals and recipes for the non-English-speaking employees. In cafeterias where managers do not speak Spanish, instructions and cafeteria policy are often transmitted through Spanish-speaking employees with no way of ensuring the proper message is conveyed.

Although Food Services has made some efforts to translate recipes into Spanish, the district has not translated job descriptions, employee handbooks, performance appraisals and recipes. In addition, AISD does not offer English as a Second Language classes to help Food Services integrate non-English-speaking employees into the workforce.

Recommendation 149:

Provide job descriptions, employee policy handbooks, performance appraisals and recipes for Food Services employees in English and Spanish and coordinate with the Community Education Department to provide English as a Second Language classes for employees.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Food Services director contacts the Texas School Food Services Association, the local health department and AISD's Human Resources department for information and training materials written in Spanish.	June 2000
2.	Food Services managers are presented the information and written materials prepared in Spanish for incorporation into present materials.	September - October 2000
3.	The Food Services director contacts the Community Education department to enroll Food Services employees in English as a Second Language classes.	November 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

Food Services has approximately 300 pages of job descriptions, employee handbooks, performance appraisals and recipes which are in need of translation into Spanish. The translation of such documents would cost $11,550 based on an average translation cost of $38.50 per page, with updates when needed at an estimated cost of $1,000 per year.

Food Services could ensure that non-English-speaking cafeteria staff receive English language instruction at no cost to Food Services. The AISD Community Education department offers English as a Second Language classes at no charge during both the fall and spring semesters. Nevertheless, Food Services must ensure that cafeteria staff is informed of the availability of classes.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Provide job descriptions, employee policy handbooks, performance appraisals and recipes for Food Services employees in English and Spanish and coordinate with the Community Education Department to provide English as a Second Language classes for employees.	$0	($1,000)	($1,000)	($1,000)	($1,000)
Translate Food Services documents into Spanish.	($11,550)	$0	$0	$0	$0
Net Savings (Costs)	($11,550)	($1,000)	($1,000)	($1,000)	($1,000)

Chapter 11

F. FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

AISD Food Services is using proceeds from the 1996 bond issue to provide walk-in cooler/freezers for 49 kitchens. Additionally, 63 kitchens will receive renovations through the Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Budget. These renovations include the installation of air conditioning at 26 kitchens, which have not had air conditioning.

Exhibit 11-26 shows the number of AISD campuses affected by the renovations.

Exhibit 11-26
Schedule of Bond Renovations for AISD Kitchens

Bond Program Work by Type	Number of Schools Completed	Number of Schools in Progress	Number of Schools Not Started	Total
Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC)	30	7	26	**63**
Walk-In Cooler/Freezer	17	6	26	**49**
New Construction/Renovation	14	4	13	**31**
Total	**61**	**17**	**65**	143

Source: AISD Bond Program Coordinator, AISD Kitchen HVAC Budget and Kitchen
Budget to Estimated Expenditure Report.

FINDING

Kitchen renovations can affect food service profitability by disrupting operations. Kitchens must be able to feed students quality meals and function at the optimum level while undergoing construction and renovation. Working around renovations requires careful planning to ensure that operational efficiency, food quality, employee utilization, menu variety and food delivery are not sacrificed. Arrangements must be made during construction periods, and proper communication and

planning must take place between the food service staff and construction personnel.

Exhibit 11-27 illustrates the number of general kitchen renovation and construction, walk-in cooler/freezer construction, and HVAC upgrades taking place from summer 1998 to summer 2000.

Exhibit 11-27
Number of Planned Renovations at AISD Kitchens
by Renovation Type and Year

Scheduled Renovation Periods	Kitchen Renovation/ Construction	Walk-in Cooler/Freezer Construction	HVAC Budget Upgrades	Total Renovations
Summer 1998	4	9	12	*25
Fall 1998	0	0	1	1
Summer 1999	8	5	8	*21
Fall 1999	2	2	5	*9
Summer 2000	8	10	16	*34
Total	**22**	**26**	**42**	***90**

Source: AISD Bond Program Coordinator, AISD Kitchen HVAC Budget and Kitchen Budget to
Estimated Expenditure Report.
* Includes schools scheduled for multiple renovation projects.

The delayed completion of summer and fall kitchen renovation projects could cause drops in revenues while forcing cafeterias to incur additional costs. Cafeteria staff are usually forced to redesign menu items, lease food transport trucks, hire drivers and reallocate cafeteria staff.

At Linder Elementary, the unplanned extension of 1999 summer construction into the 1999-2000 school year caused hard-earned meal participation rates to decline. Linder experienced a 30-percent drop in breakfast participation and a 33-percent drop in lunch participation rates. The area supervisor assigned to Linder Elementary said that the unanticipated extended construction period forced the cafeteria to serve cold breakfast and lunch items for the first two months of school. Students and teachers disliked the greater frequency of cold items and stopped

buying from the cafeteria. In addition, at Zavala Elementary, a 1999 summer construction delay in the completion of kitchen renovations caused a reduction in student meal participation levels by 20 percent.

Delays in the completion of kitchens at new schools also harms the profitability of new cafeterias. For example, at Rodriguez Elementary, the cafeteria was not fully functional until 2.5 months into the 1999-2000 school year. Cafeteria managers were forced to reduce traditional menu items, transport food from an area school and reallocate cafeteria staff. Food Services was plagued by greater costs and reduced sales as a direct result of timing lapses between the opening of Rodriguez Elementary and its cafeteria.

Little formal communication has taken place between construction officials and Food Services management. As a result, Food Services has not developed a formal plan in conjunction with construction management to deal with the large number of renovation projects and the results of unanticipated delays in the completion of these projects.

Additionally, area supervisors are not involved in monitoring the progress of renovation projects to determine whether they will meet the expected completion date. Finally, the Food Services director, assistant director, financial supervisor and area supervisors have not met to identify key obstacles, outcomes and action plans for each cafeteria undergoing construction and renovation before the start of the 2000-01 school year.

Recommendation 150:

Include Food Services representation on renovation and construction planning projects.

Although the department is aware of the steps that must be taken if projects exceed completion deadlines, a greater degree of formal communication and planning must take place between food service staff and construction personnel. The Food Services director, assistant director, financial supervisor and area supervisors should identify key obstacles, outcomes and action plans for each cafeteria undergoing construction and renovation before the start of the 2000-01 school year.

In addition, area supervisors should monitor those schools undergoing construction to observe their progress and determine if the schools will be fully operational by the scheduled completion date.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

| 1. | The Food Services director, assistant director, financial supervisor | June |

	and area supervisors meet with construction managers to determine and analyze the renovation project schedule and the feasibility of the completion dates.	2000
2.	The Food Services director, assistant director, financial supervisor and area supervisors determine which school cafeterias will be fully operational by the completion date and which will require special arrangements for optimal food service delivery.	July 2000
3.	The Food Services director, assistant director, financial supervisor and area supervisors perform cost analyses to determine appropriate steps to ensure food quality, food selection and cafeteria operational efficiency.	August 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

AISD serves most meals to students and faculty on disposable lunch and breakfast trays, dishes and dinnerware. The number of schools serving meals on disposable trays is expected to increase due to a November 1999 mandate from Food Services management to close dishwashing stations at elementary schools and discontinue dish-washer work orders. Disposable trays are designed to reduce the amount of time needed for clean-up, but they create a great deal of waste.

Although Food Services recycles aluminum cans, the department does not recycle its styrofoam disposable trays and dishes, and plastic dinnerware. The failure to recycle creates numerous environmental concerns. In addition, state law mandates that government entities, including school districts, employ in-house recycling programs, and that at least 40 percent of paper and styrofoam waste materials be recycled.

Other school districts have implemented nationally recognized recycling programs. For example, Alief ISD received a $98,000 grant from the Houston-Galveston Area Council to begin its recycling program. Alief's program collects recyclable corrugated cardboard, paper, aluminum, milk cartons, wood, plastic and polystyrene. The sale of these materials finance the program. Through this program, the district has greatly reduced the amount of waste sent to landfills, while earning money from the sale of the recycled materials.

Recommendation 151:

Apply for grants to implement a districtwide recycling program for Food Services' styrofoam and other recyclable waste.

AISD should research and apply for available grants to establish a recycling program to help reduce start-up costs, establish a cooperative agreement with area school districts or a community-based organization or establish its own recycling program.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Food Services director determines the types and amounts of solid waste generated by the department.	June 2000
2.	The Food Services director determines if there are other school-based programs in the AISD area in which the district could participate in a recycling program.	July 2000
3.	The Food Services director learns of community-based opportunities for recycling, investigates the possibility of pursuing a grant or developing a cooperative program with other area districts.	August 2000
4.	Using the research data collected, the Food Services director reports to the chief financial officer on the feasibility of a food service recycling program for the 2000-01 year.	September 2000
5.	The Food Service's recycling program is implemented districtwide.	October 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation assumes that the cost of the recycling program will be covered through grants.

Chapter 12
SAFETY AND SECURITY

This chapter reviews the Austin Independent School District's (AISD) safety and security functions in three sections:

A. Discipline Management
B. Security
C. Safety

The safety of students and school employees is a major concern for all. Because of the priority placed on the safety and security of our children by parents, educators, taxpayers and the community, the 1995 Texas Legislature addressed school violence by establishing major safety and security-related revisions in the Texas Education Code.

Traditionally, most school safety actions involved surrounding schools with fences and creating alternative education programs. Recent events, like the 1999 tragedy in Littleton, Colorado, call for a more comprehensive approach involving awareness, prevention, intervention, and a recognition that school violence is a community problem requiring community involvement. To provide a safe and secure learning environment, safety and security programs must include elements of prevention, intervention, and enforcement, as well as cooperation with municipal and county governments. Discipline management and alternative education programs are key tools in this process.

BACKGROUND

The Texas Legislature has addressed aspects of school violence. **Exhibit 12-1** summarizes major legislation related to school safety and security for the past four legislative sessions.

Exhibit 12-1
Major School Safety and Security Initiatives of the Texas Legislature
1993 - 1999

Legislation	Summary
1993 Legislature	
House Bill 23	Requires information-sharing between law enforcement and schools on student arrests for serious offenses; requires school principals to notify law enforcement if criminal activity occurs or is suspected of occurring on

Appendix A
FOCUS GROUP COMMENTS

As part of the public input phase of the Austin Independent School District (AISD) Management and Performance Review, Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) held 12 focus groups. Focus Groups were held with the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce, the Austin Area Research Organization (AARO), the league of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and Austin Latino Alliance (ALA), the Austin Council of Parent-Teacher Associations (ACPTA), the Community Education Consortium, representatives of the Hispanic and African American communities, non-English (Spanish) speaking parents, AISD principals, assistant principals, teachers and bilingual teachers. Community members and AISD staff who participated in the focus groups gave oral and written comments about the 12 areas under review. These comments illustrate community and AISD school staff perceptions of the Austin Independent School District and do not reflect the findings or opinions of the Comptroller or review team. The following is a summary of comments received by focus group session.

District Organization and Management

- Dr. Forgione is a great leader and is already turning things around. He is open, inclusive and uses data to drive decisions. He is talking to everyone in the community, not just the school board and AISD administration. He is putting key people in the right places.
- The superintendent should be commended on his efforts to address TAAS score use and personnel issues. He is looking at AISD operations as a business; is putting key people and systems in place, shows keen understanding of systems. He listens to a wide range of staff, groups and people. He is grounding practice in education research.
- AISD has top heavy upper management.
- There are too many levels between upper management and the classroom teachers.
- The board is micromanaging the district. It has mired the distinction between policy and implementation. The board has trespassed the policy-making boundary.
- Board membership has become almost a full time job-which is a sign of a problem.
- Where are new trustees going to come from in light of heavy time commitment that board membership requires?
- AISD needs a Chief Financial Officer (CFO) in charge of all financial matters.
- AISD need a Chief Information Officer (CIO).

- AISD should articulate a clear vision for the district; it needs to be simply and clearly stated, and well communicated.
- The superintendent search process was poor and lengthy and did not engender community confidence.
- Give the top people the tools (computers, technology).
- Communicate to parents that computers do help the teachers.
- The vertical structure (teaming) has been very helpful. AISD needs good leadership (i.e., area superintendents) with authority and support from other organizational areas.
- AISD has an unusual, board structure: it is not cohesive. Single member office holders versus at-large members. Terms are too long. AISD needs to reassess the board's structure.
- Board - superintendent trust/relationship. At issue is the extent to which the board oversees the superintendent. AISD has experienced a high superintendent turnover. The board needs training in superintendent selection skills. The board has shown a lack of strategic planning.
- Decisions the board makes are not based on research and planning. The board needs to take districtwide interests into consideration when making decisions.
- The decision making process by board is questionable. Inequity of board decisions.
- While the board involved the community in several strategic planning processes, it did not implement the recommendations. Citizen input was asked for but not used.
- The district is not customer friendly; it is difficult to get information or responses to requests by parents/community. State representatives can't get information either.
- AISD's Purchasing Department problems are mainly distribution problems. AISD should tell parents what school supplies students need.
- Poor communications with parents.
- AISD has old equipment that endangers safety of children. AISD does not have enough capital budget.
- Central Office is disconnected: each department is an entity to itself.
- The district is too big; need some decentralization.
- Administrators get more duties without getting more staff.
- The district needs to involve the community in establishing and meeting priorities.
- Assist principals in getting community involvement.
- Keep good principals as principals and give them opportunities. Reward principals for being good principals.
- Everyone in the school must be recognized as important.
- Principals need to remember that they are public representatives.
- District should be proactive, improve the listening process.

- At present AISD has credibility and trust problems.
- AISD should post a current, updated organizational chart on the web.
- Advanced Placement (AP) opportunities do not exist equitably.
- Lack of integrity: cheating on TAAS data.
- AISD has a bad reputation, it is not trustworthy, lacks accountability. It should have higher standards.
- The board has shown a serious lack of initiative in finding a superintendent.
- There is lack of leadership: it is unclear who is running the district.
- The board lacks vision.
- AISD's administration: the people in the top positions change but the middle level remains the same.
- Lack of communication between the board and administration.
- The board has not been receptive to decentralization of the district.
- Not every campus has access to the same resources.
- The concept of site-based management has been used to justify disparities in education service delivery, resource allocation within campuses and discipline.
- Site-based management has not been implemented properly but in a few campuses.
- Third party auditor is needed to ensure that laws and policies are implemented properly.
- AISD does not have an efficient accounting system.
- AISD needs a total management organization audit; the audit should be on going.
- AISD's policy book is outdated and difficult to use. It needs to be posted on Internet and in public libraries. It must be up to date. It should be available in Spanish. It needs clear and consistent interpretation; currently, policies are interpreted at will, inconsistently. This is done by AISD middle management that does not change with the change of superintendent.
- Teacher and administrative recruitment is narrow in scope. AISD always looks at the same sources and out of state.
- The Personnel Department makes it difficult for new hires to come to Austin.
- There is no alignment across district departments; what are they expected to do, what should be the focus? AISD needs to set expectations, hold people accountable and follow through.
- Principals are promoted to central office positions for which they have no training or qualifications.
- Some principals lack qualifications. This damages the schools.
- There have been positive changes in attitude because of the new superintendent. Last year morale on campuses was low. There has been a change. Change will take time.

- We expect much of our schools and teachers. Teachers are not involved enough.
- Site-based management works well on some campuses. Ortega has good site-based management.
- There is a dilemma between site-based management and district centralization.
- The district should look at how corporations organize their resources and apply it to AISD's organization flow-chart. Can AISD come up with a more efficient organization of its resources?
- Area superintendent's roles and responsibilities: do they spend time on campuses?
- The public is not well informed about the role of the superintendent versus the role of the board.
- Public comments at board meetings should take place at the start of the meeting.
- The board should have some control over public "abuse" or rudeness during meetings.
- The broadcasting of board meetings on television is in English only. Non-English speaking members of the community cannot follow the meetings.
- What's the balance between site based management and districtwide policy?
- Inequity in board decisions.
- The board continuously prolongs decision-making.
- Board discussions are petty and argumentative. This prolongs the meetings.
- The board should be educated about superintendent selection.
- The board has failed to do the research, set a policy and apply it districtwide!
- Impossible to get information from AISD for both employees and community members.
- The new superintendent is doing a great job. Dr. Forgione is the right person at this time. He needs all the help and support he can receive.
- The following are issues: board structure, role of the board and length of terms of board members.
- The new superintendent is working hard on making changes; we should give him a chance to implement his plans.
- The board's president and vice president are elected at large. Other members are elected from single member districts. This causes lack of leadership-the board does not necessarily "buy- into" the president.
- Need clarification of the roles of the board and superintendent.
- The board has shown a lack of consistency and equity with decisions. The board responds to "squeakiest" wheels. There is a need for a broader, more strategic focus.

- AISD central administration lacks a customer service attitude. It has not been forthcoming with information to the community. It has demonstrated an essential lack of response, courtesy and information even toward a State Representative who was trying to help.
- There is a lack of balance between site-based management and overall governance.
- The board needs more education on issues (e.g., hiring a superintendent). It needs to be restructured. It needs to be more concerned with equity in decisions. It needs to do more strategic planning. It needs to do more/better research on national best practices. For example, should sixth grade be part of elementary or middle school?
- AISD should examine site-based management versus central administration (e.g., surplus assets).
- Purchasing is a nightmare.
- Lack of communication is a central problem both externally and internally.
- The board needs to weigh the merits and benefits of single-member office holders versus at-large members.
- AISD has a high superintendent turnover.
- No clear-cut method of knowing whom to contact at central office and for what.
- AISD's leave policy has resulted in too many teachers being absent.
- The district should pay back teachers accumulated leave.
- Teachers have no incentive to save-up leave.
- Substitute teachers are hard to get.
- If teachers take on an extra load, they not getting paid for it.
- There is no coordination across professional development programs.
- AISD's central office has to respond to "urgent" requests every day.
- New principals are pulled off campus too much.
- Micromanaging by the school board.
- Culture is too accusatory without checking facts.
- District personnel should spend a week at a school so they can better understand schools needs.
- Area superintendents do not visit campuses regularly, unless there are crises.
- Area superintendents should spend more time on campus.
- The board and administration do not listen to community or staff.
- The Budget Advisory Council did not have the opportunity to provide input that was ultimately used.
- One-third of Budget Advisory Council members were selected by the principal.

- Communication/coordination among departments should be improved. AISD should prepare a document that supports coordination of programs.
- The area superintendents' structure is too bureaucratic; it poses roadblocks.
- They operate in a reactive way; they spend too much time on individual citizen concerns. This clogs up operation.
- High turnover.
- Board members are brought into conflicts.
- There is lack of uniform support for local decisions which affects policy implementation and enforcement.
- The district is getting too big to operate under the current organizational structure.
- Schools are not able to hire own assistant principals.
- There are too many administrative meetings off campus.
- Principals need to be the final stop in most cases involving parent complaints. AISD needs a process for problem handling and resolution.
- AISD may need an ombudsman for dealing with systemic problems and for principals to call for mediation.
- The district needs to have standards of communication.
- Poor customer service at Central Office. Central Office staff are rude.
- AISD has not been able to set standards.
- Board policies should be revised and made available electronically.
- AISD needs a decision-making framework.
- AISD needs a districtwide improvement plan.
- AISD has too much administrative change. There is no continuity.
- The communication from top to bottom at AISD has created a distrustful climate.
- AISD has a top-heavy administration (especially in math). It is hard to get things done; this adds more work and effort on the part of teachers.
- There is an unclear chain-of-command and accountability structure. Too many political games.
- Principals are taken off campus too much.
- Unequal treatment of schools (e.g., computer resources) especially for schools serving lower socio-economic students.
- It is unclear who is making the resource allocation decisions because of poor communications.
- Problem with putting teachers on a reserve list and then needing them back later.
- Does the district have a reserve list of administrators?
- Growth management is a problem.

	campus.
Senate Resolution 879	Encourages collaboration between the Texas Education Agency and Department of Public Safety in the recording of criminal incidents in the schools.
House Bills 633 and 634	Outlines the commissioning and jurisdiction of peace officers for school districts.
House Bill 2332	Authorizes the State Board of Education to establish special-purpose schools or districts for students whose needs are not met through regular schools.
Senate Bill 16	Defines drug-free zones for schools.
Senate Bill 213	Creates the safe schools checklist.
Senate Bill 155	Creates the Texas Youth Commission.
1995 Legislature	
Senate Bill 1	Revamps the Education Code and laws on safety and security in schools, including the requirement for districts to establish alternative education programs and, in counties with populations above 125,000, to establish juvenile justice alternative education programs.
1997 Legislature	
Senate Bill 133	Rewrites the safe schools provision of the Education Code.
1999 Legislature	
Senate Bill 260	Allows the expulsion of a student who assaults a school district employee.
Senate Bill 1580	Creates the Texas Violent Gang Task Force.
Senate Bill 1724	Requires each school district to annually report (beginning with 1999-2000) the number, rate, and type of violent and criminal incidents occurring on each campus, and requires them to include a violence prevention and intervention component in their annual campus improvement plans.
Senate Bill 1784	Allows school districts to use private or public community-based dropout recovery education programs to provide alternative education programs.
House Bill 152	Raises to a state jail felony the act of placing graffiti on school property.

House Bill 1749	Encourages school districts and juvenile probation departments to share information on juvenile offenders.

Source: Compiled by TSPR, 1999.

TSPR's *Keeping Texas Children Safe in School* is based on the results of its numerous school performance reviews. TSPR has found that the most effective districts have a safety plan that includes prevention, intervention, and enforcement strategies. An effective program includes these steps:

Strategy	Keeping Texas Children Safe in Schools
Prevention	• Know your goals and objectives: where your district is going, and what you want to accomplish.
	• Establish clear expectations for students, parents, teachers, and administrators.
	• Address warning signs before they turn into trouble.
Intervention	• Look for trouble before it finds you.
	• Recognize trouble when you see it.
	• Have individuals in the right place and at the right time to intervene.
	• Have a plan of action appropriate for the occasion and practice it.
Enforcement	• Leave no room for double standards.
	• Ensure that discipline management extends inside and outside the classroom.
	• Alternative programs are not just a matter of compliance with the law; they are many students' last chance at success.

The first three steps comprise an effective prevention strategy, the next four intervention, and the last three enforcement. Taken individually, the steps outlined in the law or those used by successful districts don't seem dramatic. But when districts apply these measures in a comprehensive system, they can and do get significant results.

Chapter 12

A. DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT

According to the Education Code, each school must adopt a Student Code of Conduct. Additionally, students who engage in serious misconduct must be removed from regular education settings and placed in alternative education programs. Specific information concerning the arrest or criminal conduct of students must be shared between law enforcement and local school districts. Moreover, the Education Code requires school districts, the juvenile board, and juvenile justice systems in counties with a population of 125,000 or more to establish a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP). The JJAEP operates under the jurisdiction of the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission and is intended to provide for the education of incarcerated youths and youthful offenders.

AISD's discipline management program is coordinated through each campus principal and the appropriate area superintendent. The principal is responsible for conducting student hearings for violations of the district's Student Code of Conduct and for monitoring and tracking student disciplinary actions, including referrals to alternative education programs and expulsions. The area superintendent serves as the first level of appeal for removal to an alternative educational placement. Appeals can go as high as the board or a board designee. The district publishes and distributes AISD's Student Code of Conduct to principals, teachers, students and parents at the beginning of each school year to make sure that everyone is familiar with the district's disciplinary process and the consequences for misbehavior.

The Student Code of Conduct has a six-part discipline management plan that includes information on the district's enforcement policy; offenses sufficiently serious to subject students to prosecution and assignment to alternative education programs; prohibited behaviors; general information and expectations; guidelines for imposing consequences; and appeal procedures. The code also details how discipline will be handled for students with disabilities.

AISD places offenses in four categories: general misconduct, serious offenses, behavior subject to removal to an alternative education program, and offenses subject to expulsion. **Exhibit 12-2** presents examples for each category of offense.

Exhibit 12-2
Categories of Offenses Outlined in AISD's Student Code of Conduct

Category	Examples of Offenses
General Misconduct	• Verbal abuse that insults or degrades an individual or stereotypes any race, gender, disability, physical condition, ethnic group, or religion • Possession of fireworks • Insubordination • Possession of cellular telephones and paging devices • Misconduct on school buses
Serious offenses	• Throwing objects that can cause bodily injury or damage property • Leaving school grounds, class, or events without permission • Accumulating excessive tardiness, truancies, or unexcused absences • Gambling • Persistent (repetitive) misbehavior (defined as two or more violations of the Student Code of Conduct in general or repeated occurrences of the same violation) • Inappropriate, disruptive behavior in or out of the classroom (e.g., hallways, cafeterias, and playgrounds)
Behavior subject to removal to an alternative Education program	• Engaging in conduct punishable as a felony • Committing an assault • Making a terrorist threat • Criminal mischief • Selling, giving, delivering, possessing, using, or being under the influence of a controlled substance or a dangerous drug • Possessing, using, or being under the influence of an alcoholic beverage • Behaving in a manner that contains the elements of the offense of indecent exposure • Engages in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of retaliation against any school

	employee, regardless of where or when the conduct occurs • Is believed by the superintendent or the superintendent's designee to have engaged in conduct defined as a felony offense in Title 5 of the Penal Code
Offenses subject to expulsion	• Criminal mischief if punishable as a felony, whether committed on or off school property or at a school-related event. • A firearm violation, as defined by federal law • Aggravated assault, sexual assault, or aggravated sexual assault

Source: AISD Student Code of Conduct, 1998-99.

AISD's discipline management process begins when a student violates the Student Code of Conduct. When a violation occurs, teachers complete an office referral form listing the student, type of offense, the date of the offense, and a description of the violation. The teacher submits the report to the appropriate school administrator (either the principal or the assistant principal responsible for student discipline). The administrator sends a copy of the report to the student's parents within 24 hours. The administrator has several options when disciplining students at the campus level. Examples include parent-teacher conferences, counseling, detention, corporal punishment, placement in an alternative education program, and expulsion. AISD's due-process hearing for removing students from regular campuses begins with a campus-level conference to inform parents of the charges against the student and possible consequences. Parents and students are provided the opportunity to respond to the charges. The process allows administrators to consider and determine the appropriate disciplinary actions, which may include a district-level hearing at which alternative placement or expulsion may be recommended.

The campus-level conference is held in the principal's office and is attended by the principal, the student, the student's parents, and the administrator most familiar with the case. If the principal determines that the student should be removed from the campus and recommends placement in an alternative education program, it can be appealed if the placement will last into the next grading period.

AISD has four alternative schools for students who have been removed from regular education settings. These include the Alternative Learning Center (ALC) for middle school students, located at the Garza alternative

high school; the ALC for high school students; the Travis County Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP), and the Dill school for elementary students. The middle school level ALC's enrollment includes students in grades 6, 7, and 8 with behavioral problems leading to referral from their home schools. The ALC for high school students includes ninth-grade high school students placed at the center through administrative hearings. The Juvenile Justice Center's enrollment includes students from the Travis County juvenile probation system that have violated parole or committed crimes. **Exhibit 12-3** shows the 1998-99 disciplinary activity in AISD high schools by category, ethnicity and gender.

Exhibit 12-3
Disciplinary Activity in AISD High Schools
by Category, Ethnicity and Gender, 1998-99

	In-School Suspension	Suspension	Removal to ALC	Expulsion
Asian Female	21	7	2	0
Asian Male	61	11	1	0
Black Female	627	371	35	0
Black Male	950	739	159	5
Hispanic Female	811	349	42	0
Hispanic Male	1,579	959	220	5
Native American Female	3	1	0	0
Native American Male	14	2	0	0
White Female	537	150	30	0
White Male	1,026	576	181	12
Totals	**5,629**	**3,165**	**670**	**22**

Source: 1998-99 Disciplinary Report by AISD.

FINDING

AISD does not include violence prevention and intervention plans in its Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs) as required by the Education Code. The board for each school district also is required to publish an annual report to parents and the community that includes the number, rate, and type of violent or criminal incidents that occurred on each district campus.

The annual district report also must include information on school violence prevention and intervention policies and procedures that the district is using to protect students.

The district has created a *School Safety and Emergency Resource Manual* that provides a framework for each campus to develop its own safety and crisis management plan known as "campus crisis plans." Each school plan is designed to protect students, staff, and facilities from disasters including violence and criminal behavior on school property or natural/operational disasters.

Recommendation 152:

Include violence prevention and intervention plans and incident statistics in campus improvement plans, and publish the number, rate and type of incident statistics in the annual district report.

AISD's board should publish the number, rate, and type of violent or criminal incidents in their annual report to the parents and community as well as distribute and discuss crime incident statistics with parents, teachers, and school administrators. These incident reports should be distributed and discussed with school administrators and site-based committees. The process will enable district administrators to obtain input from parents, teachers, and school administrators to help implement additional prevention and intervention programs for all AISD students.

The district should incorporate into the CIPs, portions of the "campus crisis plans" that address violence prevention and intervention strategies.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant director of Special Programs and Intergovernmental Relations and the coordinator of the district's discipline database gather all crime incident statistics and report them to the superintendent to be placed in the annual district report.	September 2000
2.	The assistant director of Special Programs and Intergovernmental Relations and the coordinator of the district's discipline database inventory all campus improvement plans to determine compliance with the new legislative mandates that a violence prevention, intervention plan be included in all CIPs.	September 2000
3.	The assistant director of Special Programs and Intergovernmental Relations and the coordinator of the district's discipline database meet with site-based decision-making (SBDM) committees to share crime incident statistics for their	November 2000

	campus and to instruct them of the new requirements that need to be in each CIP and receive their input.	
4.	The assistant director of Special Programs and Intergovernmental Relations and the coordinator of the district's discipline database review input received from SBDM committees comprised of parents, teachers, and school administrators and identify potential prevention and intervention programs.	February 2001
5.	The site-based decision-making committees at each campus draft violence prevention and intervention plans to include portions of the "campus crisis plans" that address violence prevention and intervention strategies and attach these plans to their CIP.	August - September 2001
6.	The district begins reporting its incident statistics in its annual report.	October 2001 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

AISD's *Administrative Discipline Procedures Manual 1999-2000* provides guidelines for teachers and administrators when a student is removed from the regular classroom setting and placed in the In School Suspension (ISS) program or the Alternative Learning Center (ALC).

The ISS program is one where students with behavior problems are sent when they are suspended from the regular classroom to a separate temporary location within their respective school. Once they have served their time in ISS, they may return to their regular classroom.

Students with disciplinary problems suspended to an ALC receive their academic instruction from staff at that center. An ALC's use is outlined in the Student Code of Conduct handbook provided to each student at the beginning of each year. The student must sign an acknowledgement of its receipt and return it to the school. The code of conduct outlines the actions required to place a student in an ALC, as well as standards for behavior in an ALC, including a strict dress code, direct control over the students' actions all day, and physical searches before they are led into the classroom. The program emphasizes the goal of altering student behavior. Two teachers and one teachers' aide must be present in each ALC classroom, and student conduct is strictly enforced.

Some areas within AISD's disciplinary guidelines are not sufficiently detailed. For example, the guidelines state simply that teachers with a student in the In School Suspension (ISS) program are to provide the ISS monitor with updated classroom materials so that students can keep up with normal class assignments. The goal of this stipulation is to allow students returning to class to be as close to the class norm as possible. Neither teachers nor principals are ensuring that these materials are consistently sent to students in ISS.

ALC guidelines state that students "can" require their home classroom teacher to provide a curriculum to use at home to keep up with the normal class workload. ALC students, however, are not taught the same classroom curriculum used at their home campuses. ALC students are graded not only on their classwork but also on their demeanor, actions, and adherence to rules.

A student can return from the ALC to the normal classroom by completing the program in approximately five or six weeks. Students can leave the program under a probationary type of contract. If students violate the contract, they can be sent back to the ALC without further conferences between parents and administrators.

These provisions seem to assume that the student will not need to return to the regular classroom fully prepared to keep up with the rest of the students. While some students in the alternative programs may never return to the regular classroom, the goal of these programs must be to return as many students as possible to the regular classroom with their peers.

Recommendation 153:

Revise the *Administrative Discipline Procedures Manual 1999-2000* to reflect a goal and plan for returning students in alternative education programs to regular education curriculum whenever possible.

Area superintendents should direct all principals to adhere to the guidelines in the *Administrative Discipline Procedures Manual 1999-2000* to include that all homeroom teachers consistently send current classroom assignments to students placed in ISS. Following these guidelines will ensure that these students will be able to be up to date in their assignments once they return to the classroom. In addition, a committee of teachers, principals, ALC representatives and parents should meet to prepare a plan for keeping students connected to their regular curriculum.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The area superintendents establish a committee of teachers, principals, ALC representatives and parents to meet and prepare a plan for keeping students connected to their regular curriculum when they are placed in alternative education programs.	August 2000
2.	The area superintendents revise the *Administrative Discipline Procedures Manual 1999-2000* to include the plan to keep ISS and ALC students connected to the current curriculum in their regular classrooms.	October 2000
3.	The area superintendents present the revised manual to the superintendent for approval.	November 2000
4.	The superintendent approves the revised manual.	December 2000
5.	Area superintendents direct principals to adhere to guidelines found within the *Administrative Discipline Procedures Manual 1999-2000* to include homeroom teachers consistently sending current classroom assignments for students sent to ISS or the ALC when requested.	January 2001
6.	Principals require their teachers to follow guidelines in the *Administrative Discipline Procedures Manual 1999-2000.*	January 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

AISD does not provide adequate training for the district's security hall monitors. Hall monitors are district employees who report directly to principals when they observe a student violating the code of conduct. AISD assigns one hall monitor for middle schools and two for high schools except where additional monitors have been approved by the district due to large enrollment numbers or other circumstances. These monitors are the primary eyes and ears for monitoring the district's middle and high schools. The only training hall monitors receive is on the job and, indirectly, by advice and suggestions provided by the school principals. TSPR found that some principals have no strong concept of the role of hall monitors or of the security implications of their disciplinary rules due to a lack of consistent, districtwide training.

The hall monitors are equipped with radios and report to the principals or, with the principal's agreement, to the School Resource Officer (SRO).

Although by state law a hall monitor cannot detain a student, TSPR observed that, on occasion, they were on the verge of doing so. The lack of training for hall monitors and principals hinders the security at AISD and could expose the district to liability.

Recommendation 154:

Develop procedures and provide training for hall monitors and principals.

All hall monitors and principals should receive at least eight hours of training on their responsibilities, tasks, authority, new regulations, laws, policies, and procedures. A standard set of procedures should be developed for the hall monitors to ensure districtwide adherence to the same disciplinary standards and job performance measures.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	AISD's police trainer develops procedures and training for hall monitors that have districtwide adherence.	June 2000
2.	AISD's police trainer submits the new hall monitor's procedures to the superintendent for approval.	July 2000
3.	The superintendent approves the new procedures.	August 2000
4.	AISD's police trainer trains hall monitors.	August 2000
5.	AISD's police trainer provides training each year.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementing this recommendation would require eight hours of training per year for 47 hall monitors. This estimate assumes a pay rate of $9.79 per hour for hall monitors plus $4,314 in annual benefits or 27 percent. (8 hrs. x $9.79 per hour = $78.32 x 27 percent benefits) = $99.47 x 47 monitors, for a total of $4,675 for each year.

Training for the principals will be at no additional cost to the district. Training for the hall monitors will be provided by AISD's police trainer prior to the start of the new school year during the regular course of their duties and at no additional cost to the district.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05

| Develop procedures and provide training for hall monitors and principals. | ($4,675) | ($4,675) | ($4,675) | ($4,675) | ($4,675) |

Chapter 12

B. SECURITY

Law enforcement in AISD's jurisdiction is provided by two different city police forces, the Austin and Sunset Valley Police Departments. In addition, the Travis County Sheriff's Department provides law enforcement for schools located outside of these two cities' limits. Finally, AISD's own Police Department provides a law enforcement presence throughout the school district.

The AISD Police Department's mission statement is as follows:

Promote a safe and secure learning and working environment for all citizens participating in programs and activities sponsored by the Austin Independent School District.

The police chief reports directly to the chief financial officer, whose office supervises all police and electronic safety and security. These functions includes the installation and maintenance of fire alarms, burglar alarms, access control devices, and video surveillance for the district. Locks and all non-electric security and safety are supervised by the Maintenance Department. The department consists of 79 full time equivalents (FTEs).

Two other critical functions of safety and security on the school campuses are the in-school suspension monitors and hall security monitors, who are supervised by the school principals or their designee. AISD's crossing guards are hired, trained, and funded by the City of Austin's Department of Transportation.

Exhibit 12-4 illustrates the current organization structure of AISD's Police and Security Department.

Exhibit 12-4
AISD Police and Security Department
Current Organization Structure
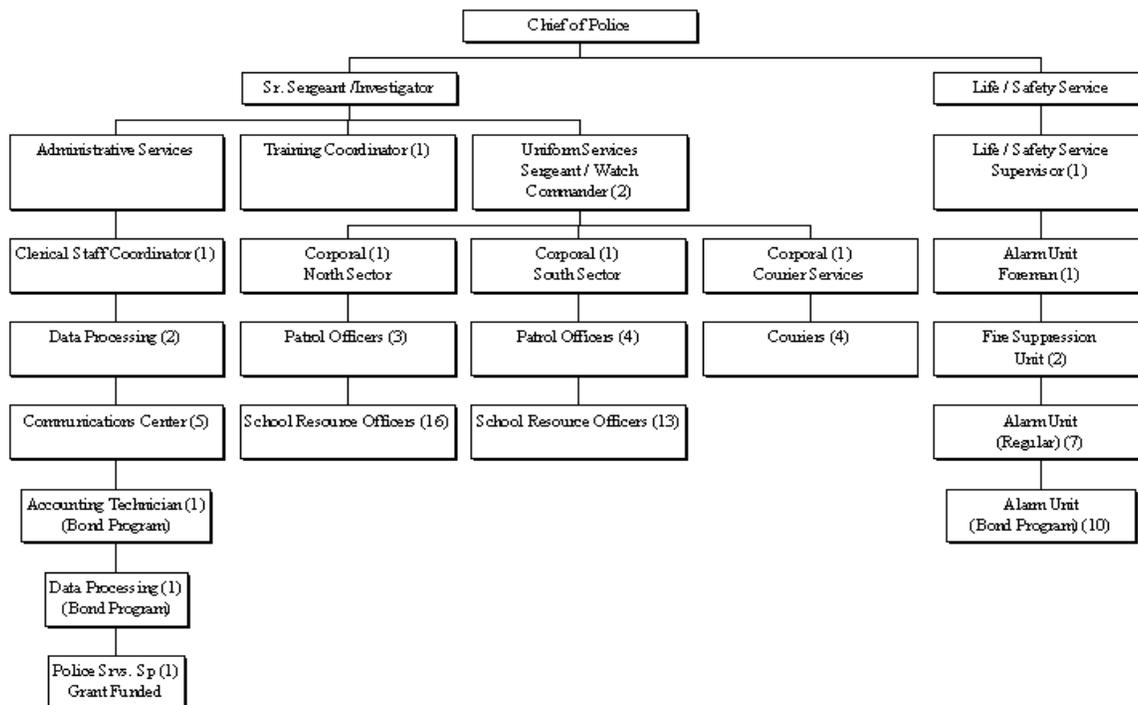
Source: AISD Police Department.

FINDING

The AISD Police and Security Department, Travis County Sheriff's office and Capital Area Crime Stoppers Inc. jointly sponsor a community program in the schools called Campus Crime Stoppers. Begun in Austin in 1995 and originally known as Weapons Watch, the program's mission is to reduce the number of firearms and other weapons brought onto area campuses.

Before this program was in place, AISD averaged from 20 to 25 firearm incidents a year on district campuses. However, from 1996-97 through 1998-99, AISD reported an average of only three or four firearms confiscated a year.

In 1997-98, AISD began to hold membership drives in hopes of enrolling more students into the program and issued cards to approximately 600 students during the first year. In 1999-2000, some 8,000 students belonged to the organization. Campus Crime Stoppers encourages students to use an

established hot-line to call in tips for various offenses. Rewards are given for tips that result in arrests. Students who join the program receive a membership card with the "TIPS" telephone number and discounts to area stores such as bowling alleys and music stores.

In 1999, the district received 194 crime tips that resulted in 60 cases being cleared. All rewards are paid from crime watch program funds provided by businesses and other donors. This program helps schools take control of criminal activity on their campuses without placing students in harm's way.

COMMENDATION

Campus Crime Stoppers effectively helps schools take control of criminal activity by encouraging students to report offenses.

FINDING

AISD is part of a project being conducted by the Travis County Constable's Office where school bus drivers are allowed to write "frustration tickets" on motorists who fail to stop for school buses that are loading or unloading students. The frustration tickets are turned over to AISD police who pass them on to a constable. The constable's deputies then determine which bus routes encounter the most violations and assign a deputy to follow buses on that route, seeking to help curtail violations.

AISD police officers work with the constables in enforcing this traffic law. AISD officers have been empowered by statute to enforce these city ordinances. They have done so since the board policy was adopted in 1993-94.

Presently the City of Austin has an ordinance that sets fines for offenses related to school buses at $1,000, but an Austin Police Department officer must write the ticket. If a violator commits a second violation, the incident is upgraded to a Class B felony that can result in jail time. Constable's deputies are not restricted to the city limits as Austin police officers are and can therefore cover the entire AISD school district.

Two unanticipated benefits of this enforcement program are that students in the buses are better behaved when they see the deputy following the bus, and the deputies can monitor the bus drivers to ensure they flash their lights with enough time for vehicles to stop. Deputies will report bus drivers who fail to warn motorists of the bus stopping in a timely manner to the AISD police. The Constables' Office has applied for federal and state grants to expand this enforcement service to the entire district.

COMMENDATION

The "frustration ticket" program is an innovative approach that assists the district in enforcing traffic laws that have been violated by motorists who do not stop for school buses loading and unloading students.

FINDING

The Absent Student Assistance Program (ASAP) is used in Austin by the Travis County constables to deter unexcused absences and truancy cases. The ASAP is a community-based collaborative effort involving AISD and the Del Valle and Pflugerville school districts and the Travis County constables. Its purpose is to improve student attendance by notifying parents when their children are absent, keep children in school and prevent their involvement with the juvenile justice system.

Schools refer students who are absent without an excuse to the county constables, who telephone parents upon the student's first absence. On subsequent absences, constables may visit the students' homes and investigate the reason for the absence. The home visit also allows the district and the constable to talk with the students' parents about the students' absences; determine if the factors causing the absences can be addressed, prevented or eliminated through the use of school or other community programs; and provide students and parents appropriate referrals to school or community programs to help deal with attendance problems.

Schools are requested to file compulsory attendance violation and failure-to-attend cases with a justice of the peace court after 10 unexcused absences. The next step involves a court appearance arranged with the justice of the peace in the student's district. Normally, the student and parent are provided with a contract that states that the parent and student are on a probationary period. During the probationary period, the student must attend school. If the justice of the peace believes it necessary, the parents or students can be given counseling in parenting, conflict management, and on such issues as drug abuse. Should the student's truancy persist, fines can be assessed and the justice of the peace may refer the case to another court. Each constable's deputy receives four hours of training on actions required under the Texas Education Code for dealing with family problems.

In 1995, ASAP began with a goal to "improve school attendance by providing the earliest possible response to student absenteeism." In 1998-99, the constables filed 1,700 reports with the justice of the peace court. The program began in the middle schools; after a successful

implementation, it was eventually moved into the elementary schools and finally expanded to the ninth grade.

The ASAP program increased school attendance rates in Travis County school districts. In turn, AISD and other districts benefit from an increase in state funding for increased "average daily attendance," or ADA. Through an interlocal agreement with Travis County, AISD offsets 50 percent of the costs of operating ASAP in its schools.

COMMENDATION

The Absent Student Assistance Program reduces truancy, and constables have been trained to recognize family problems with intervention by the proper authorities when necessary.

FINDING

AISD's security program is centered on its school resource officers (SROs). SROs are certified peace officers that assist students in dealing with conflicts, resolving problems, handling peer pressure and avoiding criminal activity. As law enforcement officers, they can take police action related to incidents on or around schools, but are not responsible for security. AISD employs 29 SROs who are stationed at one per high school or middle school throughout the district. In addition, they also provide classroom instruction on law enforcement to students.

The SRO program has provided benefits beyond what other school systems have tried to achieve with metal detectors and x-rays at each entrance, at a lower cost and in an environment much more conducive to education. The department originally employed only security guards with very basic training. Now, all SROs and patrol officers are certified peace officers. The police department has worked carefully with the schools in assigning SROs who work well with the staff of their respective schools.

Surveys conducted by AISD over the last few years have shown consistent growth and professionalism in the force, with a positive response from the community, students, and faculty. When victims of crime were asked by AISD how the AISD police handled their situation, a 1998-99 survey found that 74.7 percent were strongly satisfied and 22.4 percent considered themselves satisfied.

COMMENDATION

AISD's school resource officer program effectively reduces the cost of overall security operations and provides an important asset to the AISD community.

FINDING

While ASAP is an exemplary program, AISD administrators lack specific performance measures that could support the district's efforts to identify schools with truancy problems, increase attendance rates, and prevent at-risk students from dropping out. Specifically, the district and constables do not track and analyze data on dropout and attendance rates by grade level and correlate it with school ASAP participation rates. Additionally the district also does not track and analyze excused or "documented" absences, data that could in turn show referrals as a percentage of undocumented absences.

Recommendation 155:

Develop performance measures to track the effectiveness of the Absent Student Assistance Program in increasing school attendance and preventing at-risk students from dropping out.

It is important that AISD show how participation in the ASAP program affects the dropout and attendance rates. AISD should work with all stakeholders involved in the ASAP program to develop measures that analyze and track excused or documented absence data as well as correlating the effects the ASAP program has on the dropout rates.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant director of School to Community Programs works with the ASAP school coordinators, Travis County constables, the director of Accountability and site-based decision-making committees to develop performance measures for the ASAP program.	October 2000
2.	The assistant director of School to Community Programs seeks approval from the superintendent on the new performance measures that have been drafted.	January 2000
3.	The superintendent approves the performance measures.	February 2001
4.	Principals and ASAP coordinators begin using the performance measures to monitor progress and adjust the program to make it more effective.	August 2001 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

AISD does not have a system in place that readily identifies visitors or other non-visitors to a campus; consequently, those who may not belong on these campuses may go undetected by staff or students.

Violence in Texas schools and in schools across the nation is a growing concern for parents, students, teachers, and administrators. No Texas community is completely immune from the potential of violence. Increasingly, many school districts have decided that it is vitally important to restrict access to students by outsiders. These districts believe that non-students of any age should not be allowed to enter school grounds unnoticed. To increase school safety, some Texas districts have adopted photo-identification badge systems for both students and employees. These badges must be worn at all times while on campus. Other Texas districts also require visitors to sign in and wear badges, which allow campus administrators and security personnel to readily identify outsiders who may be mingling with students. These districts instruct teachers and staff to stop *anyone* on the campus without a badge and direct the visitor to the main office.

In 1998 Killeen ISD (KISD) adopted a badge system for its students and employees, which has heightened security awareness throughout the district. All KISD employees, visitors, ninth grade and high school students are required to wear identification badges, and plans were under way to require all middle school students to wear badges. The KISD employee badge has a photo, bar-code, and magnetic strip, and the district plans to use the badges for documenting attendance at in-service training. For substitute teachers and visitors, KISD uses numbered, temporary badges without pictures. Waco ISD also adopted a badge system in January 2000.

Recommendation 156:

Establish a districtwide badge system for students, employees and visitors to promote greater security.

While several months may be needed to fully implement such a system after all necessary equipment and materials have been purchased, the added security should outweigh the expense and effort. Once the badges are initially distributed to students, AISD's Human Resources Department should issue new or replacement badges to employees. School principals should be responsible for issuing and maintaining student badges on campuses.

Each school's visitor badges should be sequentially numbered and created in such a manner that they cannot be easily duplicated. Each visitor to the school should be required to provide identification and then should sign a log noting the badge number. Badges should be maintained in an area not easily accessible to the general public. Administrative buildings also should establish visitor procedures and badges.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the Chief of Police to implement a badge system.	September 2000
2.	The Chief of Police determines which badge system is best for the district.	November 2000
3.	The district purchases the selected system.	January 2001
4.	The deputy superintendents begin implementing the badge system with central office employees.	February 2001
5.	The deputy superintendents and police chief develop a badge system for visitors and substitute teachers and a school visitor procedure.	March 2001
6.	The principals and school staff implement the badge system for visitors and substitute teachers.	April 2001
7.	The principals and school staff begin implementing the badge system among school-based employees.	June 2001
8.	The principals and school staff begin implementing the badge system among students.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

The major expense for a badge system is the initial outlay for equipment. The district would need an identification system including a camera, printer, and computer. Killeen ISD purchased its system for $21,698, with an annual $2,000 maintenance contract starting with maintenance in 2001-02. Expenses for the badges and badge holders are estimated at $2,000 for the first year and $1,000 each year thereafter, ($2,000 maintenance contract + $1,000 for badges and holders =$3,000 for years 2002-2005.)

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Establish a districtwide badge system for students, employees and visitors to	($21,698)	$0	$0	$0	$0

promote greater security.					
Cost of annual maintenance contract, cards, and ribbons	($2,000)	($3,000)	($3,000)	($3,000)	($3,000)
Net Costs	**($23,698)**	**($3,000)**	**($3,000)**	**($3,000)**	**($3,000)**

FINDING

From 1997-98 to 1998-99, AISD experienced a sharp increase in the number of students referred for disciplinary action, or arrested for offenses, related to the possession, sale or use of tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs **(Exhibit 12-5)**. During this period, drug-related incidents resulted in disciplinary actions increasing by 115 percent and student arrests climbing by 154 percent.

Exhibit 12-5
Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Community Act
State of Texas Annual Evaluation Report
Program Specific Indicators

	Austin ISD Incidents	**1996-97**	**1997-98**	**1998-99**
1	Students referred for disciplinary action related to the possession, sale, or use of TAOD*	0	585	1,256
2	Student arrests for offenses related to the possession, sale or use of TAOD*	0	190	483
3	Incidents of school-related gang violence	0	2	0
4	Students placed in alternative education due to possession, sale, or use of TAOD*	12	480	530
5	Other students placed in Alternative Education (excluding line 4 above)	0	1,136	1,103
6	Out-of-school suspensions related to possession, sale, or use of TAOD*	0	585	726
7	Other out-of-school suspensions (excluding line 6 above)	569	9,275	9,290
8	Expulsions related to possession, sale, or use of TAOD* (does not include students placed in an alternative to expulsion program)	0	8	12
9	Other expulsions (does not include students placed in alternative to expulsion program) (excluding line 8 above)	0	21	38

10	Assaults against students	0	216	187
11	Assaults against teacher/staff	0	93	90
12	Acts of vandalism/criminal mischief against school property	2	11	10
13	Acts of vandalism/criminal mischief against student property	0	11	1
14	Acts of vandalism/criminal mischief against teacher/staff property	0	8	1
15	Number of firearms confiscated	0	4	2
16	Number of other weapons confiscated	0	21	34
	Total Number of Incidents	**583**	**12,646**	**13,763**

*TAOD = Tobacco, Alcohol, and Other Drugs
Source: Texas Education Agency - Student Support Program.

Possession or use of drugs or weapons on a school campus are serious offenses. Detection and intervention are critical to protecting students, and these steps can take several forms. Some school districts have found that periodic, unannounced inspections of lockers can discourage students from bringing drugs or weapons to school. More than half of all districts responding to a survey conducted by the Texas Center for Education Research for the Texas Senate Interim Committee on Education use drug-sniffing dogs on campus. According to AISD police department staff, the district does not have or use drug detection dogs. The only use of dogs at AISD was when a bomb detection dog was borrowed to assist the district during a bomb threat. The district does not have a defined method or policy regarding the detection of weapons or drugs on campuses.

In October 1997, the El Paso Independent School District's (EPISD) board approved the implementation of a canine (K-9) program as a deterrent to alcohol, drugs, and weapons possession and use. EPISD contracted with a private vendor to provide K-9 units to search campuses during the 1997-98 school year. The K-9 units, consisting of a dog and a dog handler, performed random searches at nine high schools, 11 middle schools, and four elementary schools. Schools were randomly selected and visits were unscheduled, although the vendor was required to ask principals for permission before searching school grounds.

During school searches, dogs were allowed to sniff only lockers and vehicles (not students). The dogs sniffed for various drugs and other contraband. During the 1997-98 school year, K-9 units conducted 294

unscheduled visits at EPISD elementary and middle schools and 173 unscheduled EPISD high school visits. Alcohol, drugs, or weapons were found in 99 instances. Drugs, alcohol, or weapons were found 2 percent of the time in middle schools and 54 percent of the time in high schools. In all, the EPISD K-9 program found contraband in 21 percent of its unscheduled visits. A Canine Program evaluation conducted in September 1998 reported that discipline referrals related to alcohol, drugs, or weapons fell by 5 percent as a result of the program.

Spring ISD bought such a dog and saved more than $15,000 annually over the price of a contract service.

Recommendation 157:

Develop a policy for the detection of weapons or drugs on campuses, and acquire or contract for a drug and weapons detection dog to promote greater security.

The board should approve a policy for the detection of weapons or drugs on campuses. A trained dog is an appropriate and effective resource for a school district to assist in identifying the presence of illicit drugs or weapons on school campuses.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Chief of Police drafts policy for the detection of weapons or drugs on school campuses.	June 2000
2.	The Chief of Police submits the policy to the superintendent for approval.	July 2000
3.	The superintendent approves the policy.	August 2000
4.	The police chief identifies the most cost-effective action to acquire the use of a drug-detection dog and makes a recommendation to the superintendent.	August 2000
5.	The superintendent seeks board approval to implement a drug-detection dog and program on AISD campuses.	October 2000
6.	The board approves the recommendation.	November 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

Costs will depend on whether AISD purchases or contracts for a drug-detection dog. First-year costs of purchasing a dog, including kennel,

maintenance, and training for handlers, are estimated at $12,000 based upon a purchase price for a dog of $5,000; kennel costs of $2,500; food and maintenance costs of $1,500; and $3,000 to train the handler. Ongoing maintenance costs are approximately $4,000 a year. Should the district decide to contract for these services, contracted services are estimated at $20,000 a year, based upon the contract fees experienced in other districts. To be conservative, TSPR assumes the maximum costs of $20,000 each year, but costs may be less.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Develop a policy for the detection of weapons or drugs on campuses, and acquire or contract for a drug and weapons detection dog to promote greater security.	($20,000)	($20,000)	($20,000)	($20,000)	($20,000)

FINDING

AISD's police department command structure has been weakened since it eliminated the position of the police lieutenant. As a result, there are fewer officers on duty. Prior to 1994, the chain of command included a police chief, captain, and lieutenant. Today, the department is run by the chief and three sergeants. One sergeant is considered to be the "lead" sergeant and serves as a de facto deputy chief, handling both administrative and training functions as well as oversight of the other two sergeants.

In 1998, the police department developed a new staffing plan that reduced police manpower during the most critical parts of the day. The plan was intended to reduce supervisor overtime and provide supervisory coverage over the weekend. To accomplish this goal, the department ceased assigning two sergeants to the south and north areas of the district and combined them into a split, watch-commander approach with two corporals assigned as north and south supervisors with added responsibility for report writing and oversight of the patrol officers and SROs in their respective areas. One sergeant serves as watch commander each day of the week including Saturdays and Sundays, which means this sergeant is in charge for that day and must remain available to handle day-to-day needs of officers and schools. The only overlap in schedules for these two sergeants occurs on Wednesdays, when the command structure is not clear to many field employees. In addition, the paperwork assigned to corporals takes them off the street for long periods of time.

While the new staffing plan achieved its intended goal of lowering supervisory overtime and providing weekend coverage, it also reduced the number of officers on duty in the field during the school week and relegated critical people to clerical and administrative functions. Interviews with officers regarding the command structure revealed some uncertainty as to whom officers should report to and which sergeant was their superior within their respective chains of command.

Recommendation 158:

Reevaluate the command structure of AISD's police department.

AISD's Chief of Police should reevaluate the 1998 staffing plan to ensure that adequate staff are available during the most critical parts of the day and that all staff members understand the reporting structure for all officers. In addition, the Chief of Police should relieve staff paperwork burden to maximize officers' ability to carry out their primary duties of safety and security for the district.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Chief of Police reevaluates the 1998 staffing plan.	June 2000
2.	The Chief of Police makes changes on the staffing plan as well as, the structure of the staff, to include the reporting line of all officers.	August 2000
3.	The Chief of Police ensures that officers attend to their primary duties by reducing the amount of assigned paperwork.	September 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 12

C. SAFETY

Principals, directors, and other immediate supervisors are responsible for developing proper safety attitudes and properly educating all personnel under their direction about safety rules and regulations to be observed in their schools and departments. A safe school district effectively manages its resources and aggressively plans for future situations. Responsive planning for safety requires accurate and up-to-date information on the current and future status of conditions in the district's schools and facilities. Safety inspections must be routine and thorough, procedures must be in place to facilitate the quick reporting of emerging threats, and responses to potentially dangerous situations must be prompt.

FINDING

As a result of the 1993 Texas School Performance Review of AISD, the district created a *School Safety and Emergency Resource Manual* which serves as a template for crisis management plans and addresses the critical incidents that can occur in any of the AISD campuses. The district was assisted by the Texas Association of School Boards and the Texas Education Agency in creating their comprehensive manual.

The manual provides a framework for each campus to develop its own safety and crisis management plan. Each campus plan is designed to protect students and staff as well as facilities from natural or operational disasters or from violent or criminal behavior occurring on school property.

The district also developed an emergency procedures flip chart, a wallet card and rolodex cards as living documents to be updated each year. In addition, guidelines, checklists, crisis management techniques, sample forms and phone numbers are all components of the plan. Principals and assistant principals make the manual and flip chart available in the office for easy access by all teachers at each campus.

AISD has evaluated all campus crisis plans and is making added revisions to enhance safety measures at all schools. In addition, AISD's campus police department have assisted schools in conducting assessments of the security and safety needs of their campuses in order to establish effective crisis management plans.

COMMENDATION

AISD's school safety and Emergency Resource Manual is an effective method for informing and training campus leaders about how to respond to crisis situations on their campuses.

FINDING

AISD's locksmiths and the electronic physical security branch are under two separate supervisory structures. Electronic security, which includes fire and burglar alarms, access control, and video surveillance systems, is handled by the Life/Safety Services section of the AISD Police Department. The locksmiths and associated carpentry workers are under the division of Construction Management through the Maintenance Services Center. Inadequate communication has led to some confusion between the Police Department's Alarm Section and the Construction Management. In one situation, equipment was placed in a building that was subsequently retrofitted as a part of the 1996 bond program. The system had to be re-installed after the bond renovations were complete. Clear and timely communication between electronic security and construction to assure the proper timing of work and to ensure that the two are working in concert with each other could have avoided this costly error.

Recommendation 159:

Establish formal lines of communication between the Life/Safety Services section and the Maintenance Services branch.

By establishing regular monthly or quarterly meetings of the two groups, and sharing information about upcoming projects, these two departments can avoid costly mistakes.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Construction Management and Maintenance Services and the Chief of Police establish a schedule of regular meetings to share information about upcoming projects.	June 2000
2.	The director of Construction Management and Maintenance Services and the Chief of Police identify areas of mutual concern in safety and maintenance services and prepare recommendations to the superintendent to improve district operations.	September 2000 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

AISD hired employees, through its 1996 bond program, to install and upgrade new alarm systems in schools. In addition, the district has a regular Alarm section whose staff primarily maintain fire alarm systems in existing schools. As the bond program alarm staff has fallen behind schedule, the regular Alarm Section staff has been called upon to assist with bond program-related work. This situation has caused the regular Alarm Section staff to fall seriously behind in their required duties.

Rather than hire employees, many school districts release bids to an outside contractor for new and upgraded alarm projects. The use of outside contractors often entails a maintenance warranty that can alleviate the workload on existing Alarm Section staff by allowing them to focus their efforts on existing alarm systems.

Recommendation 160:

Develop and release a standard request for proposal for future construction projects that requires the vendor to provide basic alarm and security systems maintenance and service calls.

The Alarm Section should be allowed to bid on these projects, and district purchasing and finance personnel should assist the Alarm section to prepare the proposal to ensure that personnel prepares a bid for services. All costs are identified so that bids are comparable.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Construction management, with assistance from the purchasing director, develops a request for proposal for new upgrade work to provide basic alarm and security systems maintenance and service calls.	August 2000
2.	The director of Construction Management evaluates the proposals and submits the recommendation to the board for approval.	October 2000
3.	The board approves a proposer and awards a contract.	November 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

It is often more cost-effective to contract for such services. However, the fiscal impact cannot be determined until the technical scope of the project is developed and bids are received and evaluated.

FINDING

AISD's Maintenance Department, which runs the locksmith function, lacks any functional authority over the issuance of keys. Principals issue keys for their respective campuses. After a principal or a designee makes a request for keys, that request becomes the last record of what happens to those keys.

In studying losses of school equipment and vandalism in schools, TSPR found that most thefts either occur during the school day or are committed by individuals with key or electronic card access. A study of the district's key control system found that there are virtually no controls on keys used anywhere in the district. This situation was noted in TSPR's 1993 audit as well, but no corrective measures were taken.

The accepted security standard is that when 5 percent of all keys are lost or unaccounted for, an organization should require that all locks be changed or re-cored. This standard would be difficult for AISD to maintain due to its lack of a standard for locking systems. This lack of standardization has led to increased costs for parts and maintenance as well.

Recommendation 161:

Establish controls for the lock and key systems.

Since AISD has no key control system in place, it is impossible to identify who has been issued a key. A key control system would require a receipt from each end user. The receipt would be signed and controlled by the Maintenance Department's lock supervisor. The receipts would be entered into a key control system, covering every key made, copied, or otherwise provided throughout the district. This is a simple and very cost-effective system, and several brand-name products on the market often are quoted in standard construction documents.

At the end of the 1999-2000 school year, all AISD keys should be collected and numbered and receipts made for each of them. The numbered keys then could be returned to the schools with a receipt attached. Each school employee should be required to sign a receipt before receiving a key. A set of backup keys could be issued to each school, again requiring a receipt. A police report should be required for each lost key or request for a replacement key. A standard of no more than 5

percent loss of exterior keys should be maintained to ensure accountability. If a school exceeds the 5 percent standard, it should pay for a replacement exterior key system. All lost exterior keys should immediately require a new alarm code change for the campus. After three years, the 5 percent rule should be applied to interior keys as well.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of the Maintenance Department develops a key control policy and presents it to the board for approval.	June 2000
2.	The board adopts a policy to require adherence to a key control program.	August 2000
3.	The director of the Maintenance Department purchases a key control software package and requires a key control program with key logs and signed receipts.	June 2000
4.	The director of the Maintenance Department collects all keys not being used during summer recess, numbers them, and prepares receipts.	June 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

Other than a minor cost of $500 for the key control package, this recommendation could be accomplished with existing resources.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Establish controls for the lock and key systems.	($500)	$0	$0	$0	$0

FINDING

AISD's alarm and access control systems are not integrated, which results in excess work for dispatchers and the Alarm Section staff. AISD's physical security system design is based on a set of four functions: the locking system, the alarm system, the access control system, and a video system. For a security system to work effectively, all of these functions must work in concert and with available reporting and response capabilities. One critical factor is the integration of the alarm and access control systems. If these systems are integrated, the functional requirements of the dispatchers would be reduced (reporting capabilities) from three separate systems to two (i.e., alarm/access control and fire).

Recommendation 162:

Develop a plan to integrate the alarm and access-control systems.

AISD should develop a plan for the integration of the alarm and access control system by using only the access control system, which can handle both missions. This would reduce maintenance and service costs for both systems as well as reducing the workload on dispatchers.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Maintenance develops a plan to integrate the alarm and access control systems.	June 2000
2.	The director of Maintenance seeks approval of the plan from the superintendent.	July 2000
3.	The superintendent approves the plan.	July 2000
4.	The director of Maintenance standardizes this plan for use in bid packages.	August 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

AISD has not adopted Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), the most cost-effective physical security program available. In widespread use since 1990, CPTED lends itself to community planning, especially for schools. The benefits of CPTED include the creation of "ownership" of specific areas such as school grounds and the development of pedestrian and vehicle traffic patterns, which also enhance the ownership of specific areas. Fences, pavement treatments, art, signs, good maintenance and landscaping are some physical ways to express ownership. While existing buildings cannot be moved, their security still can be enhanced through the use of CPTED principles.

Borders can be used to separate school grounds from problem areas such as shopping malls and to block quick escape routes both for insiders coming on to the school's property and students leaving it. Traditionally, fencing has been used merely to enclose an area, but it can also be used to channel people into traffic patterns that are more easily controlled by a minimum number of people.

Other borders might be created by the strategic placement of portable school buildings. These buildings should be placed in a manner that enhances the students' sense of ownership, reduces line-of-sight

limitations, and maintains a suitable distance from the perimeter of the school grounds. Properly located entrances, exits, fencing, landscaping and lighting can direct both foot and automobile traffic in ways that discourage crime.

The Florida Department of Education (DOE) has developed a set of standards that incorporate CPTED principles in all construction projects. The Florida DOE found that until they formally incorporated the standards as part of their construction documents, the standards were not used properly.

Recommendation 163:

Incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles into all new construction and renovation projects.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Construction Management trains at least two individuals, one from the police department and one from the Construction Division, in CPTED design.	July 2000
2.	The director of Construction Management develops a standard CPTED statement for inclusion in all construction requests for bids.	September 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing training resources. The police-training corporal already attends meetings at which CPTED training is available. The National Crime Prevention Council publishes *Designing Safer Communities: A Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Handbook* and has Internet links to other information sources.

Appendix A
FOCUS GROUP COMMENTS

As part of the public input phase of the Austin Independent School District (AISD) Management and Performance Review, Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) held 12 focus groups. Focus Groups were held with the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce, the Austin Area Research Organization (AARO), the league of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and Austin Latino Alliance (ALA), the Austin Council of Parent-Teacher Associations (ACPTA), the Community Education Consortium, representatives of the Hispanic and African American communities, non-English (Spanish) speaking parents, AISD principals, assistant principals, teachers and bilingual teachers. Community members and AISD staff who participated in the focus groups gave oral and written comments about the 12 areas under review. These comments illustrate community and AISD school staff perceptions of the Austin Independent School District and do not reflect the findings or opinions of the Comptroller or review team. The following is a summary of comments received by focus group session.

District Organization and Management

- Dr. Forgione is a great leader and is already turning things around. He is open, inclusive and uses data to drive decisions. He is talking to everyone in the community, not just the school board and AISD administration. He is putting key people in the right places.
- The superintendent should be commended on his efforts to address TAAS score use and personnel issues. He is looking at AISD operations as a business; is putting key people and systems in place, shows keen understanding of systems. He listens to a wide range of staff, groups and people. He is grounding practice in education research.
- AISD has top heavy upper management.
- There are too many levels between upper management and the classroom teachers.
- The board is micromanaging the district. It has mired the distinction between policy and implementation. The board has trespassed the policy-making boundary.
- Board membership has become almost a full time job-which is a sign of a problem.
- Where are new trustees going to come from in light of heavy time commitment that board membership requires?
- AISD needs a Chief Financial Officer (CFO) in charge of all financial matters.
- AISD need a Chief Information Officer (CIO).

- AISD should articulate a clear vision for the district; it needs to be simply and clearly stated, and well communicated.
- The superintendent search process was poor and lengthy and did not engender community confidence.
- Give the top people the tools (computers, technology).
- Communicate to parents that computers do help the teachers.
- The vertical structure (teaming) has been very helpful. AISD needs good leadership (i.e., area superintendents) with authority and support from other organizational areas.
- AISD has an unusual, board structure: it is not cohesive. Single member office holders versus at-large members. Terms are too long. AISD needs to reassess the board's structure.
- Board - superintendent trust/relationship. At issue is the extent to which the board oversees the superintendent. AISD has experienced a high superintendent turnover. The board needs training in superintendent selection skills. The board has shown a lack of strategic planning.
- Decisions the board makes are not based on research and planning. The board needs to take districtwide interests into consideration when making decisions.
- The decision making process by board is questionable. Inequity of board decisions.
- While the board involved the community in several strategic planning processes, it did not implement the recommendations. Citizen input was asked for but not used.
- The district is not customer friendly; it is difficult to get information or responses to requests by parents/community. State representatives can't get information either.
- AISD's Purchasing Department problems are mainly distribution problems. AISD should tell parents what school supplies students need.
- Poor communications with parents.
- AISD has old equipment that endangers safety of children. AISD does not have enough capital budget.
- Central Office is disconnected: each department is an entity to itself.
- The district is too big; need some decentralization.
- Administrators get more duties without getting more staff.
- The district needs to involve the community in establishing and meeting priorities.
- Assist principals in getting community involvement.
- Keep good principals as principals and give them opportunities. Reward principals for being good principals.
- Everyone in the school must be recognized as important.
- Principals need to remember that they are public representatives.
- District should be proactive, improve the listening process.

- At present AISD has credibility and trust problems.
- AISD should post a current, updated organizational chart on the web.
- Advanced Placement (AP) opportunities do not exist equitably.
- Lack of integrity: cheating on TAAS data.
- AISD has a bad reputation, it is not trustworthy, lacks accountability. It should have higher standards.
- The board has shown a serious lack of initiative in finding a superintendent.
- There is lack of leadership: it is unclear who is running the district.
- The board lacks vision.
- AISD's administration: the people in the top positions change but the middle level remains the same.
- Lack of communication between the board and administration.
- The board has not been receptive to decentralization of the district.
- Not every campus has access to the same resources.
- The concept of site-based management has been used to justify disparities in education service delivery, resource allocation within campuses and discipline.
- Site-based management has not been implemented properly but in a few campuses.
- Third party auditor is needed to ensure that laws and policies are implemented properly.
- AISD does not have an efficient accounting system.
- AISD needs a total management organization audit; the audit should be on going.
- AISD's policy book is outdated and difficult to use. It needs to be posted on Internet and in public libraries. It must be up to date. It should be available in Spanish. It needs clear and consistent interpretation; currently, policies are interpreted at will, inconsistently. This is done by AISD middle management that does not change with the change of superintendent.
- Teacher and administrative recruitment is narrow in scope. AISD always looks at the same sources and out of state.
- The Personnel Department makes it difficult for new hires to come to Austin.
- There is no alignment across district departments; what are they expected to do, what should be the focus? AISD needs to set expectations, hold people accountable and follow through.
- Principals are promoted to central office positions for which they have no training or qualifications.
- Some principals lack qualifications. This damages the schools.
- There have been positive changes in attitude because of the new superintendent. Last year morale on campuses was low. There has been a change. Change will take time.

- We expect much of our schools and teachers. Teachers are not involved enough.
- Site-based management works well on some campuses. Ortega has good site-based management.
- There is a dilemma between site-based management and district centralization.
- The district should look at how corporations organize their resources and apply it to AISD's organization flow-chart. Can AISD come up with a more efficient organization of its resources?
- Area superintendent's roles and responsibilities: do they spend time on campuses?
- The public is not well informed about the role of the superintendent versus the role of the board.
- Public comments at board meetings should take place at the start of the meeting.
- The board should have some control over public "abuse" or rudeness during meetings.
- The broadcasting of board meetings on television is in English only. Non-English speaking members of the community cannot follow the meetings.
- What's the balance between site based management and districtwide policy?
- Inequity in board decisions.
- The board continuously prolongs decision-making.
- Board discussions are petty and argumentative. This prolongs the meetings.
- The board should be educated about superintendent selection.
- The board has failed to do the research, set a policy and apply it districtwide!
- Impossible to get information from AISD for both employees and community members.
- The new superintendent is doing a great job. Dr. Forgione is the right person at this time. He needs all the help and support he can receive.
- The following are issues: board structure, role of the board and length of terms of board members.
- The new superintendent is working hard on making changes; we should give him a chance to implement his plans.
- The board's president and vice president are elected at large. Other members are elected from single member districts. This causes lack of leadership-the board does not necessarily "buy- into" the president.
- Need clarification of the roles of the board and superintendent.
- The board has shown a lack of consistency and equity with decisions. The board responds to "squeakiest" wheels. There is a need for a broader, more strategic focus.

- AISD central administration lacks a customer service attitude. It has not been forthcoming with information to the community. It has demonstrated an essential lack of response, courtesy and information even toward a State Representative who was trying to help.
- There is a lack of balance between site-based management and overall governance.
- The board needs more education on issues (e.g., hiring a superintendent). It needs to be restructured. It needs to be more concerned with equity in decisions. It needs to do more strategic planning. It needs to do more/better research on national best practices. For example, should sixth grade be part of elementary or middle school?
- AISD should examine site-based management versus central administration (e.g., surplus assets).
- Purchasing is a nightmare.
- Lack of communication is a central problem both externally and internally.
- The board needs to weigh the merits and benefits of single-member office holders versus at-large members.
- AISD has a high superintendent turnover.
- No clear-cut method of knowing whom to contact at central office and for what.
- AISD's leave policy has resulted in too many teachers being absent.
- The district should pay back teachers accumulated leave.
- Teachers have no incentive to save-up leave.
- Substitute teachers are hard to get.
- If teachers take on an extra load, they not getting paid for it.
- There is no coordination across professional development programs.
- AISD's central office has to respond to "urgent" requests every day.
- New principals are pulled off campus too much.
- Micromanaging by the school board.
- Culture is too accusatory without checking facts.
- District personnel should spend a week at a school so they can better understand schools needs.
- Area superintendents do not visit campuses regularly, unless there are crises.
- Area superintendents should spend more time on campus.
- The board and administration do not listen to community or staff.
- The Budget Advisory Council did not have the opportunity to provide input that was ultimately used.
- One-third of Budget Advisory Council members were selected by the principal.

- Communication/coordination among departments should be improved. AISD should prepare a document that supports coordination of programs.
- The area superintendents' structure is too bureaucratic; it poses roadblocks.
- They operate in a reactive way; they spend too much time on individual citizen concerns. This clogs up operation.
- High turnover.
- Board members are brought into conflicts.
- There is lack of uniform support for local decisions which affects policy implementation and enforcement.
- The district is getting too big to operate under the current organizational structure.
- Schools are not able to hire own assistant principals.
- There are too many administrative meetings off campus.
- Principals need to be the final stop in most cases involving parent complaints. AISD needs a process for problem handling and resolution.
- AISD may need an ombudsman for dealing with systemic problems and for principals to call for mediation.
- The district needs to have standards of communication.
- Poor customer service at Central Office. Central Office staff are rude.
- AISD has not been able to set standards.
- Board policies should be revised and made available electronically.
- AISD needs a decision-making framework.
- AISD needs a districtwide improvement plan.
- AISD has too much administrative change. There is no continuity.
- The communication from top to bottom at AISD has created a distrustful climate.
- AISD has a top-heavy administration (especially in math). It is hard to get things done; this adds more work and effort on the part of teachers.
- There is an unclear chain-of-command and accountability structure. Too many political games.
- Principals are taken off campus too much.
- Unequal treatment of schools (e.g., computer resources) especially for schools serving lower socio-economic students.
- It is unclear who is making the resource allocation decisions because of poor communications.
- Problem with putting teachers on a reserve list and then needing them back later.
- Does the district have a reserve list of administrators?
- Growth management is a problem.

Appendix A

Educational Service Delivery And Performance Measures

- AISD's Balanced Reading in Literacy (elementary school) is an excellent program.
- Investigations and Connected Math are strong, outstanding programs.
- AISD has a strong Reading Buddies program.
- Parents Advocacy for Literacy using Americorps is an excellent program (Pre-Kindergarten for high-risk children). Parent Advocates for Literacy at Allison and Sanchez should be commended.
- District is trying to keep fine arts programs.
- Campus Improvement Planning (CIP) process is a great tool for planning and evaluation.
- AISD has exemplary School-To-Career (STC) programs. AISD's School-To-Career initiatives are second only to Boston, the nation's best. AISD's School-To-Career programs are considered second in the country.
- AISD shows a good awareness of the value of its educational programs.
- The focus is more on paperwork/administration than on classroom skills and knowledge. AISD does not allocate sufficient resources to the latter.
- Parent involvement is often misdirected. There is no true parent involvement.
- Look at Andrews and Ortega elementary schools vis-à-vis community involvement and see how it affects academic performance.
- AISD needs to determine the progress its students are making on TAAS. How do we compare to best practice schools?
- Assigning the least experienced teachers to the low-performing schools is a problem. How can it be addressed? What is best practice in the area?
- AISD should look into the movement of teachers across schools. Are better teachers going to better (easier) schools?
- AISD compensates teachers across the board regardless of merit (performance) and the ease or difficulty of their job.
- The district needs a system to associate student performance to a specific teacher. Hold teachers responsible for student performance.
- Teachers have no control over the work environment; this leads to loss of qualified teachers.

- Evaluate curriculum connectivity across grades. Does it impart needed skills? The business community is questioning whether children are getting the skills they need.
- AISD needs to evaluate the use of technology in the classroom, including lack of technology implementation and support in the classroom.
- Is the education service delivery appropriate-what is taking away from it?
- There are not enough qualified bilingual teachers.
- Many substitute teachers are not qualified.
- The teacher shortage is most critical for lower grades.
- Bilingual classes have too many students (25 or more). Bilingual classes need a full-time aide (not a babysitter). Currently, several bilingual teachers share an aide.
- Not enough individual attention is given to bilingual students.
- Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten classes have long-term substitute teachers.
- No stipend is available to entice bilingual teachers.
- English as second language (ESL) teachers are often used to teach bilingual students although ESL teachers have less education and are not certified for bilingual education.
- AISD gives permits to people who can speak Spanish but have no education background or experience.
- Administrators lack training in and understanding of the bilingual program.
- Bilingual teachers have to "justify" what they need. No such requirement exists for teachers of other subject areas. There is a lack of recognition of importance of bilingualism.
- The district does not always purchase needed bilingual materials. They are not considered important and are given low priority.
- Bilingual materials are not adequate; they are not equal in quality to the English textbooks. The district chooses non-conforming textbooks. Only a small part of these textbooks is in Spanish.
- The emphasis on bilingual program has decreased.
- The bilingual teachers hired by AISD lack training in methodology and philosophy. Many bilingual teachers have not studied in a bilingual program.
- There are no mentors for new bilingual teachers and no support. Mentoring and support are especially critical in the Account for Learning schools.
- Bilingual teachers used as mentors are assigned 3-4 new teachers to mentor; which is an impossible task.
- Schools use bilingual teachers to translate for parents.
- Bilingual Gifted and Talented (G/T) students are not identified and are not channeled into G/T programs.

- AISD lacks bilingual Spanish education teachers. This limits services to students. Students sometimes have to go to other schools for services. The district only has 3 bilingual speech therapists. Many bilingual students (students with limited English proficiency) are misplaced and put in Spanish education: these students need bilingual education not Spanish education.
- Middle school students who are honor students in Spanish, are not placed on the honors list because they are not fluent in English.
- AISD does not have benchmarks for testing students to make sure the student is in the most appropriate program.
- Bilingual teachers are not given time to review and prepare paperwork (like Spanish education teachers are given).
- Bilingual teachers have in their classroom: bilingual students, monolingual students, and Spanish education students. This makes it difficult for teachers to attend to students' different needs.
- The perception of administrators is that the bilingual program is for slower learners, and that it offers lower quality education.
- AISD needs more dual language programs.
- Some dual language programs are very successful and benefit both bilingual and monolingual students (e.g. the program at Sun Valley Elementary).
- Curriculum specialists in Account for Learning schools are not bilingual and can't meet students' needs.
- AISD's Textbook Committee should allow input from all teachers. Currently, AISD does not publicize to all teachers the need for input. The Committee is the one who makes the decisions.
- The TAAS Spanish Translation practice test is poor and culturally misleading.
- Bilingual teachers do not get any money to attend bilingual conferences.
- AISD's Gifted and Talented (G/T) programs need a curriculum. The program varies by school and teacher. G/T children are not being challenged.
- AISD needs to decrease the equity gap between LBJ and the Science Academy it houses. In reality these are two different schools although they are housed on the same campus.
- The district doesn't want to use TEA funds (85%) to serve career pathway high school students, because they need to supply 15% of the funds.
- AISD needs to raise the level of expectations from students.
- There is a lack of uniform programs across the district that can meet the needs of each child. There is a lack of district commitment.
- Teachers should give challenging, more in-depth homework.
- Low performing schools in Austin are not performing as well as comparable schools in other districts (based Just for Kids data).

- Special education curriculum and instruction are of concern.
- The district does not make use of resources such as the Dana Center or other models.
- The district is desperate for good teachers. A high percent of the teachers are non-certified.
- The district should take more advantage of resources like TEA's best practices, models.
- AISD should look at TAAS passage rates and determine why kids fail the TAAS. Is TAAS the best tool?
- Ten percent of the students aren't being served properly. These students drop out or go on welfare.
- There is a need for better teacher training in classroom management.
- Community Education has programs that benefit the AISD. These include ESL, tutoring, child-care, and adult education.
- People need to recognize schools as a hub in the community.
- There is a need for more information on the benefits of year-round schools.
- AISD should lengthen the school day to reduce unsupervised time (latchkey), especially for middle school kids.
- There is an inequity in distribution of after-school funds.
- AISD should consider the benefits of starting school early in August.
- AISD should ensure education service delivery for kids with problems/suspension (Alternative Learning Centers).
- AISD can identify needs through community involvement.
- More funds are needed for community education.
- AISD's Community Education program got a national award.
- Teachers' performance will increase if they will be better paid.
- There is a need for a progressive career ladder for teachers (not just for administration).
- Teachers are overworked; they have too much to do. They do more than just teach their academic subject.
- Teacher evaluation should be based on performance, not just on length of service as it is now.
- AISD should have Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for children who are not successful.
- The community has to accept responsibility for the education process. Community education is an important link.
- The delivery of educational services is not equitable across the district. It is based on ethnicity.
- There is a shortage of qualified/certified bilingual teachers.
- There is a disparity in the offering of the Career Pathways program, especially in technology education.
- Spanish education: significant funds are allocated to Spanish education. Teachers are trained to teach reading. The program has

a large number of dropouts. Students assigned to Spanish education instead of bilingual education.

- A high percent of teachers in East Austin are uncertified in the area they teach. These teachers get emergency waivers (no time limit for becoming certified), they are not monitored, and they move from school to school.
- Teachers' lack cultural competencies.
- There is a lack of accountability on the part of the superintendent and principals. At what point are they held accountable?
- Equity issue in curriculum: The Spanish curriculum is not comparable to the English counterpoint. There is no accountability for the quality of translation or curriculum.
- AISD uses math textbooks that are not approved by TEA.
- The HOST program is used in one school and is effective. But, is not replicated in other schools.
- Several schools require parents to show documentation such as their Social Security number or green card before they can enroll their children. Schools are misinterpreting the law; they feel pressured by the district to require such documentation.
- AISD puts technology allotment ($30/student) in the General Fund and don't distribute it equitably. This leads to inequity in technology resources in schools.
- Should teachers get management training like administrators?
- The district has too many initiatives. This overwhelms the teachers; causes teacher burnout and high turnover.
- There is a lack of initiative on part of campuses in providing Advanced Placement (AP) courses. AP opportunities are not communicated to parents and students.
- AISD needs to perform a curriculum audit using outside auditors.
- KLRU works with curriculum coordinators to provide content to use in the classroom. KLRU provides online content for staff development. Five days a week in the early morning hours KLRU has programs which teachers can download. KLRU tries to find the best materials to use; to help teachers to align all materials to the national standards.
- Bilingual education is very important. The district has an outstanding program. The summer program for parents is excellent. KLRU helps. The program focuses on parents with low or no literacy skills.
- Students with learning disabilities are expected to perform like "regular" students without getting sufficient support.
- Schools' reporting on progress of children with disabilities is unsatisfactory.
- District should give more information to parents of children with disabilities on how to assist their child.

- AISD needs to inform principals and teachers about Spanish education law and the ramifications and implementation of Spanish education programs and children's placement.
- Schools spend all their time on teaching for TAAS.
- It is difficult to get children who experience problems tested for special services.
- There is a need for more information about the dropout problem: where does it start, what are the causes?
- Parents need information on who comes into the middle school and where do students go from there.
- Parents need more information on the process used to identify Gifted and Talented (G/T) students and the program.
- Not enough resources are allocated to Gifted and Talented (G/T) programs or to special programs. The district may be out of compliance with the law.
- District needs to define a G/T curriculum. There should be a G/T curriculum for different subjects for each grade. The G/T curriculum or lack thereof should not depend on the school or the teacher. It should be available in all schools.
- G/T students are not being challenged in the right way.
- Make the equity of services a reality - AISD are tops in bilingual education and special education but very weak in G/T education.
- Teachers need to be more respected and compensated better.
- District has not done a good job in identifying at-risk kids early enough. It has not done enough to address this problem.
- More homework isn't necessarily better. What is needed is more substantive learning.
- AISD should integrate Spanish in all elementary schools.
- AISD's high school alternative education programs such as the Garza High School program, are outstanding.
- AISD's dropout rate is of concern.
- Middle school curriculum is dismal.
- Special education instruction is not always good.
- Special education students "get by with more."
- Utilize resources.
- AISD should treat students equitably.
- Curriculum is not equitable across the district.
- The educational experience at AISD is totally dependent on the quality of the teacher.
- AISD needs uniform standards/expectations. There should be a uniform process to address Gifted and Talented (G/T) students who need an extra challenge and those who fall behind.
- Assess performance via data (Just for the Kids) and look at schools with comparable low socio-economic populations. Use performance data (such as Just For the Kids data) to drive student performance.

- AISD has virtually no workable special education program.
- AISD should improve the Gifted and Talented (G/T) programs and the special education programs across the board; provide better services on an equitable basis.
- Students are not being challenged in general, but G/T students get "punished" with extra homework.
- We need to raise expectations and raise levels of achievement.
- Boundary changes will have enormous impact (e.g. Travis High School will have all the low-performing schools feeding into it).
- The district refuses to embrace programs like Americorps.
- Certification is a big problem - if we could certify more people through non-traditional means, we could attract more people to teaching.
- The drop out rate is too high. Is TAAS the best assessment tool? However, students should be able to demonstrate skills before they graduate.
- Student projections are off, causing campuses to make constant change. Campuses have to collect the data to counter the projections Central Office makes. Kids are suffering.
- AISD's transfer policy makes it hard to move kids between schools with different class schedule structures (e.g., blocks). Principals are not supported when they revoke a transfer.
- The board makes decisions that affect the school calendar after the calendar is already set.
- Program implementations are not followed through. The district offers an overabundance of training.
- Kids are being tested too much (TAAS, ITBS).
- Special education 504 folders are not being transferred in a timely way.
- Curriculum alignment across schools is not done effectively.
- There is a need for more vocational classes at earlier grade levels.
- AISD should find a way to better serve 18 year old students that don't have any credits.
- AISD has daycare for children of teachers.
- AISD makes a good effort to provide day care for students' children, so the students won't drop out of school.
- Garza High School as an alternative high school captures students who would otherwise dropout.
- There is a need for more values education.
- There are not enough full-time English as a second language (ESL) teachers. Because of lack of funding, the district is not serving student needs.
- AISD's Central Office does not have the technology to provide student data in a timely way.
- AISD does not serve special populations such as Gifted and Talented and ESL.

- Special education has excessive funding. The pressure on inclusion is a disservice to kids. There is not enough support (no aides) in mainstream rooms for teachers whose class consists of one-third special education students. Mainstreaming is a campus-level decision. AISD does not have central training on how to do mainstreaming.
- AISD's staff development is not well organized. Principals are held to certain guidelines, but without support, except for math. Eisenhower Grants are often the only funds that campuses can use for training.
- The district has too many major initiatives and training programs. The teachers are overextended; teachers can't be in training all summer.
- Teachers do not always get supplemental pay for participating in staff development during the summer or non-school hours.
- The Mentors Program is a good program but it has not been able to attract good mentors.
- There are not enough substitutes to fill in for teachers in training. It is hard to get substitutes for special education classrooms. The district may need to have a pool of specially trained substitutes.
- The free and reduced lunch program does not have a sliding scale for funding; schools with just under 70% students on free and reduced lunch miss out on funding.
- Full-day Pre-Kindergarten programs are using much of Title I funds, although only certain Title I schools must have full Pre-Kindergarten programs.
- Because of staff development, teachers and student are not actually together many days. Staff development days are not timed well. Schools have to send teachers to training during the school day.
- Teachers lose valuable instruction time because they have to track absences.
- AISD has a difficult time getting substitute teachers. They are not available when teachers are out. This is unfair to the students.
- There is no incentive for teachers to show up at work. They cannot save up leave to be reimbursed later.
- Teachers are being treated respectfully.
- There is no administration support to enforce classroom discipline.
- The school was forced to adopt a math curriculum that they didn't want because it required a significant amount of training.
- Practice tests are burdensome.
- AISD is not spending enough time researching what works. There is a lack of respect for professionalism that starts with the administration.
- There are broad discrepancies between East Austin and West Austin schools regarding the level of teacher experience. Teachers in East Austin schools have less experience.

- In some schools there is an attitude of not expecting kids to excel and go to college.
- The district goes through textbook adoption too often.
- There is no bilingual speech therapist at Metz Elementary, even though it has a large bilingual education enrollment. There does not seem to be any special education services.
- Too many kids seem to be transferred to other campuses.
- There are no special education services that we know about in Galindo and Allen either.
- There aren't any Gifted and Talented programs for Spanish-speaking students.
- AISD doesn't give children of non-English speaking parents information about scholarships and universities. The parents don't know how to get that information or how to get their kids enrolled in college. The school needs to help these kids.
- The 6th grade curriculum is very weak. The district is not supporting this grade level because it is in the elementary schools.
- Non-English speaking parents reported that their kids don't like the way teachers treat them. They feel that there is nothing they can do or anybody they can talk to.
- Burnet Elementary is over 50% Hispanic. Yet, they seem to be getting rid of the Hispanic teachers. The class ratio at the elementary level is outrageous (36 to 1). Non-English speaking parents complained that these actions give the impression that the school doesn't "want our children to be educated." They treat the students as if they were dumb because they do not know how to speak English. They let the good teachers go. The parents hesitate to complain because they fear the school will cause harm to their children.
- Teachers look tired.
- Hold principals accountable, but let them have more discretion in how to allocate funds.
- Non-English speaking parents want to know how the district is spending their tax dollars.
- Schools do not have enough materials to teach. There are not enough books in Spanish.
- The parent-training specialists in some schools do not support the Spanish-speaking parents. The parent training specialists, according to non-English speaking parents, do not understand their culture.
- AISD did not provide any information to non-English speaking parents, about the dual-language program in which their children are enrolled.
- Teachers do not know enough about the language to teach in Spanish.

- Campus Advisory Council meetings are in English. This excludes non-English speaking parents from participation.
- Community education staff are not treated in some schools as equal to day staff.
- Magnet programs are located in East Side schools, but teachers treat non-magnet students differently. Teachers in the Science Academy will not teach students who are not in the Academy.
- The admission standards into the magnet program bar most minority students from getting accepted. The magnet programs have a very low percent of minorities.
- The policy of admission to magnet programs needs to be applied equitably across all students.
- Magnet programs have the more experienced teachers; teachers with higher academic degrees.
- AISD uses the ISBT test rather than TAAS for admission to middle school magnet programs.
- East Side schools have a larger percent of new teachers. There is high turnover among new teachers; once they gain experience they move to other schools. These schools are left with poor teachers or inexperienced teachers.
- Teachers should be required to stay longer.
- The schools do not have enough textbooks.
- Teachers that are ineffective in the West Side get shipped to the East Side.
- Parents are not informed when their children have an uncertified teacher.
- One East Side school did not have a principal for five years; it had an interim principal.
- Some teachers give children very low grades, which contributes to the dropout rate.
- Some teachers on the East Side work in two jobs. They don't give homework (so they won't have to grade it) and they don't have time to prepare for school.
- Progress report comments are not constructive; the comments are just negative.
- Homework is used as a punishment in some East Side schools; kids don't have to turn in homework until the end of 6 weeks. They do not get timely feedback from the teachers.
- The tardy policy is too lax; kids can miss most of a class period and only considered tardy.
- Parents are able to influence the process too much.

Appendix A

Community Involvement

- AISD is a model vis-a-vis community involvement.
- Parents of middle and high school students find it difficult to "predict" where their child will go to school. This leads to lower parent involvement/interest.
- AISD has a credibility problem as a result of past events such as the bond issue and redistricting. Parents who can afford it send their kids to private schools or move out of district. The board is not acting to address the credibility issue.
- Austin Project is an excellent example of involving the lower (less active) layers of the community. Principals need to want community involvement. Putting clinic in schools is one strategy to increase community involvement.
- AISD needs a communication plan to inform the community. The effectiveness of the plan needs to be evaluated.
- The Comprehensive Plan (developed under Dr. Fox) was not implemented. This contributed to a credibility problem. Current superintendent needs to carry out this plan.
- The board hindered the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Board meetings are always in English.
- Menus and other materials are all in English.
- Campus Advisory Council (CAC) meetings are in English.
- AISD needs to open schools (open the computer labs, offer tutoring) at night to involve parents. But AISD should pay the teachers for these activities.
- AISD should show its commitment to involving the community.
- The District Advisory Council (DAC) does not have a Spanish representative.
- Parent training specialists in schools with a high minority student population need to be bilingual.
- There is no accountability for parent training specialists to determine whether they increased parental involvement.
- Most Channel 22 programs are in English.
- The superintendent has met with many community groups.
- AISD should use recommendations made by the community.
- Incoming principals need training in how to deal with community/business partners.
- Improve communications among all stakeholders.
- District should have a well-oiled communication machine. This has been discussed and communicated in previous strategic planning efforts.

- Each campus needs to have a community involvement staff person who matches and coordinates business partners and volunteers.
- Principals should be more sensitive and responsive to parents' information needs
- The community does not have a positive image of schools and the district. AISD needs to undertake a public relations campaign.
- AISD should work with realtors (as recommended in the district's strategic plan).
- AISD does not provide input to the community on what has been done.
- AISD develops many plans but does not implement them.
- No accountability and continuity.
- Is district size part of the problem?
- Slow responsiveness on part of Central Office vis-a-vis community request for information (e.g. building schools in Southwest Austin).
- Process of selection of superintendent (close meetings).
- Commitment of parent liaisons in reaching out and getting involved in getting parents more involved. Liaisons don't have enough support.
- Parent liaisons vary in their effectiveness because of other responsibilities they have.
- AISD should have year round commitment to work with parents. Need to use the summer.
- Reinvigorate the Campus Advisory Council concept in schools, specifically for community education.
- The East Austin - West Austin divide. Schools in East Austin need more district support.
- The community is involved (i.e. PTA participation). Need to recognize that parents work, so gauging community involvement on the basis of the numbers of parents involved is not representative.
- Board does not treat minority community members with respect.
- Board does not schedule meetings with the community until the last minute.
- Board does not communicate about meetings far enough in advance or tends to schedule the meeting during inconvenient time.
- Task force organized by the district does not invite the stakeholders (people affected the most) to be on the task force (for example, dropout task force).
- There is a serious community problem between magnet parents and non-magnet parents. Parents of magnet students want to be in control.
- The Campus Advisory Council is not effective in middle schools; these committees are effective in elementary schools.

- Communications gap between East Side and West Side parents is evident in the magnet schools.
- The district does not make communication with community members easy; it is very difficult to get information.
- There is a lack of information in Spanish.
- Schools depend on students to deliver information to parents.
- The board has no information in Spanish and no interpreters. The board looks at communications in Spanish as an add-on.
- The Austin Insider is available both in English and Spanish; on the Internet the Austin Insider is posted only in English.
- Lack of board and Administration sensitivity toward community.
- Parent liaison specialists are not available on all low-income schools. AISD needs to redefine their role to focus on parent involvement and not on social work.
- There is a lack of principal leadership in generating "true" community involvement. There is a meaningful need rather than token participation.
- Campus Advisory Councils meet in the afternoon when many parents and community members are not available.
- Need retreats for community involvement like retreats for administration and staff.
- There is lack of support for Latino parents to become involved in the PTA.
- The district needs to encourage alternatives to ACPTA - to encourage minority parents.
- AISD needs a clear policy on parent involvement.
- The PTA is not responsive to minority parents.
- The district needs to encourage paradigm change for the PTA.
- There is no monitoring of community involvement at the district level; no evaluation of effectiveness; it is done at an ad-hoc basis.
- Public TV and public libraries have partnered through a NSF grant to provide a series of workshops for parents. They work with schools that feed into those libraries. The schools help in getting parents to library.
- KLRU did a year of diversity training for teachers. The schools got substitutes. KLRU worked with 7 schools on diversity training. KLRU got a grant for this project. It helped the district start their diversity bookshelf in the library.
- When not in use during a school day, school facilities should be open for community use. It is starting to happen. Use the computers for community programs. Try to avoid a digital divide.
- Try to raise community awareness of school needs. Concern is the digital divide. KLRU is preparing a program on Travis High School and Fulmore Middle School efforts in getting students to be technology proficient.

- Community involvement is not high enough. Parents are not sufficiently involved. Schools are making efforts. Need to make parents more aware about the importance of their involvement. Most campuses have parent specialists.
- Partners in Education is an exemplary program: it offers good training to the community.
- Need to reach out to more people: businesses, parents, and grandparents.
- Partners in Education is a big help. It is not as active in East Austin schools.
- Need more volunteers in schools.
- There is an equity issue in community involvement.
- Need people in schools: volunteers and volunteer time.
- Need to coordinate the mentors' program to make it more effective (Mentor programs sponsored by Partners in Education and the school-based PAL program). The program has volunteers commit 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week, 9 months a year.
- Examples are: Harbinger ISD and Plano ISD programs.
- There is a need to get consistent presence of volunteers in all schools.
- Crockett High School: higher student achievement, recent lower dropout rate.
- Are Partners in Education programs asked to provide resources that the district should provide?
- The district has been supportive of the PTA Council.
- The PTA has been invited to many committees, including Campus Advisory Councils and the District Advisory Council.
- District-wide information was provided on the bond issue.
- The district should have a volunteer recruitment effort.
- AISD is doing a lot to get information to the committee (website, channel 22).
- There is no bilingual programming on channel 22.
- The *Austin Insider* should address more community involvement issues.
- *Austin-American Statesman* should have a regular Education section. It should keep abreast of events and programs in AISD. Especially for AISD's "empty nesters" population.
- Promote public education in the media.
- Disseminate information in the media about the great things AISD and the community have done. Also highlight higher education.
- The parent training specialist program that is very effective has been discontinued in some schools.
- Partners in Education is recognized as number 1 nationally.
- The new, current superintendent is doing a great job of getting with people and listening to them! This is in stark contrast to the previous superintendent.

- AISD needs a press relations department.
- AISD is weak in working with the real estate community.
- The new superintendent is doing a good job with press relations.
- AISD needs to improve communications.
- Respond to community input when it is given.
- The board is unapproachable.
- Principals could use training in engaging community partners.
- Dedicate resources to help principals and campuses.
- Poor perception of district and some specific schools.
- District should have a professional, proactive, well-oiled communications machine for internal (employees) and external (public) communications.
- Marshalling resources of business-community partners is critical.
- Communication is critical to building and maintaining support.
- Principals need more support for community engagement.
- Community image of AISD and schools needs to change.
- AISD needs to court, educate, and communicate with realtors and the Austin American Statesman.
- Stop planning and start acting! The <u>Strategic Plan</u> died and the <u>Comprehensive Plan</u> was never implemented.
- Don't need to limit community contributions to address equity.
- District is not communicating the real issue here.
- The district needs to promote the value of the teacher.
- The district does poor job of translating communications to parents.
- Principals are generally open to parent and community involvement.
- Partners in Education is a blessing. AISD has the best Partners in Education program in the nation; it shows that Austin is a strong and committed community.
- Parent specialists on campuses are a great addition.
- The AISD Education Foundation also shows the community's concern and commitment to education.
- AISD has an excellent Parent-Teacher Associations/Organizations.
- Campus report cards are a problem.
- The district does not support its schools equitably.
- Principals are the key to level of parent and community involvement; schools drive community involvement; schools need to make parents and community members feel welcome.
- Parent specialists work better at the elementary than high school levels.
- The budget is in English. Parents who not read English cannot fully participate this way.
- A lot of information is not translated. Some of the material that is translated is poorly translated. Non-English speaking parents

consider this an insult to their language. The district should hire full-time professional translators, and respect other languages.

- Non-English speaking parents need information about community services. There seem to be many services, but these parents don't know about them. The district needs to coordinate with community agencies to provided students and parents with information about all of the programs available in the community.
- Non-English speaking parents don't understand the role of the PTA. They don't know how to get involved in the school.
- School and PTA meetings are in English. The school sends papers home that are too late to arrive. The schools don't communicate adequately and in Spanish.
- Non-English speaking parents need more help adjusting to this culture. Their children come from a very different culture. The parents feel that their culture is more docile. They are adapting but need more help in this area.

Personnel Management

- AISD needs to determine clearly what is the charge of this organization? How does it compare to best practices?
- The board has not done a good job of superintendent recruitment and selection.
- Teacher recruitment is a problem: not enough teachers are being hired.
- Teacher turnover seems high. Why is it so high? Is this turnover rate normal? What actions should AISD take to reduce it?
- Teachers are hired late: AISD waits too long to sign teachers on.
- AISD should prepare the budget earlier, in April-May.
- AISD needs to improve the accuracy of its students' projections.
- AISD substitute policies need to be reviewed and modified.
- Are teachers receiving the professional development they need?
- Are good teachers being hired? This issue impacts teacher/student performance.
- The Personnel Department does not actively recruit bilingual teachers.
- AISD does not publicize the stipend or signing bonus it gives teachers.
- The Personnel Department doesn't recruit from nearby areas. It recruits from Spain, which has not been effective because the teachers quit after a few months.
- Why doesn't AISD recruit from the student teachers?
- The Personnel Department does a poor job of interviewing candidates for teaching positions. Personnel does not follow-up. It does not provide any information to UT or to St. Edwards about recruitment needs.

- Bilingual master teachers are not encouraged by AISD to apply for higher positions. This leaves bilingual teachers under-represented in higher, management positions.
- The Personnel Department does not have any staff members who are knowledgeable about bilingual education.
- The Personnel Department manipulates policies to its benefit.
- The district has to hire 15-20% new teachers annually.
- Bilingual teachers are often appraised by administrators who are not bilingual.
- Grievance procedures involving bilingual teachers are handled by staff who are not bilingual and who don't understand bilingual education.
- The Personnel Department has worked to change recruiting and staffing processes.
- The job fair was a great way to recruit teachers. But teachers were allowed to switch schools, which left some schools in a bind.
- The district lets teachers move to other schools or quit mid-year rather than hold them to their contract.
- Teachers are hired late.
- AISD lacks a comprehensive staffing plan.
- Some principals have been moved to Human Resources without appropriate training or qualifications.
- The Human Resources Department does not have technology. It still uses index cards.
- Teacher salaries in Austin need to be examined and compared to salaries other districts in the state pay.
- Teacher burnout needs to be considered. This is a statewide issue.
- AISD's dismissal (firing) process is burdensome and complex.
- Region 13 Education Service Center's teacher training program is producing excellent teachers.
- AISD's Personnel Department lacks diversity and sensitivity.
- AISD gives mixed messages to teachers with emergency permits.
- AISD's communication with its employees is very poor.
- Hiring procedures for reserve list teachers are not consistent: principals don't follow procedures.
- Qualified Latinos are not promoted.
- The hiring procedures for new schools set unrealistic deadlines.
- AISD has high teacher turnover; there is no policy to retain teachers. AISD needs to look at data on teachers that are leaving: identify campuses with high turnover; determine how many of those teachers are leaving the teaching profession.
- AISD does not have a consistent mentoring program. The mentoring program is not monitored or implemented.
- The procedures for hiring new teachers are complex; there is no follow-up.

- AISD does not make a special effort to recruit minority teachers and administrators.
- AISD does not have an employee advocate; the district sides always with the administrator and not with teacher.
- Substitute teachers are a problem. Every school should have a substitute position.
- The teacher-student ratio needs to be kept low in the early years.
- The district has begun to look at the Personnel Department and is changing its policies and practices.
- The district should be commended: the new superintendent has already entirely turned around the Personnel Department, he is headed in a very good direction.
- The new superintendent is doing a good job of evaluating staff and deciding if they are suitable for their jobs.
- The changes the district has made in the Personnel Department are very positive.
- The job fair was a good idea.
- AISD lacks a comprehensive Human Resources plan.
- AISD is in the process of reinventing the Personnel Department.
- The Personnel Department uses old outdated processes - it still uses index cards.
- The department is overly dependent on paper - it needs to use and integrate technology.
- AISD needs to hire trained Human Resources professionals and not use principals who've been "bumped upstairs" to run Human Resources.
- Teachers are hired late.
- Region 13 Education Service Center's teacher training is great.
- Turnover in AISD's Human Resources Department was a problem this year, but they are now taking steps to address this.
- The teachers' job fair was a great success.
- Teachers should not be allowed to break their contracts in the middle of the year.
- AISD lacks accurate projections for addressing Human Resource needs.
- No technology has been integrated into the Human Resources Department.
- Compensation is a big issue.
- The issue of getting rid of incompetent or burned-out teachers is a statewide problem.
- Region XIII Education Service Center's high school teacher training program is excellent.
- AISD is not able to remove poor-performing teachers. These teachers always win when they go through the grievance process.
- Helping teachers are not given the $3,000 raise. They are also excluded from the administrative pay scale.

- The pay increases are not uniform.
- Helping teachers are the last to get paid in the summer.
- Getting paid only once per month is hard.
- AISD does not have any guidelines regarding helping teachers. There is no clear career path. The same is true with assistant principals.
- AISD needs a proactive recruitment process.
- Administrators are moved around without their consent or consideration.
- AISD should more actively recruit minority teachers.
- If teacher takes leave, they cannot be replaced before 60 days.
- There is inequity in staffing ratios of helping teachers. The same is true with counselors.
- It is hard to get personnel to support high needs students.
- Some staff are "placed" in positions without interviews.
- AISD is inconsistent in its use of interim principals.
- AISD hires teachers late. It is inconsistent in using the reserve list.
- AISD needs to have more experienced teachers.
- The district has a salary equity issue.
- Dr. Forgione is listening.
- AISD does not use technology in recruiting teachers (no online teacher application system).
- AISD's recruitment and retainment policies do not support diversity. AISD should maintain a relationship with the University of Texas, see El Paso's recruitment program.
- The way AISD uses the reserve (surplus) list makes them lose good teachers.
- AISD is not staffing at 100%.
- AISD's projections are off-target. It takes AISD the first 6 weeks to prove that they don't have enough teachers, then they develop a plan, and then they finally hire needed teachers.
- The area superintendents are not empowered.
- Personnel files on teachers and teacher applicants are inaccurate. Principals who need to hire teachers are directed to filing cabinets to find applicants or teachers. AISD does not use technology in the application and hiring process.
- AIDS's hiring criteria are not applied consistently.
- Schools with a low socio-economic population have high turnover. These schools spend too much time recruiting. In one school 19 out of 55 teachers have to be hired.
- AISD's Personnel Department staff work hard but still there are many problems.
- AISD is constantly replacing principals. The district's administrator retention is low. This is caused by salary discrepancies. For example, department chairs earn more than assistant principals. This is discouraging to good administrators.

- The helping teacher position is misused. Helping teachers did not get a pay increase like teachers got. They are not being treated consistently: sometimes they are treated as administrators and sometimes as teachers.
- Assistant principals are assigned about half of the time without principals having a say. For example, one principal out of six had a say in the hiring of assistant principals.
- Central Office employees are being paid much more than their scale. They get many hidden stipends.
- There are large pay discrepancies between more tenured teachers and the new hires. The new hires have a higher pay scale.
- AISD does not deliver teacher contracts in a timely manner. The delivery of contracts depends also on the school.
- The teacher turnover rate is 30-40%. AISD did not use to have such high turnover.
- AISD has too many non-certified teachers. Two years ago, in one of the schools, 60% of the math department has non-certified teachers.
- The alternative certification programs often do not work.
- Teacher experience across the district is unequal.
- Management used to be more supportive.
- Some schools can retain their staff.
- Teachers are working harder in schools in low socio-economic areas. Their efforts are not recognized.
- Reprimands "show up" without proof or any discussions.
- It is difficult to get a job at AISD. It involves a lot of paperwork, a complex process, and multiple meetings.
- Qualifications of principals are not always satisfactory.
- Things seem to be getting worse in this district. The principal in one elementary school used to be very active and involved, but now the principal seems to have lost interest. Is there any way to re-shuffle principals every three years or so?
- The district has too many substitute teachers. It seems that the district chooses to hire permanent substitutes instead of real teachers so that they can pay less.
- AISD needs to hire bilingual staff. There are several teachers who are not certified that have been placed in bilingual education.
- The substitutes don't know how to teach the bilingual students.
- Many teachers are new. They don't know how to discipline the students. They are in a bad mood, or stressed.

Appendix A

Facilities Use and Management

- Are we getting maximum use of district facilities? In the past under-utilization was the problem.
- Schools should be user-friendly: open to the community and welcoming. This should be communicated and implemented throughout the district.
- Austin youth have a tremendous need for gym and field space in the community. This need must be taken into account during the planning of school construction.
- As school enrollment expands, there is not enough parking, especially for community members.
- There is a need for coordinating and planning with the City, and the Parks and Recreation Department for facilities that can be used by the community.
- Enlarge libraries in schools and open them to the community.
- AISD should have a computer system to reserve school facilities.
- Better lighting systems in schools are needed.
- AISD has a disparity in the quality of facilities.
- AISD should keep promises regarding facility improvements.
- If AISD is interested in involving the community, schools should plan for and have space for community education.
- The City Council and board need to work together in regard to facilities, facility use and joint construction of facilities. There is a need for greater collaboration and better planning.
- AISD should be represented on the City's Planning Commission.
- East Side schools are old buildings, with asbestos and poor plumbing. No new schools are being built. The old buildings are not up to standards. The schools include many portables. [Forging the Future - 1984 Report].
- The bond issue put resources into West Side schools. East Side kids were bused to West Side schools to justify West Side improvements. At that time, AISD abandoned the neighborhood school concept. Now with the boundary changes, East Side kids have to go back to their neighborhood schools, which are neglected, in poor condition, and unsafe.
- The East Side has only one middle school (a magnet school).
- Schools are being remodeled during the school year rather than in the summer. Remodeling of schools interferes with delivery of education services.
- Air-conditioning in one of the remodeled school is very loud and interferes with teaching. The remodeling was poorly done.

- An East Side school is subjected to noise from flight pattern to new airport.
- Poor planning of new schools; new construction is not up to standards or timelines.
- New schools being opened before they are completed and are unsafe.
- AISD lacks an accurate growth forecast. AISD does not have a plan to meet the growth.
- There is no long-range plan for East Side schools' growth.
- AISD needs to allocate more maintenance dollars to older buildings.
- More schools should be open to parents in the evenings to allow parents to use computers with their children.
- AISD needs year-round schools.
- Schools used to have groundskeeper, now they are gone and it shows.
- Playgrounds are old and unsafe. AISD does not have a long-range facilities plan.
- AISD needs to monitor outsourced grounds' upkeep and obtain data on the efficiency of the outsourced services. Campuses may need to go back to campus-based groundskeepers.
- Does AISD use best practices for facility building, use, and management?
- Every vertical team should have a facility manager. Facilities should not be the sole responsibility of principals.
- Inequity among schools in quality of facilities, supplies, technology. Schools give different priority to facility upkeep/maintenance.
- There is a lack of access ramps from buses.
- Parks where children play after school are not fenced in.
- AISD needs an overseer of site-based management practices.
- Upgrade the low-income schools without "taking away" from the richer income schools.
- Schools that do not have visitor-parking spaces in the front of the school appear not welcoming to parents and community members.
- AISD should utilize facilities after school for recreation and community activities.
- Many campuses look very uninviting. They need to landscape and replace old windows.
- AISD has poor quality construction. New schools were not well planned and work has not been completed on time. The new facilities are of poor quality.
- Maintenance of school is inconsistent and not reliable.
- The use of school facilities by outside groups puts more burden on personnel.

- In schools that are under construction or re-modeling, there is an unclear definition of responsibilities and authority regarding facilities. It is unrealistic for principals to be asked to help manage bond work but they need to be in the loop.
- Buildings are not underutilized.
- Maintenance is done on an emergency basis rather than as part of regular upkeep. There are no standards for regularly scheduled maintenance.
- Schools have poor air quality, even brand new facilities. There is no air return in halls.
- Schools rely on community members to "march" to get things done. Community members have more power than principals.
- Inequity exists across schools, but even in "rich" schools there are problems.
- Schools are still overcrowded despite construction. AISD should have standards of space across schools.
- AISD is not building schools that are big enough. It has to use too many portables.
- Schools have too few bathrooms.
- Deadlines for building completion have not been met.
- Shortage of space. Kids at Allen study in the hallways.
- Some schools do not have playgrounds.

Asset And Risk Management

- How aggressively is the district using unused real estate assets (i.e. abandoned school buildings) to generate money?
- Is there a financial evaluation done on asset and risk management for the superintendent?
- Need a joint venture between the city and the district to build parks around schools.
- Combine public and school libraries to get the community more involved.
- Is the district maximizing its resources?
- A high percentage of dollars per child is spent on textbooks. Not enough is left for other services or programs; this is especially acute in schools with high at-risk populations.
- The district spends a significant amount of funds on the replacement of lost textbooks. (Textbook loss is high). This takes away dollars from other programs.
- Carrying books back and forth results in textbook loss. Students should have a second set of textbooks at home.
- The new insurance plan has dropped many doctors off the plans.
- The current insurance plan is worse than the previous plan. It forces AISD employees have to find new doctors.
- Why can't the district invest in the retirement of its employees?

- The bond issue program has been poorly implemented. The cost overruns should not have happened. There has been lack of planning, lack of public information, and no accountability. Deadlines did not mean anything; libraries are not getting finished.

Appendix A

Financial Management

- Is someone responsible for financial issues?
- The formal part of the process appears to be fine.
- Need in-depth analysis to determine if the assets are used well.
- Does AISD have a monthly budget that reflects the annual budget showing deviations from plan?
- The public lacks confidence in the district's financial projections.
- AISD needs to evaluate the impact of Robin Hood provisions (over 51% of AISD students are on free and reduced lunch) on the future of the district.
- Evaluation of management systems in all areas is critical. Does AISD have a management system? What is best practice? What should be done?
- AISD does not give any data on check stubs about reimbursement for professional development for bilingual teachers.
- It is difficult to get any information from Central Office finance staff.
- The pay for professional development is very slow.
- Year-round schools get paid late.
- Sign-on bonus is not paid upon starting work. Half is paid in December and half in May. The teacher is responsible for calling Finance to make sure that the bonus is part of his/her paycheck.
- Who in AISD monitors the implementation of monetary policies (e.g. signing bonus for those re-hired in less than 3 years)?
- The district should be run like a business.
- Outsourcing needs to be considered in all areas but education service delivery.
- Outsourcing when it makes sense financially is more efficient and productive.
- Look at consultants' use and cost-effectiveness; selection criteria and whether the district uses what consultants recommend.
- AISD's budget is hard to understand. It is hard to figure out the implications.
- The budget process is confusing. AISD needs to use appropriate budgeting tools.
- The Finance Department has no leadership. It is difficult for principals to work with the department. Bills are not paid in a timely manner.
- There is a need for taxpayer oversight to avoid AISD cost overruns.
- Process for estimating bond issue was faulty.

- Build a functional accounting system. Currently the response time (for purchase orders) is too slow.
- The system and reports provided by AISD are outdated.
- Decentralize accounting (4-5 financial hubs/subsidiaries).
- Improve collaboration between Technology and Finance Departments.
- The district needs to demonstrate to the public that it spends money wisely.
- There is a lack of equitable distribution of resources east of I-35.
- AISD uses Federal funds and not local funds for East Side schools.
- AISD's internal finance department is outdated and lacks accountability.
- AISD's budgets are unclear.
- There is lack of leadership in financial area.
- AISD's Finance Department is slow in decision-making and in paying bills.
- Outsourcing needs to be considered if it is efficient.
- Is the use of consultants cost-effective?
- The budget needs to be more user friendly.
- Outsource any areas that make sense from a financial point of view.
- District finance process is very confusing and overly complicated. Very little communication around it.
- The district should be run like a business. Outsourcing should be considered where appropriate. MIS is an excellent example for outsourcing. Consultants are often too expensive and their products/ reports are often ignored.
- The budget is too complicated and confusing. The public doesn't understand it.
- Principals have great difficulty getting financial information.
- Vendors don't get paid promptly.
- AISD's budget comes out on September 1; this is too late for the start of the school year.
- AISD bookkeepers need much more training. They need real-time access to information.
- Inaccuracy in balances slows down payment to teachers for trips.
- Supplementary pay is late/ not timely. It does not reflect real salaries. Whether teachers get paid is a campus decision.
- No consistency in how forms are processed.
- Offensive/ inconsistent customer support.
- The consulting agreement is too cumbersome.

Purchasing

- AISD and the community should recognize that AISD may be a more challenging district than suburban districts.

- How state-of-the-art are the warehousing and inventory systems?
- AISD ran out of Spanish report cards. Teachers had to Xerox them. Purchasing maldistributed the cards, so it left some schools without any report cards.
- AISD is slow in meeting the need for bilingual materials. This leaves students without materials.
- East Austin principals have to prove and justify why they need additional equipment while in west Austin this is not required.
- There is no coordination or checking of orders and deliveries.
- The reordering of bilingual materials is very slow.
- Materials are not tagged. When they get lost or misplaced it is impossible to keep track.
- AISD purchases cheap products (toilet paper, paper towels, floor wax, and school supplies).
- AISD's purchasing policies are inflexible. For example, AISD cannot buy used furniture, or buy a product cheaper.
- The purchasing system is hard to negotiate.
- The textbooks that AISD purchases will require the district to buy supplementary materials in future years.
- AISD bilingual textbooks come with one set of work books, although the work books have to be used multiple times.
- There is no accountability for lost books. There is no enforcement of lost book policies. Schools have to absorb loss and some don't pay.
- AISD does not have a system for distributing and tracking textbooks. They have to do it manually. AISD should consider barcodes on the textbooks.
- Textbooks are not delivered in a timely manner.
- Books for special education are extremely hard to get.
- The district does not have enough textbooks.
- It takes weeks to get a purchase order (PO) through.
- AISD always awards contracts to the lowest bidders. AISD purchases cheap, poor quality products. Two-year old buildings are falling apart.
- There are no books for advanced placement (AP) courses.
- Certain programs do not have enough textbooks.
- Textbooks are poorly distributed across schools. In some cases, schools have too many textbooks to even use. Some schools have two sets of books for students.
- The textbook purchasing policy and procedures needs to be more flexible.
- Some schools can't get workbooks or support materials.
- There is a lack of coordination in picking up surplus books.
- Not enough capacity to deliver materials from warehouse to school.

- AISD should give its employees the purchasing training that librarians get.
- Teachers have to buy their own supplies to stock their classrooms.
- AISD always buys the cheapest product.
- Outside consultants and contractors have to wait months and years to get paid.
- Some of the products and supplies AISD purchases can be bought cheaper at the store.

Appendix A

Computers and Technology

- Lack of equity.
- The training of technology staff is poor.
- Every school needs staff to support and maintain technology.
- The district does not have a central contact for technology.
- The district does not have a technology plan.
- Quality of technology staff is poor.
- Teachers don't have technology skills.
- There is lack of integration of technology into curriculum.
- Teachers should get credit for taking technology training.
- The superintendent has taken the leadership in technology issues.
- District technology systems are inadequate.
- The software systems used are not compatible.
- Lack of use of computers in schools.
- Teachers don't know how to use computers.
- Students have limited access to technology.
- The software and hardware are outdated.
- Upgrading is not always feasible.
- The board needs to pursue more aggressively corporations to supply technology, and train teachers, students, and parents.
- All students should be computer literate as early as possible.
- Lack of continuity in availability of technology across school levels (elementary - middle - high).
- All students should be taught keyboarding.
- AISD's telephone system does not work. AISD needs to inform the public about changing telephone numbers.
- AISD should look at best practices in other districts.
- Use more TV/VCR in schools.
- AISD needs better programmers.
- AISD should have a central place to get data about the district and the schools. At present the system is decentralized; located in different departments.
- Data is not uniform.
- Schools don't have updated technology.
- Data should be accessible.
- District mainframe is down 50% of the time.
- It takes long to fix equipment; there is not enough technology support.
- District should teach students how to fix computers.
- Teachers are not technology proficient.
- Few teachers are technology certified.

- The district will not maintain the computers in elementary school computer labs because they are donated systems.
- Schools had to do student schedules by hand because the technology did not work.
- Wiring of schools has not been completed.
- The high technology companies are not contributing back to the community.
- East Side schools are technology-poor. Teachers are not certified, and get only limited time to get certification.
- The district has a technology facilitator on each campus.
- It is important to have computers in the classroom.
- The district offers technology training. Need more staff development to be done on campus rather than away from the campus.
- Technology should be fully integrated into instruction. Technology should be thought of as curriculum tools, not as separate stand-alone "stuff".
- The district lacks technology leadership. The Technology Department has so much to do to shape up. There is high staff turnover ("People come and go from department and there is no one to fulfill the duties"). The software programs and equipment are outdated!
- Serious equity issue in the availability of technology on campuses. Some campuses have technology, some do not. For example, students at Johnston High School should not be using typewriters to learn keyboarding.
- Training issue. Training teachers in the use of technology.
- Must have support personnel available to each campus to maintain Information Systems.
- There is a lack of a districtwide viable technology plan.
- There is a need to train teachers in the integration of technology into curriculum.
- AISD needs an overall information system that can provide the data needed to reevaluate software systems currently used. Currently used systems are not compatible.
- There is no central point of contact for technology-as a result, no one knows the status of projects.
- Poor campus level support: telephones don't work and don't get fixed in a timely manner.
- Not enough staff to support and repair technology equipment.
- AISD should have a technology support person on each campus.
- Poor technology is driving poor decisions.
- Wiring and other contract work is done at night without campus input.
- Lack of e-mail consistency.
- Give campuses choices but need to make standard decisions.

- There is disparity in what schools get computers.
- AISD's mainframe is old, and goes down a lot.
- Because of the district's technology problems, campuses have to print the progress report cards.
- Columbia system is not very useful; it is duplicative.
- Data integrity: the dropout rate is inaccurate.
- Campuses have to wait weeks for technology support.
- Nothing ever works (phones).
- The district is in process of equipping classrooms with telephones.
- The district is not connected.
- The work order request system is ineffective; it takes months to fulfill requests.
- Technology in classrooms is lagging.
- Television sets in the schools are too small and there are not enough sets.
- Not everyone has e-mail.
- Computers don't always work.
- Support is slow.
- The district does not support or maintain donated equipment.
- Not all campuses have on-campus technology support. Teachers have to do it but don't have time.
- Not all classrooms have computers.
- Local Area Networks (LANs) go unused because they are not always supported.
- Teachers don't have the technology knowledge they need.
- The district's technology plan sounded good, but it is not really followed through.

Transportation

- Should AISD be in this business? Are they outsourcing? Do they know what they are doing?
- Are the right financial procedures in place?
- Students who attend magnet schools get a card to ride the Capital Metro buses. All other students have to ride the school bus.
- The bond issue was supposed to include the purchase of 200 buses. Why then are Capital Metro buses being used?
- Capital Metro buses should pick up all students on their route.
- There are not sufficient school buses to pick up students from Southwest Austin.
- High school students from East Austin schools who are being tutored have no transportation to get home.
- Bilingual students in schools without bilingual teachers don't get transportation to a school with bilingual teachers. This forces students to leave the bilingual program.

- School buses are overcrowded: kids are seated 3 to a seat or on the floor.
- School buses need to be maintained better.
- High school students who are being tutored after school have no transportation to get home.
- Bus drives need more training in how to manage kids.
- Use video cameras/monitors on buses to help drivers monitor the kids.
- AISD needs to review its agreement with Cap Metro. The buses are too crowded.
- The school bus routing system is inflexible. It is hard to add a special education child to the bus route.
- AISD's policy regarding cost of using school buses for trips is inconsistent.
- AISD needs to bring back "late busing."
- AISD has a narrow window of time for the use of buses after hours.
- AISD school bus drivers are underpaid for the work they do.
- School buses need to have security cameras, and another adult monitor.
- AISD school bus schedule causes schools to start early.
- Students smoke on the bus.
- No discipline is enforced on the buses. Students hit other students.

Appendix A

Food Services

- Should AISD be in this business? Are they outsourcing? Outsourcing of food service should be considered.
- Do they know what they are doing?
- Are the right financial procedures in place?
- Do they have quality people in key positions?
- Kids are getting cold food.
- Overcrowding in the cafeteria, no room to sit.
- Not enough food is prepared.
- Students don't have enough time to eat lunch because of long lines, so they eat food from vending machines.
- Lack of variety of food.
- Portions are too small.
- The food served has questionable nutritional quality.
- Important to let all students have breakfast (even though some get there late) so that they will be more alert. Administration needs to be more flexible in this matter.
- Food service staff need to be more polite, have more respect for students, and be more nurturing.
- The food is unhealthy and does not taste good; alternatives chosen are not always the best.
- There is a lack of variety in food served to students.
- Quality of food served is declining.
- The district sets the menu. Schools have to ask for special permission if they want to change the menu.
- Some of the lunch periods are very late (after 1:00 p.m.).
- In some schools, lines are so long that students only have a few minutes to eat lunch. This makes kids bring their own lunch, which results in loss to the school.
- In some schools, food service provides better food to teachers than to students.
- Social embarrassment by students who have to apply for free/reduced lunch. Other districts solved this problem by issuing cards-smart cards-to students.
- Unhealthy diet of school food may lead to serious health problems.
- The closed campus policy for lunch is a good policy.
- There is no monitoring of closed campus policies (only seniors can go out). This policy varies across schools.
- Too many "extra" vendors are competing with the schools' food services.
- Monitors are not paid very well and can't find other work to do.
- School breakfast contains too much sugar.

- The menu is too rigid; it does not have enough *a la carte.*
- One of the schools went above and beyond in their food service arrangements. Food service staff know every kid's name and are very kind.
- Adults get same portions as students for a higher price.
- It is a constant process to determine who is on free/reduced lunch.
- Local campuses have no control in hiring food service staff.
- Students are embarrassed to go through free/reduced lunch line.
- Freezers and refrigerators in one school are located in gym.
- Food service managers are operating in the dark with out any profit/loss statements.
- The menu is too limited: the same food is served every Monday and Friday.
- Some of the cafeterias are too small.
- The food is not very nutritionally balanced.
- In some schools, lunch time is as early as 10:15 a.m.

Safety and Security

- Are the right procedures and programs in place?
- The campus security officers are excellent.
- Schools need appropriate lighting.
- Teachers need access to telephones.
- In the portables of one of the schools teachers cannot hear the public announcement (PA) system.
- Schools should be equipped with camera systems to monitor visitors.
- Schools should have more friendly signs. Instead of a sign saying "Report to Office," the sign should say "Welcome to our school, please report to the office."
- There is selective enforcement of evacuation procedures.
- District should own a bomb-sniffing dog. The district had to get one from San Antonio.
- Schools need to have secure entry systems. This was promised in the bond issue but has not been implemented on the East Side.
- There is heavy truck traffic near school buildings in East Austin. This raises safety concerns.
- Some schools in East Austin don't have crosswalks.
- There are no traffic signs or poor signs near some schools in East Austin.
- Areas near some schools in East Austin lack crossing lines, traffic lights or have non-working traffic lights.
- Traffic rules are not enforced around some schools in East Austin.
- There are no campus security officers at the schools in East Austin.
- Security cameras in the schools don't work.
- Schools have a DARE program.

- The schools have good security systems.
- AISD has good security and safety policies but they are not enforced.
- People can walk in and out of campuses without anyone stopping them.
- Every principal needs to follow the security and safety policy.
- Every person on campus should have a badge.
- AISD needs to have uniform safety and security standards across all schools.
- Area superintendent should go at the beginning of each year to each campus and check the campuses' safety and security procedures.
- AISD should include in the substitute teacher packets information on safety and security procedures for each campus.
- Some schools do not follow evacuation procedures.
- Schools should use the parents as monitors.
- This district has the same safety and security problems as the nation.
- AISD should be commended for its campus security officers.
- The bleacher/choir risers collapsed at Murchison.
- The risers at Travis High School were built in 1952.
- Police response time is very poor.
- The police don't know what security and safety equipment is available at each school.
- The police don't question who is calling in an alarm.
- The district police are under-staffed.
- The construction workers leave buildings open.
- Schools have good relationships with the security and police officers.
- School staff need training on how to look for bombs.
- There is no support for the dress code. AISD should have a dress code policy for both teachers and students.
- One of the schools does not have a public announcements (PA) system.
- Pease Elementary lacks crossing guards and parking.
- One of the schools has experienced excessive vandalism because there is only one patrol officer.
- Bowie has one officer who is overworked. It needs more officers.
- Consider having crossing guards at middle schools.
- It is unclear how campus property is insured.
- Classrooms lack security; teachers can't lock things up.
- Teachers don't always feel safe in school because of lack of discipline enforcement.
- Teachers are expected to deal with discipline in their classroom; they don't receive enough support.
- The police are not doing their job.

- AISD's discipline process doesn't change student behavior.
- The code of conduct is not enforced uniformly.

Appendix B
PUBLIC FORUM COMMENTS

As part of the Austin Independent School District (AISD) performance review, public forums were held in 10 AISD high schools. Public forums were held at Anderson, Austin, Bowie, Crockett, Johnston, Lanier, LBJ, McCallum, Reagan, and Travis High Schools. The public forums were held over two nights. Members of the public were invited to record any comments they have regarding the AISD education system. Community members and school staff who participated in the public forums gave their comments about the 12 areas under review mostly in writing. These comments illustrate community perceptions of AISD and do not reflect the findings or opinions of the Comptroller or review team. The following is a summary of comments received by focus area.

District Organization and Management

- The Campus Advisory Council (CAC) system is a farce: principals run the meetings and drive the agenda. Too much power given to one person.
- The superintendent has not been responsive to a certified letter mailed by parents in August and to an email on 10/22/99. He referred it to an area superintendent.
- The Board members are hard to reach and don't return telephone calls.
- The Board has made attempts to elicit parent and community input when decisions have already been made.
- All school personnel should be allowed to take classes on AISD time not just the administrative staff.
- AISD should look at programs in place at Round Rock Independent School District. They continually win awards for academic excellence. Perhaps AISD could implement similar programs.
- Central Office micro-manages schools especially in Area 4. Why then have site-based management when decisions are overturned by area superintendents?
- Area superintendents should be located in the area they serve and not housed downtown.
- If principals are hired they should be considered qualified to run the schools and not be overturned.
- Area superintendents are not needed.
- Develop and enforce a dress code. Inappropriate attire is being worn to school.
- AISD is too big and unmanageable. It should be divided into two districts: north of the river and south of the river.

- The dress code is not being enforced in some schools.
- The district is too top heavy. Why did AISD hire this superintendent? When you hire a statistician, why should we be surprised that his first concern is being able to gather better statistics? It seems that statistics not kids are his priority!
- Schools should look at their applicants more carefully before they hire them.
- Site-based management has adversely affected special education. Often special education administrators know student needs and how to provide services but do not provide the service because school principals are in charge of their domain and refuse to provide the services to meet the need. Often, principals don't know enough about special education; they need to participate in training that will assist them in serving the needs of students in special education.
- Why can't AISD track students throughout the district?
- Schools are very lax in tracking students; they need to do more in this matter.
- Board members have been very supportive.
- There has been a big change in the way Austin ISD is run. AISD really needs time to adjust.
- The Board has made a lot of progress this school year with the new administration.
- Thank goodness for a superintendent who is smart, insightful, and willing to tackle the real problems we've faced in AISD. At last, there is real hope that we can undo the damage from Central Office and appreciate the fantastic things happening in our classrooms!
- Incorrect grades printed on a report card caused major problems for students and their families. It took weeks to sort out this problem.
- Staff at lower levels are afraid to take positive action. They feel that their hands are tied.
- AISD employees do not want to take responsibility; they pass the buck to someone else.
- It is difficult to communicate with AISD employees. The employee called is never there and if he/she call back they usually just leave a message.
- AISD has an integrity problem: issues of dropouts, performance on TAAS.
- Parents should have open access to program budgets of various AISD departments.
- The Board sets high standards and policies but these are inconsistently enforced in AISD.
- The Board really relies on and values public input but bureaucrats in Central Office are more often than not protective of their jobs and not proactive about district problems.

- Teachers go to Board members with serious issues pertaining to specific campuses. There is no follow-up on part of the Board. Teachers fear retaliation.
- AISD should allow campuses to do what they see best for their students; i.e., Gifted and Talented (G/T) and math programs. Many campuses want to do more. Campuses see that some of the approved curriculum is not effective, but feel that their hands are tied because of the districts' mandates.
- In the past, the superintendent and Board did not seek the same goals for the district. The hope is that the new superintendent and Board will work together aiming for academic success for all students.
- Campuses provide opportunities for parents and staff participation in making campus decisions.
- I'm dissatisfied that the district deals with parent concerns by going back to campus management and fails to involve parents. When parents feel that the campus is not addressing concerns and ask for district assistance--parents are then left out of loop.
- State needs to improve training of Board members in district fiscal management. Audit deficiencies need to be understood and addressed in a timely and adequate manner. It is an important area of management, which has been deficient and is a primary responsibility of the Board. The Board also needs to know how to deal with inadequate information by district managers.
- The public needs to be provided with a detailed budget book for each campus, detailing programs and resources. In the past three years, district provided gross or aggregate numbers but not details by campus and program--such as number of students served, cost per pupil, numbers of students by grade, and number of teachers and special programs on campus.
- Central Office financial data is inadequate. It needs to be specific and list numbers of persons in office, who they serve specifically and breakout numbers per office and personnel.
- Reports of interest such as TAAS and dropout data should be readily available at each campus. Allow for public review and comment at the campus level. Improve accuracy by disseminating information in a timely and public manner.
- Attendance counting is a problem. The school carries no-shows on their rolls the entire year. Teachers are instructed not to enter until the student is actually seen in the classroom. Students are never counted absent. At some point, students are taken off the teacher's records and placed in a "study hall" that does not exist on the campus. Teachers' original attendance cards need to be audited and compared to the statistical percentage turned in. A principal may proclaim that his/her high school has a 91 percent attendance rate, when the real attendance rate is closer to 60 percent.

- The faculty is pressured by the principal in one of the schools to change the NGs, although the teacher's union representative told the principal in a school meeting that teachers were not to change or tally NGs. However, someone within the administration made a blanket change to the records.
- Dropout reporting is a problem. The Comptroller's concerns are legitimate. The reporting on dropouts is not accurate. When kids drop out of high school there is no interview to see if the kids try to stay in school and no attempt is made to find ways to assist the kids in staying in school. No contact is made during the school year with these students. Memos are sent to the kids at the end of the school year requesting them to come to school and get withdrawal slips stating that they will take the GED. The counselors don't talk to the students to try to convince them to stay in school.
- The data processor changes students' grades that a teacher submits. This was done primarily so that certain students could attend UIL events. Only when a teacher questioned the changed data did the processor change the information back to reflect the correct information submitted.
- The budgets need to be audited! Schools that are low performing get extra money. The Campus Advisory Council (CAC) is supposed to have a say in how the money is being spent. Questions about the budget are not being answered by the administration. There is no accountability.
- How are these manipulated budgets really affecting the students and how much is going to the actual instructional needs? Not much.
- The school has an incompetent principal;
- The credibility of the leadership is a serous question. The Board is not making decisions in the best interest of our neighborhoods. The attendance/drop-out rates, TAAS scores, and the troubles with the '96 bond package point out these weaknesses.
- A tremendous amount of money was spent on the management of the '96 bond package. Not sure what the value of having the management firm was in light to the cost overruns. As the package had overruns, the management company started to "scrimp" on plans to try to reduce the cost. Therefore, some buildings did not receive the improvements that were promised to the voters. The recent school classroom size issue in an example. It's very difficult for staff to track where the bond money actually was utilized. The money in the bond package for the old schools did not bring them up to the standards of the new schools. The district needs to ensure that older schools receive the same top quality attention so that we encourage smart growth and not sprawl.

- AISD actions in the south have encouraged sprawl. AISD built schools in that area before the pupil population actually demanded it. As a result, they encouraged people to move further and further out.
- There is a mismatch of jurisdictional responsibility between AISD and the City of Austin. Because they don't have the same boundaries, they don't work together to achieve what's best for the city and for the kids. AISD should work with the City to shape the growth pattern. The two entities should work together in various tax sharing opportunities such as police protection, grounds keeping, and transportation. Why couldn't the Austin police take over most of the responsibilities of protection? Why couldn't City parks staff handle most grounds keeping responsibilities, especially in areas where parks are very close to schools? Why couldn't AISD rely on Capitol Metro to transport most of the kids to school?
- AISD doesn't conduct any type of strategic planning for the future. Their only goal is to improve test scores.
- There is an attempt within one of the schools to pressure the teachers "to go along with the games." The principal in that school does not have any interaction with the students. Most students would not be able to identify the principal. The principal goes on "conventions" with a group of "friends"--the ones who manipulate the data for her. The principal spends excessive amounts of money for hotels and wanted to rent a limousine for the evening. This principal allows the school administration to do nothing. Administrative staff don't take responsibility for anything and will not do any disciplining. The administration is incompetent as well. The school formulated committees to take the responsibility off of the principal. However, the committees were spear-headed by "friends of the principal," so nothing was taken care of. The vice-principal will not take responsibility for any discipline. There have not been any repercussions for bad behavior. The students don't respect the administration and faculty. This school "is a mess."
- In one of the schools, the Attendance Committee asked that students who are tardy not show up on records. Some students are asked not to show up on certain days. The students know that there is no accountability or action would be taken when they are tardy or skip class, so they don't show up for class.
- AISD's health service is a concern. The program with Seton can't follow AISD guidelines, have to follow Seton guidelines. School health staff can't give out inhalers because of Seton's guidelines. Nurses don't have equipment. The situation is driving nurses out; they have too much paperwork, there are too many rules and regulations. Also, the loyalty of the nurses is not to the school; it is to Seton. Nurses are assigned to multiple campuses. The nurses are afraid to help special education students because of liability.

Nurses are limited in what they can do because of liability concerns, so secretaries are handling things nurses should be handling. Nurse aides are even more restricted. There is high turnover in the nursing staff. They do not like to deal with the Seton Administration. The district is losing good nurses to the surrounding school districts. This lack of continuity in nursing staff means that nurses don't know kids well.

- Central Office staff and campus administrators are not being held accountable to the law.
- The unwritten law is to isolate the school board from volatile issues, to protect Central Office.
- Many times principals do not communicate problems to superintendents.
- In some cases, parents were threatened about communicating their problems to district administrators.
- The policy at Crockett High School is that if a student has no absences and a 90 percent average, the student can be exempted from the final exam.
- The district allows students to make up absences. Students can make up absences in some schools by working 10-15 minutes outdoors.
- Teachers don't know why some students are exempt from a class. They do not receive data on a day-to-day basis. The system of recording absences is failing (because of poor technology).
- The district does not follow procedures. Teachers do not have control over what is going on.
- The football coach in one school decides who is hired and fired. The coach fired staff in the Athletic Department. These newly hired staff do not have proper certifications.
- Central Office should hold principals accountable to Senate Bill 1 which decentralizes the decision-making process. Campuses must form committees that include students and parents to oversee the decision making process. The committees don't function properly, since principals can overwrite any of the committee's decisions.
- AISD Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs) do not have an assessment of the school climate. Principals do not want to assess the school climate, they want to run schools like dictatorships. They should conduct student, parents, and teachers' surveys.
- Central Office does not want to have principals accountable, unless test scores are bad. Their only worry is test scores.
- Football coaches in some schools make hiring decisions. History, math, and other teachers are hired by the coach. Not all of the math teachers hired there were certified.
- Some area superintendents do not respond to stakeholders' concerns and are not accessible to the general public.
- AISD has high employee turnover.

- Principals at some of the schools do not live in Travis County and are not taxpayers; they commute. Their commitment is low. They do not attend nightly meetings.
- Central Office does not keep track of principals' attendance and does not review the campus improvement plans (CIPs). AISD should designate an individual to review CIPs and to look objectively at what is happening on campuses.
- Some schools do not provide accurate data to Central Office. Taxpayers are misled.
- Nepotism is a problem at AISD.
- Students whose parents are coaches have major favors given to them. These children are treated as royalty compared to how other students are treated.
- Some schools are unsuccessful because the leadership is not competent. As a result, the students suffer.
- Special education students should not all be sent to one school, they should be transferred to their home schools. There is an unfair distribution of special education students.
- The district is sending kids to Rosedale who may not need to be there (for liability concerns). Some special education teachers are not even aware what nurses can serve special education students, so they just call Rosedale.
- There is no outlet in the district for stakeholders to vent their frustration.
- Some schools give bad (inaccurate) attendance data to Central Office. Some area superintendents are aware of this but ignore it.
- The principal in one of the schools will complain that the students don't show up to class because the teacher does not make the class fun enough for the students to want to attend. Teachers with high failure rates are reprimanded, even if the rate is caused by no-shows.
- The two hall monitors and AISD policeman in one of the high schools do not do their job. They are not seen on campus. The teachers don't know where the security officer is. The policeman assigned to this school teaches a karate class.

Appendix B

Educational Service Delivery

- English as a second language (ESL) classes need to be audited. Nothing is being done for these children who take these classes.
- The School-to-Work program is receiving excessive amounts of money from the instructional budget of the school. The teachers in the program are not certified. They have smaller classes than the regular high school teachers, so their job is easier.
- Some administrators are using the School-to-Work program as a way to care for their own children. The administration staff will transfer into the program at a teacher's salary and care for their own child. The program is being mishandled by the administration.
- Special education programming is inadequate and inappropriate at virtually every level--from resource classrooms to segregated units and campuses. There is no accountability for student progress. Poorly trained staff members can actually do more harm than good.
- Too many kids are put in Gifted and Talented programs due to parental pressure--not the abilities of the kid.
- The Gifted and Talented (G/T) program is virtually non-existent.
- Teachers are told to teach to TAAS, instead of providing good a program. This year kids will miss big parts of nine school days due to TAAS practice and testing.
- No attempt is made to look at long-term outcomes. The Special Education Department cannot tell how many graduates go on to get jobs. There is no accountability for non-college bound kids.
- Special education kids are moved up and out of school without remediation or job-training.
- There is a lack of accountability for special education student progress-- students are passed on from grade to grade in resource or self-contained classrooms, with no attempt to remediate their academic deficits.
- The lack of teacher/staff training results in poorer outcomes for students with disabilities who must then look to state supported, adult services programs for less independent lives.
- Some schools fail to maintain data on Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals and objectives, while continuing to report acceptable progress on report cards. Even though progress is documented on progress reports, students fail to show that progress when evaluations are done and nothing is done about it.
- Schools are wasting money on meetings and lawsuits instead of providing appropriate programs under IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.)

- There is no support for and sometimes there is even retaliation against parents who advocated for effective programming for their children. There is little attempt to work with parents as part of the team; parents are viewed as the "enemy."
- Some schools have made attempts to remove special education students from classrooms and/or campuses instead of providing positive behavioral supports and appropriate programming.
- Schools are teaching to the TAAS, instead of good teaching.
- In schools there is little systematic method for communication with parents regarding the educational options for students. Poor quality schedule formation at the secondary level limits student electives and teaming. The O. Henry Middle School had no schedule for the entire school for the first three days and didn't work it all out for the first couple of weeks, due to poor technical support.
- Some schools have little support or mentoring for new teachers.
- The district does not work together towards a common goal. Each curriculum area (i.e., math, science, etc.) attempts to build its own area of excellence with little regard for what other areas are trying to accomplish. AISD needs to adopt a more holistic approach. The district needs staff that is well versed in a variety of areas. No one has the whole picture. Somehow, the district needs to get to that point so that kids see the relevancy of subjects and can make the connections.
- Schools do not have the necessary learning tools/resources; some schools are provided funds, some are not.
- Over-emphasis on TAAS--so much time is spent "teaching to the test." Don't teach TAAS. TAAS isn't a life test. Teach SAT and ACT--TAAS is first grade material!
- AISD needs better teachers who will teach things we need for life, not a test. The only way to attract better teachers is with larger salaries. Some great teachers left for that reason. Why teach high school when you can work at IBM for more than twice as much?
- Special education teachers need assistance with paperwork required by TEA and the city. Schools need more staff for special education programs.
- Teachers need a longer contractual year to be compensated for training in district initiatives.
- Teachers need to receive more training for working with at-risk students, if not, they will leave and go to schools that are less stressful and pay teachers more money.
- Update the library system.
- Add to the passing period time an extra 10 minutes.
- There is a need for communication between middle school teachers and high school teachers about the curriculum.
- Do students know about scholarships if they are in honors classes? If so, do they get special treatment?

- Have classes that will help students in the future. Have more traveling classes. Make classes interesting and important.
- Prepare kids for college! Schools don't have enough classes to prepare students for real life out there!
- Offer more choices for kids that are not college-bound, such as technical school.
- School is for educating the kids, not to pass them through and keep your job. We need to shake the kids up and expect/demand more from them. Raise the bar!
- Reading, writing, math should be paramount.
- If the district purchased textbooks last year for this fall, why don't the schools have them?
- Why or how can a special education classroom go without a teacher for three months, and expect to meet Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals?
- We've been working on equal access for our special education class for two years. No result so far.
- The atmosphere in some campuses is not healthy because of lack of civility.
- Schools need stricter attendance policies!
- Three tardies no longer equal to an absence. Students can miss 50 percent of the class and only be considered tardy. We are lowering our standards way too much!
- Teach subjects that result in real life knowledge, give students more chances to pick a vocation early on.
- Curriculum needs more attention by all teachers, administration, parents and students. We are in the dark ages and need to wake up.
- Schools fail to consider the general curriculum as a first option for students with disabilities in accordance with federal law.
- Schools fail to offer aides and support services that students with disabilities need in order to be involved in and make progress in the general curriculum (TEKS).
- Schools fail to offer aides and support services that students with disabilities need to be placed in regular education.
- Schools fail to assess students with disabilities for assistive technology.
- Schools fail to implement the individualized education plans (IEPs) of the students with disabilities.
- Parents are concerned about the mindset leading to deciding on services, plans, and placement based on the disability of the student. For example: because the student has mental retardation, then he/she will be placed in a self-contained classroom.
- Parents are concerned that the evaluation of students with disabilities is based solely on "teacher observation" in accordance with an individualized education plan. This is especially of concern in regard to students who are receiving a curriculum that can not be

tested by a standardized test. School should use more objective ways to evaluate whether the student has completed the goals and objectives.

- Schools fail to provide services for students with disabilities whose IEPs call for these services with the excuse that personnel is not available without looking for resources in the community that the school can contract with for services.
- Outlaw curriculum "based on" the general curriculum for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities have a right to the general curriculum decided on by the state, not one made up by special educators.
- AISD must provide adequate leadership from the top down to communicate and enforce the right to a free appropriate education in the least restrictive environment and access to the general curriculum (not an alternative general curriculum) for students with disabilities.
- Stop adding new life skills classes and stop tracking students with disabilities into existing life skills classes. Start getting kids out of these classes with the goal of closing all life skills classes within 3 years.
- Ensure that schools have the resources (time, qualified people) to implement every IEP.
- AISD's supported employment is very high quality, but limited in scope--it needs to expand. At a minimum, students age 16 and over should have access.
- Do not teach to TAAS. Much educational time is wasted for students who already mastered practice tests. Tutor students who need specific skills/support.
- Students do not learn academics (core subjects) through osmosis. Academically gifted students shouldn't have to teach slower students. Self-esteem does not rise for the academically challenged by sitting next to gifted students.
- Consider the Charter School option ("school within a school") to serve students with language learning differences/dyslexia. Core subjects would be taught by appropriate trained teachers who have a passion to work with these "high risk" students. These students will be integrated with the regular students for electives (arts, sports, library, cafeteria, etc.). Students with Learning Disabilities would benefit from smaller classes that have a supportive teaching team and a multi-sensory program to meet their educational needs. If these students are taught appropriately by teachers who are properly trained and passionate, these students would learn and feel supported and would not dropout.
- We're losing "smart" children (0-20%) who merely learn differently than the "norm." Eighty five percent of incarcerated

adults have a language learning disability. We must stop building prisons and pay to teach all students appropriately.

- Let's truly reduce the dropout rate. Not just prepare individualized educational plans but follow through on mandated modifications.
- No more "brainstorming." Research and programs already in place throughout the U.S. indicate that we must act now, to stop students from dropping out.
- Students and parents don't feel supported or listened to.
- Offer incentives to the good teachers.
- There are outstanding teachers and programs in AISD. There are some top-notch principals too. They should be encouraged and financially recognized for their achievements. They should also be listened to and sought out for advice on programs, management and other district needs.
- Special education ARDs are being conducted without a parent, counselor or administrator in attendance. Special education teachers attempt to coerce teachers not in attendance to sign the forms.
- Special Education Departments in some schools are not familiar with their students. In one case, a special education teacher gave grades to a student who withdrew the previous year and was never in attendance. Another student got a computerized progress report although that student has never been in that class; he had left public school for a private school and no one was aware of it.
- The curriculum has been watered down. There is hardly any opportunity for accelerated education.
- The honors program was devastated because the district allowed anyone to get into the program.
- AISD doesn't effectively deal with TAAS or with school dropout.
- Administration does not feel any pressure to maintain high standards.
- The TAAS required to graduate from high school is an eighth or ninth grade level test. Why do we focus on it? Focusing the debate on such an "easy" flawed test is a scandal.
- The poor turnout of residents to public forums and Board meetings is troubling. Men generally do not show up for these meetings.
- The Board wanted to eliminate the honors program and homework. The Board has not encouraged excellence.
- Research shows that setting low standards does not solve the problem. Setting high standards helps.
- We have created a system that wants everybody to graduate from high school and have a curriculum that supports this objective. Such a curriculum is not worth having.
- Since we moved to Austin in 1995, we have been pleased with special education service delivery to our son who has Down syndrome. He has been fully included in regular classrooms

(grades K-2). This year, we have been under pressure to move our son to a "life skills" class at a neighboring school. We believe that the most efficient use of federal and state money is to serve our son at his home school in the least restrictive environment (i.e., in the "regular" third grade classroom). We would like to know if AISD is funding training to teachers (both special education and regular education) in inclusive practices and team building. We would also like to know if AISD is moving away from inclusion as a district-wide philosophy? We would also like to know if special education is adequately funded district-wide? Are individualized education plans (IEPs) truly meeting the individual needs of students, within their networks of family and friends? Or are children being grouped together at selected campuses to teach them "life skills" without benefit of the grade level curriculum?

- The curriculum at McCallum is outstanding. We've had two students attend McCallum and they have done very well. Our college-age son was extremely well prepared after attending advanced placement (AP) and honors classes. I hope the district will continue or increase funding for the Fine Arts Academy. Parent fund-raising will not get the Academy everything it needs. The district instituted the Academy and should help us keep it!
- Administration needs to know not to "float" non-science classes into science classrooms. It becomes a safety issue.
- The school gives students lots of opportunities to learn new things.
- Account for Learning appears to be a terrific program. It gives real help at the campuses to teachers so they can better meet the needs of individual students.
- I have three sons at Bowie. The Delta Program helped my oldest son to graduate. Russian language and ROTC programs and more advance courses have helped my other two sons.
- AISD must reduce the dropout rate.
- Students with dyslexia are at high risk of dropping out because their educational needs are not being met.
- AISD should encourage strong counselors-student relationships involving constant communication to help support and direct students. The relationship should be proactive: not focused only on correcting problems after they happen.
- AISD should have better career planning for students. Career planning should establish each student's strengths and guide the student down the right path. AISD must change its ideology that all students will go to college. It must prepare students that are not strong in academics to become good, productive citizens.
- AISD schools should have smaller classes. Teachers should have teacher aides.
- AISD should offer an extended high school option. This option is similar to college. Students work on a credits system. There is a

summer school option for all students. Why do students have to complete high school in four years?

- Put "good" principals back into the schools, not "brainstorming" at Central Office.
- Permit schools to be more directed by teachers, not by administration. The teachers are too bogged down with bureaucratic paperwork. They went into teaching to teach!
- Offer incentives to teachers; not all teachers are the same.
- Stop teaching to the TAAS!
- Some schools receive students with low reading ability, but are still expected to perform at the same level as other schools that receive more resources. How are those schools expected to do more with less?
- TAAS, AISD needs to accommodate the participation of students with disabilities to prepare for, take, and pass the TAAS. The exemption rate is too high.
- All special populations should have individualized education plans (IEPs). We should be tracking their progress and intervening when the first hint of trouble occurs. The Gifted and Talented students are left too often to fend for themselves. Magnet programs are life-savers for some and should be supported with more money.
- I feel TAAS has become a monster in our school district. Too much time is spent on "TAAS prep" rather than on true preparation. I feel that if students are taught the basics with true competency, the TAAS would be no problem. We have to get back to teaching, rather than coaching.
- Children have been placed in special education for no other reason than exclusion of TAAS. They should take the test if it is reasonable for them and the district can do what they like with the scores. Conversely, they could be in regular education and be exempt from the test.
- I have an at-risk child. The district does not provide enough support or resources for a single parent.
- The Gifted and Talented (G/T) programs vary tremendously between campus sites. Teachers are discouraged to refer to the program or use overly stringent qualifications for G/T labels so the schools do not have to provide specially trained teachers.
- The magnet program at Kealing has so much to offer academically, but many parents are not sending their 7th - 8th graders because the school environment is awful. It has violence (physical, theft through threat of violence, etc.), horrible language allowed, and racial slurs by home campus students.
- Johnston is great: a safe, mentally healthy school.
- Special needs instruction does not follow Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD)developed plans.

- Provision of services is sometimes changed by the supervisors/teachers after the ARD meetings are concluded.
- AISD should look at how Round Rock ISD handles site-based management. There are no non-performing campuses in Round Rock ISD. Round Rock ISD has better parent-teacher-school-superintendent communication than AISD. Round Rock teachers are mentored by other teachers in the field. The goal of their mentoring program is retention of teachers. Round Rock ISD implements vertical teaming: teachers from the higher grades inform the lower grades teachers what they expect from the students when they get them. It also has horizontal teaming: where teachers are assisted by teachers within their own campus when they have problems.
- Lanier is very unique, very diverse. Students are a joy.
- Focus on each student's strengths and interests to begin "specific" career planning--particularly for students that are not college bound.
- Central Office help with the curriculum has been good in the past year. It is likely to change because the coordinator leaving.
- Create a stable school and classroom environment.
- Some principals don't respond to calls from parents regarding their children's problems at school.
- What is AISD going to do about schools like Reagan?
- School was not responsive to calls from a parent whose child did not get any grades due to absences and tardies. Instead of talking to the parent, school staff just passed the call from one person to another.
- A parent reported that her, daughter who has a 150 IQ and never showed up to classes, who was promoted by the school pushed from grade to grade until she dropped out of school and ran away from home. The parent feels the school's administrative staff should have accountability. The school should offer more individualized teaching. The parent considers herself "educated, vocal, participates in all school committees, ask questions, not afraid of making anyone mad, yet, I could not get school help for my daughter."
- Because AISD schools don't give grades, homework, or serious schoolwork in earlier grades, many students are unprepared and fail.
- Athletic activities occur during the day. Such activities should be after school.
- AISD has a large Central Office; when principals and teachers "mess up" they are moved to central administration.
- Students can be absent 8 days without being considered tardy.
- The special education system at AISD is a good system.

Appendix B

Community Involvement

- There is not enough parent involvement in secondary curriculum planning. Too much is left up to 14 and 15 year old students to decide on classes. Schools usually have only one meeting to provide information for the transition from middle school to high school.
- Special education parents are viewed as the enemy.
- AISD does not have a long-term strategy of working with the city on building an inclusive, diverse community!
- Too often the "powers that be" only listen to the community and forget to ask and listen to the teachers and student.
- Please keep in mind that students should always be put first. Schools should have programs to encourage parents to visit their child's school regularly.
- AISD needs more community meetings for input.
- Parent involvement is important in every school. Athletics can especially gain from parents and student who come out to support school teams. A group of students, however, has been restricted in this regard. Spirit Managers are those students who show an overflowing pride in their schools. This is good. Correction, this is great! In the midst of so much political fire, AISD can generally point out that there is still a large showing of school pride. Unfortunately, however, AISD has decided to restrict the Spirit Managers from the football field where they generally cheer on their teams. By football field, I mean the track on which no one, except the cheerleaders, stand. Before this year, administrators, coaches, parents, students, cheerleaders, football players and principals had no objection to having the school Spirit Managers on the field. Not only providing inspirational signs and run-throughs for the football team, the Spirit Managers are the loudest supporters of the team. In the case of LBJ High School, one can always find a clump of purple-clad students cheering and screaming their heads off for their team. No one cheers louder than the LBJ Spirit Managers!! Last year, the principals decided that due to a disturbance involving students from two schools, no Spirit Managers would be allowed to stand on the track and cheer for their team. Is this really fair? Because two other schools got into a disagreement, every Spirit Manager group should be banned from the field? What is even more irksome is that even though a group of principals made this decision last school year, the topic has not been revisited even though a revival of the discussion has been requested by LBJ principals. Understandably, this football season

will probably fly by without a ruling in the Spirit Manager's favor. However, I hope that the topic will be revisited before the next season. My senior year will go by with me fenced in the stands with my fellow Spirit Managers. This request is for the next generation of purple-clad, energetic, proud, boisterous, spirited, Spirit Managers. For next year, I hope and firmly intend to lobby for the re-acquisition of the true position of these students. On the tracks, hooting and hollering for our team, is where we belong.

- Parents need to insist that the district have strict policies and that they be enforced. AISD should strengthen its attendance policies, not weaken them (as the Board has done). Parents need support from the schools so that students graduating from high school know how to work and earn their way. The community needs to insist that the Board "get tough."
- Parents should be "required" to be involved in their kids' work and extra-curricular activities.
- AISD should court businesses more favorably to get more out of businesses! AISD needs help from Dell, IBM, and other business to get technology and train Austin's future workforce.
- Bring back neighborhood schools.
- Upon trying to meet with a certain coach at Crockett, parents were put off. A group of parents sent a letter requesting a meeting. The coach refused to meet with the parents. Coaches/teachers have a responsibility to the parents in addressing issues brought to them in a timely manner.
- There is a need for more teacher-parent interface!
- Does AISD have a web page?
- The translations into Spanish of announcements to parents who do not read English are shameful and disrespectful. Parents who read English get a whole page of information, while those who do not may get two lines of information. Parents who read English get more information than Spanish parents.
- Parent involvement varies from school to school. Parents feel welcome at all levels in AISD.
- AISD needs more School-to-Work programs and mentoring.
- AISD should have more vocational education programs implemented in conjunction with businesses and trades. The many students who don't go to college need a foundation to make a living.
- Parents should not be blamed for all the ills. Parents need to be heard far more than they are. School hours should accommodate parents' work schedules. The hours are still on a schedule for farm hands. When a child gets out of school, the parents need to be there, somehow! The trouble for high school students starts at school dismissal time.

- Travis High School is an example of great community partnerships although little parental involvement.
- The Telecommunity Partnership Initiative program (TPI) is an excellent educational program that matches area employers with members of the public who are computer literate. This program is a collaboration between the City of Austin and area employers such as Dell and Motorola. People without computer literacy will be left behind in the modern economy. Please allow this vital program to continue!
- The TPI program is a very needed program for adults. Many adults did not have the chance to be trained in using computers and are already behind. This program is very intensive and fast paced. Classes are always full. More programs like this are needed to meet the high demand for computer literacy. Some adults volunteer their time to help train others. The appreciation of those who took part in the program is unmatched. Please continue!
- The TPI program is very useful and encouraging. Adults need more opportunities like this. We want to continue this class to the next level. Please continue this wonderful work. TPI Program has taught me to use computers so I can better myself for a better career and to be a better asset to the job force and to help in the community. It is an excellent program for adults to learn, in which, if classes were not provided in the evening then, therefore, we would not have to opportunity to learn and excel, and become a better working citizen in the Southwest Silicon Technical Valley.
- The TPI program is a real nice program, it helps people like myself to better myself for a better prosperous job in the future. It's a very helpful program for adults in the community.
- It's gratifying to see businesses partnering with schools as mentors and in-kind donors.
- It's great to see the employee unions, the business community, and AISD all working together through Partners in Education to address the issues. Partners in Education is great.
- Often, parents of secondary school students are not notified of meetings or activities on campus until after the fact. Schools should keep parents informed.
- Parental involvement exists at all levels throughout the district. Many parents often miss many opportunities to participate due to apathy.
- Parents who do participate should feel that their input is more than "token participation." Principals and area superintendent encourage parent involvement to different degrees.
- The Board's policy of restricting public input to certain times is unfair.

- Companies offer help to principals, but principals do not have expertise in utilizing help from business. Central Office must coordinate these efforts.
- Overall, the school system has improved significantly over the last 30 years. AISD promoted the importance of pluralistic society.
- Parents who children are not successful academically feel that no one is listening or caring.
- The district should improve its relationships with other youth-oriented organizations. It is known for not cooperating.
- The drop out rate at Lanier High School is of concern. Parents are helpless. It is really a community problem. Penalizing schools for it is not right.
- The district should help schools that don't have community support.

Personnel Management

- Hiring practices need to be looked at, some do not utilize the talent we have.
- Substitute teachers should have benefits. Florida hired permanent substitute teachers and it worked.
- Out-of-field teaching should be wiped out entirely. Hire an appropriate substitute.
- AISD needs to hire bilingual staff to meet the needs of the growing population of English as a second language (ESL) students.
- AISD should recruit personnel from Austin-area colleges/universities.
- AISD should hire strong instructional leader-managers (principals).
- AISD is too top heavy.
- Teachers are not paid adequately. Need to pay teachers competitive salaries for this area.
- There is a need for better training and mentoring of new teachers.
- There is a need for training teachers for special education and specific disabilities.
- Increase the number of teachers two-fold and double their salary and you will have better teachers.
- There is no upward mobility for teachers.
- Teachers that are the most experienced are recruited for west side schools, leaving the east side schools with the leftovers.
- Make sure there are enough teachers before school starts or don't offer the course. It's not fair to those of us who have to sit through the class and not learn. It's a waste of time.
- Give me some new qualified teachers to teach me. Don't allow senior teachers with experience to leave without a good reason.

Support our teachers in everything. Every time I lose a qualified teacher I lose a chance to learn!

- Have incentives for teachers who improve student performance.
- LBJ needs better staffing when special science and math courses need to be taught.
- LBJ teachers should teach both Science Academy and non-academy students.
- There is a lot of inequity in the classified system. There is no difference between a teacher who had been in the district ten years and a newly hired teacher. Often new employees are paid more for the same job because those of us who began 8-10 years ago were not given any credit for prior employment as they are now giving. This is wrong and very discouraging.
- Teachers have far too much paperwork and too much is expected of them, especially at the high school level. They need help. They need fewer students and less outside stuff required; they need to have a life!
- Get the best available teachers with available funds.
- Do parents know when staff development is happening? What are the recruiting procedures for teachers? Are students informed about this?
- Get nicer and smarter teachers.
- Teachers need to be more patient with students who aren't as advanced as others.
- Teachers should keep parents informed.
- Teachers don't get paid enough.
- Teachers more often need to work individually with each student in areas in which they perform poorly.
- Please hire teachers with the appropriate expertise.
- Improve the teacher/student ratio.
- Thanks to people who have supported inclusive education practices in AISD.
- Some teachers are sometimes afraid to have students with disabilities included in their classrooms. They will tell you that they were not trained to work with these students. AISD should offer teachers more training. Training diversity and acceptance. Emphasize the importance of communities for all.
- Yea for our teachers! After 14 years in the district, I have had very few teacher problems. Teachers need more support.
- The school climate needs to be more supportive of inclusion. The teachers, administrators, parents and all staff need to be more supportive. Often, the regular kids learn a lot from diverse students being accepted.
- For the successful inclusion of special education students, more support staff are needed.

- Check out the top-heavy health services provided through Seton. The service used to run with a supervisor and two secretaries in main office. Now, the service includes a head of health services, numerous team leaders, and numerous support staff. Office and class staff still have to provide first aid and medication. (Check with Education Austin re: Survey of Last Spring). There has been a tremendous nurse turnover at schools, so the nursing staff is not familiar with the student population from year to year. Little service is provided to special education students on regular campuses. The significant amount of paperwork that supervisors assign cuts down on time the staff can devote to meet student needs and planning. Assess the feasibility of returning health services to AISD staff with a team of RNs and assistants. This would give AISD more say and control over how needs are met. The loyalty of the health services staff would be to AISD, not to Seton.
- Very concerned that the district is hiring new people and paying them more than employees already on the job. Then the district asks the more experienced employees to train these new people.
- Train teachers to include students with disabilities in general education classes and teach these students the general curriculum.
- We need more office staff!
- The Board needs to visit schools to see what the real world is like. So when school staff voice their concerns about pay, overwork, etc. the Board will be more apt to act and not just pretend to listen.
- Hire teachers (or pay teachers more) who are ready, willing (attitudes), and able (trained) to teach students with disabilities in regular classes.
- AISD complained of a teacher shortage this past year and yet, the AISD Personnel Department was not available for one month during the summer to interview prospective teachers. In contrast, Round Rock ISD and personnel departments in other area districts were open and available. These other districts hired some of the teachers who applied for positions with AISD.
- AISD should have an online application process.
- AISD should post available positions on a web site. The positions should be listed by type (i.e., social studies, music, foreign languages, etc.). Currently teacher positions are listed as "positions available."
- The area superintendents' functions are not clear. Area superintendents appear to exist only to provide a buffer of insulation to the superintendent.
- AISD appears to be reluctant to allocate resources for special needs children even though they are based on identified needs as determined by the ARD meetings.

- AISD has combined two special needs classrooms into one. The class has 24 children instead of 12. Having so many children in the classroom stresses the special needs children.
- It seems that ARD meetings are adversarial rather than beneficial.
- Low-income schools get the last choice on teachers. Nevertheless, low-income schools get the young, vibrant teachers, who don't always agree with the "system," but are an inspiration to all students.
- Please continue to look for the best teachers for all students. Hiring bonuses might lure some great candidates from other districts or the business world.
- Offer incentives for experienced teachers who have sought higher degrees (e.g., M.A.) to stay with AISD.
- Continue to improve the quality of substitute teachers. Classes spend too many hours when they have substitute teachers watching videos instead of following lesson plans.
- We have excellent personnel at the highest levels of management, e.g., the curriculum department, but Central Office is over staffed (bloated) with too many assistants and secretaries for each director. Even IBM and Dell use secretarial pools or "outsource" clerical people.
- We could save money by having only four area superintendents.
- We really need to look carefully at the jobs that could be consolidated in upper management in Central Office. How is it that we have added Area Superintendents to improve management and yet, have seen such glaring and dismal reporting of accurate information and the same old patterns of neglect at certain campuses? Should we not question this cost/benefit ratio?
- Principals should be paid at the rate of assistant superintendents at the secondary level. Interview principals to get their view of what campuses need.
- A math teacher at a low performing school was taken out of the classroom and put in a School-to-Work program in childcare, babysitting her own child. This person is paid as a math teacher and classified as a math teacher. At the same time, the Math Department is understaffed and the school has low TAAS math scores.
- An English teacher was taken out of the classroom and assigned to an administrative position in the School-to-Work program. At the same time the school's English Department is understaffed and the school has low TAAS scores. But this individual is carried as an English faculty member and is being paid as such.
- Give qualified teachers substantial raises.
- There isn't a significant salary difference for teachers with Masters and Ph.D.s, so there is no incentive to pursue higher education.

- AISD must foster our teachers to keep learning and become better, and be rewarded for their efforts.
- In recruiting teachers, AISD should emphasize benefits such as social security and TRS (retirement). Other school districts don't have to pay social security.
- AISD should provide staff development for teachers to learn to teach reading and writing and have the ability to identify students having trouble. AISD should listen to teacher referrals rather than claim that "they've referred too many students for help." Student education is not a numbers' game.
- Allow the teachers to determine the proper education for our students, not the administrators who don't have teaching experience. We need to listen to our teachers, not tell them what to do.
- Free teachers to "teach" and not be burdened with paperwork that is rarely looked at.
- Principals should direct budget and paperwork and leave the teaching to teachers.
- In one school, a teacher sent an email to co-workers and referred to a student as a "bozo." The teacher in this case has been insensitive to the student and the parent.
- Student-teacher ratios.
- Check into how the student-teacher ratios are calculated and make sure that administrators are not included/used to bring the ratios down.
- School performance of AISD schools should be compared to similar campus groupings around the state.
- There are problems with how the school dropout rate is calculated.
- AISD's management information system cannot track students accurately.
- AISD has a program where principals that do not have a Ph.D. take off friday to go to Texas A&M and take courses to get their Ph.D. It is called the Principal's Cohort Program. Principals are hired to run the schools five days a week. They should take courses like the teachers take them--after work and during the week.
- Too often school administrators are more concerned with determining "how to make it look good" rather than actually "making it good."
- The Texas School Performance Review Team should obtain a copy of a program recently televised on KLRU on innovations being implemented by schools around the country.
- Lower pupil/teacher ratios at Lanier High School and increase teachers' pay.
- New hires make more money than those who have been there for years. This causes turnover to be high.

- Schools are not staffed adequately with regards to both teachers and administrators.
- Classes should not have more than 30-32 students. Classes now have 38 students. Schools should have more support at ninth grade level. The district should fund portables to address class size problem.
- Teachers need to be compensated better so AISD can be competitive with surrounding districts.
- Some teachers don't know how to teach. The district needs to train them to be better teachers.
- The workload in the attendance office is endless. It is difficult for staff to do their job and generate attendance reports on time because of the other duties they have including answering phone calls from parents.
- AISD does not provide enough rewards such as incentive pay to keep good people.
- AISD has a high percent of new teachers. Teachers aren't hired until August. AISD needs to hire teachers sooner. Because they hire so late, teachers applying for positions find other jobs before the district makes the hiring decision.
- New teachers have a high turnover rate.
- The head football coach in one of the schools is paid a teacher's salary but is not teaching.
- The ninth grade is overcrowded, students get the least attention, it has inexperienced teachers, the highest failure rate and the highest dropout rate.
- Because of the teacher (coach) shortage, there is a high coach-to-athlete ratio.
- Teachers have a high student load; classes are too big.
- There is low staff morale.
- Some teachers with good performance reviews look for transfers and are not accepted in other schools. The principals are not releasing the teachers. The principals are in full control of teachers. Teachers are in situation where they have to either resign or put up with the existing system.
- There is a lack of certified teachers. Good teachers are overloaded with students, whereas uncertified teacher have low enrollments in their classes.
- At some schools, the principal has threatened teachers not "to go over his head." Department chairs are assigned by the principal and they block concerns coming from teachers.
- Hiring practices in AISD are very questionable. Hiring decisions should be checked. How are people hired? How are people replaced?
- Many administrators in AISD were hired from Round Rock. Some of these people had no experience working with a school system.

- One of the principals takes days and weeks to work on a doctorate out of town.
- Some schools have high turnover of secretaries. Secretaries were not trained properly.
- Personnel procedures and policies are not followed. Staff development is good. Fifty-one percent of AISD budget goes to administrator (should be 38 percent).

Appendix B

Facilities Use and Management

- Make school facilities available after hours to students and parents.
- Kids need access to libraries in the summer and after regular school hours.
- Central Administration is too big; it has too many people. Look at the Comptroller's audit of AISD. We are top heavy!
- Does the School Board set all the budgets for high schools? Are funds allocated based on the location of the school (east side - west side)? Schools on the east side don't receive equitable funding to address students' academic, social development, and health needs.
- Automation needs to be improved. AISD employees are still writing checks and purchase orders by hand; the process should be online.
- The purchasing process takes too long. Schools should be allowed to purchase from sources they choose.
- Upgrade computer programs for all schools.
- It takes too long for work orders to be processed. Sometimes it creates a hazard/unsafe environment. Those work orders should be processed and work should be completed in a timely manner.
- Some schools have underutilized building space and our schools are crowded.
- The libraries at LBJ High School are old and small.
- LBJ High School needs an auditorium.
- Fix the sidewalks at LBJ High School.
- School facilities could be used for more community education (adult education).
- Conserve energy by keeping air conditioners set at 75 degrees. Most schools keep it too cold.
- Portable buildings need intercom systems and restrooms.
- The lifts for people with disabilities at Crockett High School, I believe, do not meet ADA requirements. It has been a hassle to find access within Crockett High School. As a parent, we have had to deal with these issues since our child entered kindergarten. I've heard excuses at the middle school level such as "we can't put an elevator in because our school is on a sinkhole." I'm tired of being treated differently from the other parents. We could not go to some of the teacher's classrooms on "back to school night."
- I suspect that this area is so wrapped up in red tape that simplicity is not the way. I have personal experiences with many Texas districts and AISD is one of the hardest and most bureaucratic to deal with.

- The library in some schools is not a useful space. Kids can't get any of the latest books. All you see there are very old books and few copies available. Public libraries should be merged into school libraries. We always use the public libraries for school research. School libraries are always closed when we need them.
- Some of the teachers, well almost all of them, really care and get involved a lot more than others. I really like how the periods are set up so they don't have as many students to care about.
- Lanier High School is kept clean but the construction is messing up some of the teachers' curriculum and time.
- Our housekeeping department takes pride in keeping our school clean. They all work very hard and should get paid more than $8 per hour.
- Why are not all the new playgrounds accessible to students with disabilities?
- Stop putting special education students in their own wing, building, or school.
- All facilities need updating.
- Austin High School's construction program is a mess. There is no parking, no traffic flow, not enough room for students at lunch.
- Require every campus to demonstrate their preparedness to serve students with disabilities in the least-restrictive environment. Train a cross section of teachers at every campus on inclusive education.
- I think the school district should have planned to fix the schools before classes started. Having construction going on during the school year disturbs students and many teachers.
- There needs to be a system in place that explains the budget report (the charge codes) to staff that need to perform the work.
- Send more money to schools where the real world exists - don't give all the funds to top-heavy administration.
- For a significant number of students with disabilities, the ultimate goal after high school is vocational; that is, to be able to go out, find, and keep a job. Schools need to become more involved in building partnerships with community businesses, inform them on the benefits to the business and the community that comes from hiring a person with a disability.
- The federal law guarantees the rights of parents to participate in the educational planning process for students with disabilities. Many parents do not participate because they are unaware of their rights. Schools need to do more about educating parents regarding why their involvement is important. Schools find it easier to do things their way and not try to get parents involved in the process.
- Many parents are unaware that their children with disabilities are not receiving the services mandated in their individualized education plans (IEPs) because the school does not inform them about lack of services until the end of the year review. Schools

need to communicate with parents at least weekly about what is happening at school, especially when the students are unable to communicate fully to their parents what has happened to them during the school day.

- Schools need to actively recruit parents of children with disabilities and students with disabilities to become involved in school-wide and district-wide planning committees so that the needs of students with disabilities are considered when planning events or changes in the school environment. For example, the needs of students with disabilities are not being considered when planning new playgrounds, thereby excluding children with physical disabilities from using them. Try pushing a wheelchair through the playground rocks.
- The business-school partnership at Lanier High School is very good. A lot of businesses adopt Lanier and help us a great deal financially with scholarships.
- We need more parent involvement at Lanier!
- Schools do not have equity in resources. Look at Travis High School compared to Bowie High School, Austin High School, etc. Compared to other schools, Travis High School is neglected, but is definitely making progress on its own. Travis students are neglected. They should be given the same consideration as West Lake. These students are our future leaders.
- I appreciate the fact that custodians are part of the education team in AISD. They are role models and educators in their own right and are very attached to their schools. Their pride is evident. AISD was wise to go to year-round to lower turnover and do a good in-depth cleaning in the summers.
- Bowie High School is good overall. Some upkeep issues are not handled. Problems with outside veneer should be corrected. It is a false economy to let things go unrepaired.
- Please remember to keep the school facilities upgraded throughout the years. Let's not have another situation like Porter Middle School. The thirty-year old school is just now getting the needed renovations. Our children suffer due to the inequity of dollars spent in certain areas versus others.
- I was in a physics lab in AISD in 1995 that was much worse than the one in my 1948 high school and that one was ridiculous. All children need a nice school to attend, not just special education children. Although special education needs are great too. What benefits one benefits all.
- The district has improved summer usage of some facilities but should explore expanding after school and summer use.
- Maintenance requests by teachers are ignored.
- O'Henry is nice but: sixth grade portables on Exposition don't have a "buzzer." Students can get "locked out."

- The boys' bathrooms at O'Henry and Austin High School should be cleaned hourly and soap vandalism must stop.
- Why can't students at O. Henry go back to get books with parents after hours or use the bathrooms during band practice?
- I'm worried about my kids' backs; they have to carry such heavy books. My son already has back problems. It is better now because Austin High School has lockers.
- The science storage at O'Henry was infested with rats last year. There were "feces" all over.
- I think our building is used most efficiently; it is using all areas for teaching.
- The heating and cooling systems in all of our school need to be carefully surveyed for energy use. Some schools are unbearably hot because their coolers are old and ineffective. This is terrible to experience in August. Also, the vents and filters need to be cleaned regularly and maintained so that the systems are efficient.
- The 1996 bond program is over-scoped, and under-funded. The BLGY/Sverdrup management team, which is the program manager, has added an expensive layer of bureaucracy to the building process. They have impeded the building process by usurping the role of architects/engineers with their incompetence! The waste of tax dollars has been phenomenal, due to poor planning and politics.
- Portables were supposed to be a stop-gap. Why not build a good building? Portables are more expensive in the long run.
- Administrative costs are too high. Why should administrators have a good building and not the kids?
- AISD's implementation of the bond program has been slow, behind scheduled, and costs more.
- AISD's work order system is 500 orders behind. Central Office does not have enough staff in this area.
- Construction during school is messing up schedules. It also poses a safety problem.
- Good buildings are well maintained.

Asset and Risk Management

- AISD needs to do something about LBJ's being on a flood plain.
- AISD insurance plan included only one insurance provider. AISD employees should have a choice of providers.
- The vision insurance provided by AISD is inadequate. One pays $20 per month, but when you call the provider, they are no longer taking the vision plan. Employee had to spend hours to look for another provider but could find one. Also, employee used own money to pay for the test and glasses.
- AISD's health insurance offers only two providers.

- Ensure a districtwide commitment to help uninsured students to access Medicaid and CHIP through school-based outreach.
- The way for an all-healthy school is to have all students insured.
- AISD needs to manage its funds more efficiently so that there is money for completing the work as for maintenance, materials and equipment.
- Teachers feel that the district did not have their best interest at heart with the health insurance issue.
- To have good teachers, AISD needs to offer good benefits to get the teachers to stay and to enjoy teaching.
- The most important issue: Pay teachers and staff more and administration less. "You get what you pay for."
- The highest priority regarding students: no cliques. District should put more emphasis on academic and less emphasis on politics. Schools should help students build self-esteem, encourage student teamwork.
- Better coaches who want more money, have to earn it.
- Schools should not have been encouraged to spend functional equity money until all of the additional costs associated with the bond issue were taken care of.
- The bond plans were mismanaged on district level, as well as by BLGY/Sverdrup Program Management Team.
- The issue of workers' compensation, how to access it, and how to appeal decisions is very confusing. One practice that should be modified is the automatic use of all the employee's sick leave while they are out. Many workers don't understand why they are receiving different amounts of money; then they are surprised when they return and don't have any leave left. For long-term cases, the employee should have the option to use only a portion of their own leave to supplement workers compensation. This should be communicated clearly in English and Spanish. At the least, employees should be able to "buy back" leave they never asked to use!
- Every bureaucracy needs to be able to handle basic finances and benefits. Our payroll system is antiquated, and the health insurance program was messed up in too many ways to mention.
- AISD should be commended, however, for providing basic health insurance to all employees, even though this is a big commitment. It gives lower-paid workers health care with dignity instead of a clinic card (which is also provided by the taxpayers).
- AISD plans provide only one insurance (company); there is no choice.

Appendix B

Financial Management

- Simple is best.
- Schools need more supplies.
- Bond money was poorly managed. I do not fancy a tax increase. There are technology problems but most are human errors such as mistakes on report cards, information mailed to the wrong address.
- When was the last time a construction project came in on time and on budget?
- I am offended by the district's release of partial information and misinformation about the tax rate!
- Why don't all schools have access to the same quality of resources?
- Too much money is allocated for administration--42 percent. The money needs to go to students.
- Parents are tired of hearing that their children with disabilities cannot receive needed services because "we don't have the money for that" or "it's too expensive." Budget for the needs of children with disabilities. Stop segregating them because it's cheaper or pays more.
- Hiring the cheapest teacher is not cost effective. It's been going on for years at the expense of the children.
- AISD should start fresh and plan cost saving programs that are good. It's possible.
- Spend money on programs that work.
- Accountability is a problem.
- Please spend more on teacher salaries!
- Give more dollars to the Fine Arts Academy--grants and parent fund raising are not the way to keep a program going.
- All principals should be drilled and trained in sound money management principles. Some barely follow their basic tables of organization. Some overspend bond money they didn't have and included in their bond committee proposals in spite of the caution exercised by community members that sit on these committees.
- There is a paucity of complete detailed information provided to the public. At budget time there is not a campus-by-campus complete listing of all funds and how they are spent. The same is true for Central. How can the public comment intelligently, or assist in making helpful recommendations when they are precluded by a lack of specific information?
- The district needs greater investment in resources in order to provide financial data. The number of auditors internally may need to be expanded and until the district has stronger external audits it should hire a consultant to assist.

Purchasing

- AISD has too much "red tape." Many times items can be purchased cheaper than the lowest bid accepted by the district, yet, employees still must pay the higher amount.
- AISD's purchasing system makes it hard for teachers to buy products like VCRs and DVDs on their own for lower prices.
- Teachers should be given a credit card with a predetermined dollar amount and held accountable for their students' materials. Currently, corporate businesses like Dell Computer, IBM and 3M, are using this program with great success and saving money.
- Budget for science needs to be in place and monies need to be released in May/June so that orders for materials can be filled for the fall. As it is now, we must submit orders in May, yet these are not processed and monies are not released until the end of August or first of September to order supplies needed for first semester. It is the third six weeks period and our order is till not here for this school year.
- Schools should not have to use curriculum or any of funds to replace lost textbooks. The district should be responsible.
- Often the bids that AISD gets are too expensive.
- AISD should shop around more in order to get more for its money.
- Some schools receive carpets, furniture and equipment for classrooms funded from federal dollars. Some schools don't qualify for the money, so their students suffer.
- Schools should be allowed to purchase things where they can get a better price and better quality. Bids aren't always representative of the best price.
- There needs to be a better system for returning textbooks at LBJ.
- AISD is a nightmare to work with in purchasing. Too much administration!
- Why buy books? Too many teachers don't use them.
- We as parents spend money for supplies. The lockers at the schools are broken into and items are being stolen.
- The items schools sell are too expensive.
- Most classes do not use the textbook(s). They are passed out and stay in lockers until the end of school.
- Textbooks are often lost. It is best to number the books, assign them to students and leave them in the classroom. It's better that way so books won't be stolen from lockers and won't be left home or misplaced. Students know where their books are, teachers can keep track if any damage is done to the books.
- It would be ideal if the list of textbooks and to whom they were given was computerized. We lose a lot of money on misplaced and lost textbooks, some of it is due to students that are transient.
- I wonder why we have textbook shortages every year.

- Make it easier for teachers to get the supplies they need.
- The district has a bad reputation with many purchasers due to late payments. Payments are often 60-90 days past due.
- Purchase more videos and computers and look into different textbooks. Some are very poor. Education is supposed to be free--forcing the parent to supply a lot is not right and punishes the poor.
- Complete inventories must be kept of all materials at each school and the warehouses.
- Very often some schools discard usable and new items that other schools can use, such as new keyboards, cabinets, etc.
- In one campus, $20,000 in lost textbooks was taken out of all teachers' instructional budgets although only some of the teachers had lost textbooks.
- The competitive bid process works against classroom teachers because of the extended time necessary to implement the bid/ordering/delivery process. For example, because Astronomy is not a required content area, it takes a long time to order and get the books.
- Schools have to buy from unidentified vendors when cheaper items are available from Wal Mart.

Appendix B

Computers and Technology

- AISD's technology is antiquated.
- Texas mandates that technology in the classroom is required (curriculum-wide).
- AISD has a lack of teacher training in the use of technology.
- The technology upgrading process at AISD is painfully slow.
- The schedule disaster at O'Henry this year could have been averted with adequate technical support.
- Classrooms don't have decent computers.
- AISD has spent money on technology without developing a technology plan to figure out how this technology would be used in the classroom in the future. They purchase equipment that's already outdated.
- In the past, AISD has made big commitments to IBM, although IBM hardware was not the best solution for the district. Two Board members have IBM connections.
- AISD needs to improve the coordination of it technology planning (i.e., purchasing, implementing, using technology). Technicians, school staff, and users need to be consulted and informed. Often equipment is bought and no one in the school knows about it!
- All schools need equal access to technology.
- Purchase of specified computer hardware and software should be implemented with haste and not take more than one to two weeks at most, especially when funds are provided by individual groups or clubs. Schools also need to have technology for instructional and administrative training.
- LBJ High School needs computers.
- Schools need on-campus technology support. District technology support is not sufficient.
- Schools need more computers so they do not fall behind today's techno-world.
- Schools need more computers with printers. One computer per classroom makes it difficult to teach technology to 30 or more students.
- The future is here. Eliminate books, libraries, pens and pencils. Computer and technology should replace old books.
- Computers should be used in all classes at all times.
- Schools should have more computers for students to help them with homework. More computers means more education. We will have to live with laptops and PCs, so lets do it now!
- Some schools don't have enough computers.
- Schools need color printers.

- AISD should allocate more resources for the students and less for administration.
- Currently, schools do not have enough equipment. They have inadequate printers and computers and lots of downtime.
- AISD requires turn-around time on important computer reports (PEIMS, school to work, etc.) that is much too short and unreasonable.
- AISD needs to become more cognizant of corporate America and the business world standards.
- AISD needs to reduce the time to repair machines and to repair telephones.
- Lanier High School needs up-to-date computers, not "dinosaurs." Central Office should give their wonderful computers to the schools.
- AISD should develop more programs that involve students in the high-tech community, like work co-ops.
- There is still a place for vocational training for many students even in high schools with International Baccalaureate (IB) programs.
- The district needs to have greater expertise to address technology, including selection of technology, purchasing, and training. The district seems to ignore cost/benefit ratios and rush to purchase technology without adequate analysis of what and how it will implement technology throughout the district.
- Why doesn't Austin High School have language labs? They have some computers, but the CD-ROM programs are sub-standard. "Ven Conmigo" Windows 95 doesn't work as well as Disney Software. "Ven Conmigo" crashes because of the substandard drivers for multimedia.
- Why don't schools teach Excel, Word, WordPerfect, PageMaker, and PowerPoint?
- Multilevel skills classes are needed for all students to prepare students for survival in the workforce.
- Austin is considered "Silicon Valley #2." Why can't we get the Austin technology professionals to direct AISD's technology curriculum?
- The district's computer systems are terrible! The computer systems do not interface with schools. Correct information is provided by the campuses but Central Office produces inaccurate information.
- AISD has put off purchasing an adequate computer system for too long, and our reputation is now damaged by our inability to tell what we're doing. A huge system like AISD must have a computer system that is adequate for today's tasks and tomorrow's.
- Do assistive technology evaluations on students with disabilities, then provide them with the assistive technology that they need, even if this sometimes means a laptop computer.

- District is slow in fixing classroom computers that don't work. Some classrooms do not have Internet access.
- The magnet program did not get the new computers it expected. There are no computers for all administrative personnel.
- Lanier High School needs money to purchase a new computer system that can "talk" to the district's mainframe. The current Columbia system on campus does not allow such communications.
- The Management Information System (MIS) for the secondary level schools is inadequate. These schools need a database that can handle registrar's reports, attendance date, etc.
- Central Office generates reports with outdated data. Central Office doesn't organize the data it receives from campuses, which creates more work for campuses.

Transportation

- AISD continues to split neighborhoods with their attendance boundaries and doesn't pay attention to keeping neighborhood communities together.
- Capitol Metro bus passes should be given to all students if they attend the same school. There should be fair access transportation by all children.
- Transportation for special education is very expensive and takes much time and effort. Could it be better coordinated? How can we better utilize resources?
- My tax dollars shouldn't pay for some students to ride Capitol Metro free all year, while students from low-income families who need free transportation have to pay to ride.
- All students should be able to use same bus, whether it is a school bus or a Capital Metro bus.
- The buses need seat belts and more friendly drivers.
- The drivers don't know how to handle kids.
- Drivers need to be monitored more! I have seen too many drivers who drive away from stops with kids still standing, buses speeding (even through school zones), and generally drivers not driving in a safe manner.
- AISD needs to ensure that students with disabilities are not systemically taken out of classes early at the end of each day in order to get on buses. This should only happen on an individual basis due to a specific student's needs.
- Try putting the special education kids on buses with all the other children. Don't assume that a kid with disabilities needs to have special transportation.
- Bus maintenance is poor. The same problems occur repeatedly on same bus. Parts are not kept in stock, so broken buses are out of commission for long periods waiting for parts. Air conditioning on

special education buses is always breaking in the summer when medically fragile students need it most.

- Bus drivers are doing a great job especially in "Austin traffic!"
- AISD may have to move in the direction of the rail system, for the traffic in Austin is terrible for students to have to commute for 2-2 1/2 hours each way.
- Our drivers are great and AISD has a good safety record. Don't mess with it! I'd hate to see Austin lose out to some moneymaking contractor. Our drivers are committed to the kids and their schools. We should look at ways for them to earn more hours of work so they can afford to stay. It's tough having a split shift, part-time (5-7 hours average), 9-month-a-year job.
- It is important that buses for special education students have air conditioning in working order. Many of these students are seizure-prone or wear braces or headgear, etc., which puts great stress on their bodies in heat.
- Most districts don't bus students. AISD should find other ways to transport kids.
- School bus drivers are having a lot of problems with discipline. There is no staff in the bus to discipline the children. Principals should discipline the children identified by bus drivers as causing problems.

Appendix B

Food Services

- Kids want to go off-campus and eat what the rest of the outside world has to offer. They should be allowed to or the district should bring such food into the school.
- The district should be researching ways to automate cafeterias, so that children who are on free or reduced lunch are not singled out. They receive money from federal funds. They should use ID scan cards to help process students through the lines.
- Better sanitation please in the cafeteria. (Fix ceilings to eliminate critters.)
- Vegetarian food should be offered. Lots of students don't eat because vegetarian food isn't offered.
- We need decent quality food. Snack machine foods sound healthier than what is served in the lunch line. Tacos, cornbread and corn are not a very balanced meal.
- The LBJ cafeteria is too small and does not have enough furniture.
- My child doesn't eat lunch that's provided, except junk food that is provided, due to the lines being too long.
- Lunch hours should be spread out, due to the massive volume of students in LBJ. There is only one lunch hour for all students.
- The school needs better pots and pans--the ones currently used are rusty.
- Have an open campus for lunch for all age groups.
- Everything I eat here is good. Keep on serving vegetables and soups. Healthy food is good for young developing teens.
- I like some of the food, but I hate how we run out of some types of food, but my worst problem is not being able to leave.
- I like it because we have a lot to choose from.
- Everybody needs to eat. Have more choices for us to pick from instead of pizza!
- I like a variety of foods.
- Contract out food service (cafeteria buffet).
- I think we should have better food because truthfully; the food isn't very good. Sometimes the food looks like dog food and leftovers from last week's dinner.
- I think that we should have a greater variety to choose from. The food should be fresh.
- Food servings are way too small.
- Kids eat like adults most of the time.
- Make lunch an enjoyable and safe experience.
- They need to change the way they cook: uncooked food is not healthy for the body (breakfast).

- Offer different food all week: Mexican food and Chinese food.
- No more leftovers!
- One school provided a dried up peanut butter sandwich (the scrapings of an empty jar) to a special education student with no money. He was so embarrassed he couldn't eat.
- Austin High School cut back from three lunches to two in half the space.
- Bring back lunch cards. It's too difficult for parents to deal with lunch money. There is no easy way to keep track and pay.
- All high schools should have one lunch and food should be better.
- Lunch ladies are so mean, the way they give us food it's like they are feeding pigs.
- More choices are needed!
- Too many soda pops!
- Not enough food is served for lunch!
- The lunch food is okay, but sometimes it's the most disgusting stuff. I think that having a Subway booth set up will offer a choice in what we should eat.
- We need nutritious foods in schools--not hot dogs, not highly sugared cereals. What are we teaching our kids about eating? How to bring on a heart attack?
- I think you should give better food, because kids notice that the food you give are leftovers, from last week or two days ago and kids don't like that.
- The cafeteria at Travis is good. Everyone complains about the food, but the meals are pretty darned good and very affordable. We take it for granted. AISD has won awards for food service. The workers have a hard time because their work is split-shift, part-time, and not year-round. The pay is low, especially for new hires, and they wait a long time for pay increases and benefits.
- Many schools don't have air conditioning in the cafeteria this is a real shame for schools in Texas. Workers have passed out from heat (literally) and the Health Department won't allow them to have water at their workstations. Air conditioning should be a top priority it's a health and safety issue.
- Bowie High School has good food service.
- All kitchens must now be provided with air conditioners especially if this was part of their bond allocation. (The working conditions in August and May are inhumane!)
- The food at Lanier High School tastes like it is "frozen."
- The lunch period should be the same for all high schools.
- School food is adequate.

Safety and Security

- We can't turn the schools into prisons. Any efforts to improve security need to be accompanied by a strategic plan.
- We need more officers on campus.
- Administrators and faculty need more support in dealing with students who are repeat problem kids. The Alternative Learning Center should not be the only place for problem students.
- The teachers, students, and administration need to feel safe.
- AISD needs to take stronger actions regarding troublesome students, like boot camp.
- A boot camp should be established for students, so they can go to school for several hours, then work in the community for the rest of the school day.
- The schools should be given increased security in order to prevent thefts. But they shouldn't lock the students in after hours while extra-curricular activities still go on.
- AISD should establish another alternative education program like a vocational/technical school for students that are not going to college and are dropping out.
- Schools should have visible security in the hallways.
- Schools need a better security system in classrooms; classrooms don't have communication systems to the main office.
- The administration should follow AISD's Code of Conduct 37.00. If a student uses profanity, the student should be fined and suspended and so should teachers who use profanity.
- Implement strong discipline consequences to prevent classroom disruptions at LBJ.
- Discipline at LBJ is non-existent. Students need clear guidelines on behavior and proactive and effective feedback from administrators concerning referrals. Too much time elapses between the teacher writing the referral and administrative response.
- AISD should have zero tolerance for drugs and weapons. AISD should give one warning for fighting and intimidation.
- Newly hired local law officers should be taught not to stereotype our children. Just because a child looks a certain way doesn't mean the child is up to no good!
- Schools don't discipline bad students.
- What does "zero tolerance" mean? If it truly means zero tolerance, why are discipline referrals written in steps/stages? We have lowered our standards!
- We don't feel safe at any of the AISD schools.
- If you are suspended, do you get to play athletics through high school? What is the policy on this if you are caught skipping classes or with drugs and alcohol?
- AISD discipline policy is too strict.
- I think the monitors are doing a great job in stopping fights and keeping youth out of trouble. They are communicating well and it

makes a difference. I feel safe here but I think we should have an opportunity to have a session to express our feelings and to work out problems between students when conflict occurs. So enemies can have a chance to become friends.

- The monitors are doing great. They are down-to-earth and they are cool to talk with. They are there when fights occur and they do a good job in stopping them. I would like to thank them for their hard work.
- We are concerned about the application of discipline policies to students with disabilities who need individualized discipline/behavioral plans. Such plans are not being developed or implemented.
- It is inappropriate to shuffle students with disabilities into alternative education placements without a true evaluation of how their disability has affected their behavior and education. This is done without looking at plans and support services that can help these students remain in regular placements.
- This school, in my opinion, is the safest in Austin, because it houses the Criminal Justice Academy. This is the only school in which I feel safe. It's just so different from the other school I have been to; the staff, teachers, students, and the atmosphere it's peaceful and friendly.
- Although I understand that this may cause some teachers to be biased, I think that teachers should be made aware of students in their class with a criminal history, particularly a violent history.
- There is a lack of accountability at AISD! When the administration says it is going to do something... it should follow through. Often, the kids know how to work the system and they know no one is watching or coordinating with other areas.
- Schools don't have enough onsite supervision for students after class or school.
- At Austin High, with the parking situation fouled up, there are many vehicle burglaries.
- School dismissal must be addressed. The children run into cars. A new dismissal plan is needed. Schools may consider different dismissal times.
- Listen to students' safety concerns and get suggestions from them; they are most at risk.
- Principals need to be more aware of unsafe conditions.
- AISD buses should have seat belts.
- I don't know what bus drivers are paid, but we need the best and we need to pay them well.
- Cook playground for students with disabilities does not have a fence.

- Juvenile Center students from all over Travis County are sent to school at Travis High School. Travis High School has same security as schools in affluent areas.
- It's fine to have security in schools but they shouldn't treat everyone as a criminal. They should also give troubled teens the opportunity to have a second chance.
- If Travis High School has the same security as the schools in "affluent areas," then I feel sorry for the other schools. One Travis High School teacher has lost over $5,000 worth of public and personal property in three years alone.
- A major problem recently surfaced at Bowie High School. Students smoke everywhere and it is not effectively policed. Some students are offered lit cigarettes on campus. There is peer pressure on students to try marijuana. Some of the students are addicted to drugs. Students can also get their ears and lips pierced on campus. School staff do not respond to reports about students' smoking. Clearly the school needs more people in positions to deal with such illicit activities on campus.
- AISD needs more counselors freed from massive paperwork to work "proactively" with all students.
- At middle school and high school levels schools are reactive: they seem to solve problems after they happen.
- Teachers need to be supported by administration and parents, consistency is key.
- TEA needs to be pushed to mandate (with no loopholes) that all science classes at the secondary level have no more than 24 students per lab class. This should become a district policy, for safety reasons. If there is an accident in the overcrowded science labs, teachers are deserted by the administration and must rely on their professional organization to help them deal with any liability issues.
- Schools need to be proactive in communicating with and supporting our students before violence erupts.
- Staff should be better role models in the way they dress and talk. They need to behave as professionals.
- I applaud our principal for trying to maintain a well-disciplined campus. Parents have often resisted backing our principal's actions in disciplining a student. We all need to realize that there are laws we need to abide and back those in authority when those laws are enforced on campus. With secondary campuses as crowded as they are, I feel administrators are doing the best they can to keep students safe. Resources (staff and money) are short and principals do what they can. Perhaps we need more parent involvement to help in this area.
- I am concerned that campus management does not do enough to ensure the safety of our students. The policies and procedures that

are in place are not followed. This administration has covered up incidents and has not followed up to ensure a safe campus. SB 1724 needs to be followed strictly. However, now that the state requires schools to have policies and procedures for violence intervention, prevention and document all incidents on campus, schools try to downplay these incidents. This parent has had to take his concerns to the district, Attorney General's Office, TEA, and the Legislature, and still no relief has been offered.

- The discipline policy and procedures should be consistently enforced throughout the district.
- Various high school administrations did not take care of safety issues and incidents because they are afraid of bad reputations.
- One high school has no discipline enforced. Administrators refuse to address issues. Teachers are forced to deal with all discipline problems themselves through a committee appointed by the principal. Students roam the halls and disrupt classes at will. The school does not deal with students with drugs and on drugs.
- For regular children, school is great. Educational opportunities are outstanding. For problem children, it is a nightmare. Administrators don't take responsibility. A parent had several conversations with the counselor because her daughter was harassed by other girls who left threatening phone messages, wrote nasty notes, held her against the wall and punched her, and tried to run over her in the parking lot. The counselor did nothing. She didn't even record this incidence in the student's folder nor did she report these students to campus security.
- Some of the campus police are not taken seriously by the students. Monitors get more respect than the campus police.
- Some schools are not secure: anyone from street can walk into a class.
- Security is adequate. School has a good alarm system.

Appendix C
SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES

In addition to community meetings held to determine area of concern or praise for noteworthy accomplishments, surveys of the following groups were conducted:

A. District Administrators and Support Staff
B. Principals and Assistant Principals
C. Teachers
D. Students

A statistically valid sample of each population was selected at random to determine the opinions of each group. This appendix contains a copy of questionnaires used to conduct each survey.

District Administrators and Support Staff
(Written/Self-Administered)

PART A:

Circle Answer

1.	Gender (Optional)	Male	Female			
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
3.	How long have you been employed by Austin ISD?	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years
4.	Are you a(n):	a. administrator	b. clerical staffer	c. support staffer (i.e., transportation, food services, etc.)		
5.	How long have you been employed in this capacity by Austin ISD?	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years

A. District Organization & Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.					
2. School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.					
3. The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.					
4. The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.					
5. Central administration is efficient.					
6. Central administration supports the educational process.					
7. The morale of central administration staff is good.					

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8. Education is the main priority in our school district.					
9. Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.					
10. The needs of the college-bound student					

	are being met.					
11.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.					
12.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
	a) Reading					
	b) Writing					
	c) Mathematics					
	d) Science					
	e) English or Language Arts					
	f) Computer Instruction					
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)					
	h) Fine Arts					
	i) Physical Education					
	j) Business Education					
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education					
	l) Foreign Language					
13.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a) Library Service					
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education					
	c) Special Education					
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs					
	e) Dyslexia program					
	f) Student mentoring					

	program					
	g) Advanced placement program					
	h) Literacy program					
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school					
	j) Summer school programs					
	k) Alternative education programs					
	l) "English as a second language" program					
	m) Career counseling program					
	n) College counseling program					
	o) Counseling the parents of students					
	p) Drop out prevention program					
14.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.					
15.	Teacher turnover is low.					
16.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.					
17.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.					
18.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.					
19.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.					

	Survey Questions					
20.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.					
21.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.					
22.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.					
23.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.					

C. Personnel

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
24.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.					
25.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.					
26.	Temporary workers are rarely used.					
27.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.					
28.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.					
29.	The district operates an effective staff development program.					
30.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.					

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
31.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.					
32.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.					
33.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.					
34.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.					

D. Community Involvement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
35.	The district regularly communicates with parents.					
36.	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.					
37.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.					
38.	District facilities are open for community use.					

E. Facilities Use and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly	Agree	No	Disagree	Strongly

		Agree		Opinion		Disagree
39.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.					
40.	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.					
41.	Schools are clean.					
42.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.					
43.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.					
44.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.					

F. Financial Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
45.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.					
46.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.					
47.	The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.					
48.	Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.					

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
49.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.					
50.	Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.					
51.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.					
52.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.					
53.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.					
54.	Textbooks are in good shape.					
55.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources for students.					

H. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
56.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.					
57.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.					
58.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.					

	Survey Questions					
59.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.					
60.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.					
61.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.					
62.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.					

I. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
63.	Students regularly use computers.					
64.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.					
65.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.					
66.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.					
67.	The district meets students needs in computer fundamentals.					
68.	The district meets students needs in advanced computer skills.					

69.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.					

Appendix C

PART A:

Circle Answer

1.	Gender (Optional)	Male	Female			
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
3.	How long have you been employed by Austin ISD?	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years
4.	What grades are taught in your school?					
		Pre-Kindergarten Fourth Ninth	Kindergarten Fifth Tenth	First Sixth Eleventh	Second Seventh Twelfth	Third Eighth

A. District Organization & Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.					
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.					
3.	School board members understand their role as policymakers and stay out of the day-to-day					

		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	management of the district.					
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.					
5.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.					
6.	Central administration is efficient.					
7.	Central administration supports the educational process.					
8.	The morale of central administration staff is good.					

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9.	Education is the main priority in our school district.					
10.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.					
11.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.					
12.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.					
13.	The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.					
14.	The curriculum guides					

	are appropriately aligned and coordinated.					
15.	The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.					
16.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
	a) Reading					
	b) Writing					
	c) Mathematics					
	d) Science					
	e) English or Language Arts					
	f) Computer Instruction					
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)					
	h) Fine Arts					
	i) Physical Education					
	j) Business Education					
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education					
	l) Foreign Language					
17.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a) Library Service					
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education					
	c) Special Education					
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs					
	e) Dyslexia program					

	f) Student mentoring program					
	g) Advanced placement program					
	h) Literacy program					
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school					
	j) Summer school programs					
	k) Alternative education programs					
	l) "English as a second language" program					
	m) Career counseling program					
	n) College counseling program					
	o) Counseling the parents of students					
	p) Drop out prevention program					
18.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.					
19.	Teacher turnover is low.					
20.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.					
21.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.					
22.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.					
23.	All schools have equal					

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.					
24.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.					
25.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.					

C. Personnel

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
26.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.					
27.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.					
28.	Temporary workers are rarely used.					
29.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.					
30.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.					
31.	The district operates an effective staff development program.					
32.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.					
33.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells					

		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	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.					
35.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.					
36.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.					

D. Community Involvement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
37.	The district regularly communicates with parents.					
38.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.					
39.	District facilities are open for community use.					

E. Facilities Use and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
40.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.					

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
41.	Schools are clean.					
42.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.					
43.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.					
44.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.					

F. Financial Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
45.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.					
46.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.					
47.	Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.					

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
48.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.					
49.	Purchasing acquires high quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.					
50.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for					

	Survey Questions					
	the requestor.					
51.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.					
52.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.					
53.	Textbooks are in good shape.					
54.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.					

H. Food Services

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
55.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.					
56.	Food is served warm.					
57.	Students have enough time to eat.					
58.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.					
59.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.					
60.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.					
61.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.					
62.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.					

I. Transportation

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
63.	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.					
64.	The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.					
65.	Buses arrive and leave on time.					
66.	Adding or modifying a route for a student is easy to accomplish.					

J. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
67.	Students feel safe and secure at school.					
68.	School disturbances are infrequent.					
69.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.					
70.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.					
71.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.					
72.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.					
73.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.					
74.	A good working arrangement exists					

	Survey Questions					
	between the local law enforcement and the district.					
75.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.					
76.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.					

K. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
77.	Students regularly use computers.					
78.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.					
79.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.					
80.	The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.					
81.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.					
82.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.					
83.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.					

Appendix C

Teachers
(Written/Self-Administered)

PART A:

Circle Answer

1.	Gender (Optional)	Male	Female		
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
3.	How long have you been employed by Austin ISD?	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years
4.	What grade(s) do you teach this year (circle all that apply)?					
		Pre-Kindergarten Fourth Ninth	Kindergarten Fifth Tenth	First Sixth Eleventh	Second Seventh Twelfth	Third Eighth

District Organization & Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.					
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.					
3.	School board members work well with the superintendent.					
4.	The school board has a					

	Survey Questions					
	good image in the community.					
5.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.					
6.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.					
7.	Central administration is efficient.					
8.	Central administration supports the educational process.					
9.	The morale of central administration staff is good.					

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10.	Education is the main priority in our school district.					
11.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.					
12.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.					
13.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.					
14.	The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.					
15.	The curriculum guides					

	are appropriately aligned and coordinated.					
16.	The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.					
17.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
	a) Reading					
	b) Writing					
	c) Mathematics					
	d) Science					
	e) English or Language Arts					
	f) Computer Instruction					
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)					
	h) Fine Arts					
	i) Physical Education					
	j) Business Education					
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education					
	l) Foreign Language					
18.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a) Library Service					
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education					
	c) Special Education					
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs					
	e) Dyslexia program					

	f) Student mentoring program					
	g) Advanced placement program					
	h) Literacy program					
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school					
	j) Summer school programs					
	k) Alternative education programs					
	l) "English as a second language" program					
	m) Career counseling program					
	n) College counseling program					
	o) Counseling the parents of students					
	p) Drop out prevention program					
19.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.					
20.	Teacher turnover is low.					
21.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.					
22.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.					
23.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.					
24.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory					

	Survey Questions					
	performance.					
25.	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.					
26.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.					
27.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.					
28.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.					

C. Personnel

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
29.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.					
30.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.					
31.	Temporary workers are rarely used.					
32.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.					
33.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.					
34.	The district operates an effective staff development program.					
35.	District employees					

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	receive annual personnel evaluations.					
36.	The district 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.					
38.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.					
39.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.					

D. Community Involvement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
40.	The district regularly communicates with parents.					
41.	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.					
42.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.					
43.	District facilities are open for community use.					

E. Facilities Use and Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
44. The district plans facilities far enough in the future to support enrollment growth.					
45. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.					
46. The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.					
47. The quality of new construction is excellent.					
48. Schools are clean.					
49. Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.					
50. Repairs are made in a timely manner.					
51. Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.					

F. Financial Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
52. Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.					
53. Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management					

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	techniques.					
54.	Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.					

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
55.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.					
56.	Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.					
57.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.					
58.	Vendors are selected competitively.					
59.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.					
60.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.					
61.	Textbooks are in good shape.					
62.	The school library meets the student needs for books and other resources.					

H. Food Services

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

	Survey Questions					
63.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.					
64.	Food is served warm.					
65.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.					
66.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.					
67.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.					
68.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.					
69.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.					

I. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
70.	School disturbances are infrequent.					
71.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.					
72.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.					
73.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.					
74.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.					
75.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.					
76.	A good working arrangement exists					

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	between the local law enforcement and the district.					
77.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.					
78.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.					

J. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
79.	Students regularly use computers.					
80.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.					
81.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.					
82.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.					
83.	The district meets student needs in classes in computer fundamentals.					
84.	The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.					
85.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.					

Appendix C

PART A:

Circle Answer

1.	Gender (Optional)	Male	Female			
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
3.	What is your classification?	Junior	Senior			

A. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.					
2.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.					
3.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
	a) Reading					
	b) Writing					
	c) Mathematics					
	d) Science					
	e) English or Language Arts					
	f) Computer Instruction					
	g) Social Studies					

	(history or geography)					
	h) Fine Arts					
	i) Physical Education					
	j) Business Education					
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education					
	l) Foreign Language					
4.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a) Library Service					
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education					
	c) Special Education					
	d) Student mentoring program					
	e) Advanced placement program					
	f) Career counseling program					
	g) College counseling program					
5.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.					
6.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.					
7.	The district provides a high quality education.					
8.	The district has a high quality of teachers.					

B. Facilities Use and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9.	Schools are clean.					
10.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.					
11.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.					
12.	Emergency maintenance is handled timely.					

C. Purchasing and Warehousing

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13.	There are enough textbooks in all my classes.					
14.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.					
15.	Textbooks are in good shape.					
16.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.					

D. Food Services

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
17.	The school breakfast program is available to all children.					
18.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.					

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
19.	Food is served warm.					
20.	Students have enough time to eat.					
21.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.					
22.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.					
23.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.					
24.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.					
25.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.					

E. Transportation

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
26.	I regularly ride the bus.					
27.	The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.					
28.	The length of my bus ride is reasonable.					
29.	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.					
30.	The bus stop near my house is safe.					
31.	The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.					
32.	Buses arrive and leave on time.					
33.	Buses arrive early					

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	enough for students to eat breakfast at school.					
34.	Buses seldom break down.					
35.	Buses are clean.					
36.	Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.					

F. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
37.	I feel safe and secure at school.					
38.	School disturbances are infrequent.					
39.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.					
40.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.					
41.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.					
42.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.					
43.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.					
44.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.					
45.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.					

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
46.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.					

G. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
47.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.					
48.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.					
49.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.					
50.	The district offers enough classes in computer fundamentals.					
51.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.					
52.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.					

Appendix D
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY RESULTS (Written/Self-Administered)

Demographics

The Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) selected a random sample of 150 (out of 1,570) campus administrative and support staff and 50 Central Office staff. Eighty-nine of the 200 staff returned completed questionnaires. The majority (88 percent) of those who responded to the survey were divided equally between clerical and support staff; 8 percent were administrators, and 4 percent did not identify their positions. More than three-quarters of the respondents (77.5 percent) were female. About one-half were Anglo (49 percent), 20 percent were African American, and 24 percent were Hispanic.

Length of employment of administrative and support staff with the Austin Independent School District (AISD) varied greatly. More than 40 percent have been with AISD for 10 years: 12 percent have been with AISD for 11-15 years, 14 percent for 16-20 years, and 15 percent for 20 or more years. Forty percent had worked in the district for one to five years and 18 percent for six to ten years.

The survey questionnaire comprised two sections: a multiple-choice section and a comment section. The multiple-choice section asked employees their opinions about nine of the 12 areas under review. The nine areas covered in the survey were:

- District Organization and Management
- Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement
- Personnel
- Community Involvement
- Facilities Use and Management
- Financial Management
- Purchasing and Warehousing
- Safety and Security
- Computers and Technology

The comment section asked employees their opinions on the overall educational performance of the district in general. Responses for the multiple-choice questions are summarized below.

District Organization and Management

District administrative and support staff were asked for their opinions of the school board, superintendent, and central administration. Overall, respondents were supportive of central administration and the board. About 50 percent agreed that the school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings (35 percent had no opinion). About 60 percent indicated that the board listened to the opinions and desires of others (24 percent had no opinion). Fifty-five percent agreed that central administration supports the education process although 27 percent disagreed. District administrative and support staff were more critical about the efficiency of central administration: 55 percent did not think that central administration was efficient and 26 percent thought it was. Thirty-three percent of the respondents did not think that the morale of central administration staff is good, 27 percent thought that staff morale was good, and 39 percent had no opinion. More than 50 percent of district administrative and support staff had not made up their minds about the superintendent. However, about 40 percent agreed that the superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader and business manager and only a small percentage (2 to 5 percent) expressed a critical view.

Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Seventy percent of district administrative and support staff agreed that education is AISD's main priority. Nearly 60 percent agreed that teachers are given opportunities to suggest effective programs and materials. Fewer respondents agreed that AISD has been successful in meeting the needs of college-bound students (48 percent) and work-bound students (37 percent). Thirty percent of district administrative and support staff had no opinion in these matters.

Regarding the effectiveness of AISD's educational programs, 61 to 70 percent agreed that AISD's programs in Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Science, Language Arts, Social Studies, Fine Arts, and Physic al Education are effective. Between 15 and 28 percent of the district administrative and support staff did not express an opinion regarding the effectiveness of these educational programs. Between 45 and 50 percent agreed that programs in Computer Instruction, Business Education, Vocational Education, and Foreign Language are effective. Many had no opinion in regard to the effectiveness of programs in Business Education (45 percent), Foreign Language (37 percent), and Vocational Education (36 percent).

Respondents' views on the effectiveness of special programs varied greatly. Between 20 and 50 percent of the district administrative and support staff had no opinion about the effectiveness of these programs. Programs rated most effective were Library Service, Honors, and Special Education, all of which had 60 to 70 percent agreement. The Drop-Out

Prevention and At-Risk Students programs received the lowest ratings. Only 28 and 32 percent of the respondents thought that these programs were effective, while 36 to 38 percent disagreed; in fact, more respondents considered these program ineffective than effective. Between 40 and 50 percent of the district administrative and support staff did not express any opinion about the effectiveness of the Head Start and Even Start programs, the Dyslexia program, the Advanced Placement program, the Career Counseling program, and the College Counseling program. Fewer than 40 percent indicated that these programs were effective.

District administrative and support staff were critical of the handling of a range of personnel issues. Only 16 percent agreed that AISD teachers are rewarded for supreme performance: 56 percent disagreed. Eighteen percent agreed that teacher turnover in the district is low: 58 percent disagreed. About one-quarter of the respondents agreed that teacher openings are filled quickly, that they are filled by highly qualified teachers, or that teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance. Staff were also critical of allocation of resources to schools. Only 26 percent of the respondents agreed while 57 percent disagreed that all schools have equal access to educational materials and resources. Thirty to 37 percent of the respondents agreed while 40 to 50 percent disagreed that AISD's student-to-teacher ratio was reasonable, that parents are immediately notified if their child is absent, and that students have access to a school nurse when needed. Between 12 and 27 percent expressed no opinion about these issues.

Personnel

Respondents generally disagreed with most of the statements in this section. They were most critical of the statements about competitive salaries, staffing projections, and rewards for competence/promotions. More than 50 percent of the respondents disagreed and fewer than 25 percent agreed with these statements. The only statement to which a majority of district administrative and support staff agreed was that employees receive annual evaluations. Between 21 and 45 percent of district administrative and support staff expressed no opinion about most of these issues with the exception of three issues: the adequacy of the health insurance package (2 percent had no opinion), the competitiveness of salaries (6 percent had no opinion) and the administration of annual performance reviews (8 percent had no opinion).

Community Involvement

District administrative and support staff have a positive view of AISD's community involvement efforts. Respondents agreed that the district communicates regularly with parents (60 percent), that local radio and

television stations regularly report school news (84 percent), and that facilities are open for school use (62 percent). Only 25 percent of the respondents agreed while 54 percent disagreed that schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs. About 20 to 25 percent expressed no opinion on these issues.

Facilities Use and Management

Sixty-seven to 70 percent of district administrative and support staff agreed that schools are clean and that emergency maintenance is handled properly (9 to 13 percent had no opinion). Less agreement was expressed in connection to community, staff, and faculty input into facility planning (45 percent). Respondents were split between agreement and disagreement in regard to facility maintenance: 52 percent agreed and 34 percent disagreed that facilities are maintained properly and in a timely manner; 36 percent agreed and 45 percent disagreed that repairs are made in a timely manner. Fewer than 40 percent of the respondents were able to express an opinion about the process of selection of the architect and construction managers: 17 percent agreed that the process was objective and impersonal and 21 percent disagreed.

Financial Management

Forty to 60 percent of district administrative and support staff did not have an opinion on financial management issues. Respondents, however, were split on most financial management issues included in the survey. Nearly 40 percent of respondents agreed that site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend teacher and principal involvement (17 percent disagreed). More than one-third thought that campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management (25 percent disagreed). According to one-quarter of the respondents the district makes financial reports available to community members upon request (15 percent disagreed). More than one-third of the respondents disagreed and one-fifth agreed that the district's financial reports are easy to read.

Purchasing and Warehousing

A large percent of respondents were critical of AISD's purchasing processes and practices. Between 20 and 30 percent had no opinion. District administrative and support staff were most critical of the quality of materials purchased by the district and the cumbersome nature of the process. Fewer than 30 percent of the respondents agreed and 51 percent disagreed that the district purchases the highest-quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost. Similarly, 30 percent of the respondents agreed and 37 disagreed that the district's purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor. More than 40 percent agreed that they can

purchase what they need and when they need it; however, 35 percent disagreed. More than 50 percent agreed that teachers and administrators get an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.

A larger percent of respondents agreed with the district's processes for the purchasing and distribution of textbooks. Forty-five percent agreed that textbooks are distributed to students in a timely manner (24 percent disagreed). Fifty-seven percent agreed that the textbooks are in good shape and 67 percent agreed that school libraries are well stocked and meet student needs.

Safety and Security

More than 60 percent of district administrative and support staff thought that gangs, drugs, and vandalism are problems in the district (13 to 20 percent disagreed and 18 percent had no opinion). Forty to 60 percent of respondents agreed that security personnel have good relationships with the principals (61 percent), that the district has a good working arrangement with the local law enforcement (56 percent), and that security personnel are respected and well liked by the students (42 percent). Thirty to 50 percent had no opinion about these issues. Respondents had a mixed opinion on the application of disciplinary policies: about one-half (48 percent) of the respondents agreed that students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct, 32 percent disagreed, and 17 percent had no opinion.

Computers and Technology

District administrative and support staff generally agreed with statements regarding students and teachers access to and use of computers. Over 60 percent of the respondents agreed that students regularly use computers (20 percent disagreed, 16 percent had no opinion). More than 50 percent agreed that students have regular access to computers in the classroom (25 percent disagreed, 18 percent had no opinion). Two-thirds also agreed that computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction (19 percent disagreed and 12 percent had no opinion). About one-half of the respondents agreed that teachers know how to use computers in the classroom (29 percent disagreed and 22 percent had no opinion), that the district meets students' needs in computer fundamentals (29 percent disagreed and 19 percent had no opinion), and that teachers and students have easy access to the Internet (44 percent agreed and 34 percent disagreed, 20 percent had no opinion). Fewer than 30 percent agreed while 34 percent disagreed that the district meets students' needs in advanced skills (30 percent had no opinion).

Appendix D

Exhibit D-1
District Administrative and Support Staff Survey Results
(n=89)

PART A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

STATEMENT	CATEGORY		
	No Response	Male	Female
1. Gender (Optional)	3.4%	19.1%	77.5%

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Anglo	African-American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
2. Ethnicity (Optional)	6.7%	49.4%	20.2%	23.6%	0.0%	0.0%

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years
3. How long have you been employed by Austin ISD?	1.1%	40.4%	18.0%	12.4%	13.5%	14.6%

STATEMENT	CATEGORY			
	No Response	Administrator	Clerical Staffer	Support Staffer
4. Are you a(n):	4.5%	7.9%	43.8%	43.8%

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years
5. How long have you been employed in this capacity by Austin ISD?	2.2%	49.4%	15.7%	13.5%	10.1%	9.0%

PART B: SURVEY QUESTIONS

A. District Organization & Management

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	1.1%	4.5%	43.8%	34.8%	15.7%	0.0%
2. School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	1.1	3.4	57.3	23.6	13.5	1.1
3. The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	2.2	10.1	28.1	55.1	3.4	1.1
4. The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	2.2	11.2	31.5	52.8	1.1	1.1
5. Central administration is efficient.	1.1	1.1	24.7	18.0	42.7	12.4
6. Central administration supports the educational process.	1.1	4.5	50.6	16.9	21.3	5.6
7. The morale of central administration staff is good.	1.1	4.5	22.5	39.3	22.5	10.1

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8. Education is the main priority in our school district.	1.1%	11.2%	58.4%	11.2%	13.5%	4.5%
9. Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	5.6	3.4	55.1	23.6	11.2	1.1
10. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	3.4	6.7	41.6	29.2	16.9	2.2

11.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	4.5	3.4	33.7	30.3	21.3	6.7
12.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	1.1	5.6	67.4	14.6	10.1	1.1
	b) Writing	2.2	4.5	61.8	18.0	11.2	2.2
	c) Mathematics	2.2	4.5	65.2	18.0	6.7	3.4
	d) Science	2.2	3.4	57.3	24.7	10.1	2.2
	e) English or Language Arts	2.2	6.7	58.4	25.8	6.7	0.0
	f) Computer Instruction	3.4	5.6	41.6	25.8	21.3	2.2
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	2.2	4.5	58.4	28.1	5.6	1.1
	h) Fine Arts	3.4	6.7	62.9	23.6	2.2	1.1
	i) Physical Education	2.2	5.6	64.0	24.7	2.2	1.1
	j) Business Education	2.2	3.4	41.6	44.9	5.6	2.2
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	2.2	3.4	42.7	36.0	13.5	2.2
	l) Foreign Language	2.2	2.2	48.3	37.1	7.9	2.2
13.	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a) Library Service	1.1	6.7	56.2	28.1	7.9	0.0
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	1.1	7.9	60.7	18.0	11.2	1.1
	c) Special Education	2.2	9.0	56.2	19.1	11.2	2.2
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	1.1	4.5	40.4	48.3	3.4	2.2
	e) Dyslexia program	1.1	2.2	32.6	47.2	14.6	2.2
	f) Student mentoring program	1.1	3.4	46.1	30.3	16.9	2.2
	g) Advanced placement program	1.1	7.9	42.7	43.8	3.4	1.1
	h) Literacy program	3.4	2.2	44.9	39.3	9.0	1.1
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	1.1	2.2	30.3	28.1	28.1	10.1

	STATEMENT						
	j) Summer school programs	0.0	4.5	49.4	28.1	14.6	3.4
	k) Alternative education programs	2.2	4.5	42.7	32.6	15.7	2.2
	l) "English as a second language" program	1.1	3.4	43.8	29.2	18.0	4.5
	m) Career counseling program	1.1	3.4	37.1	40.4	12.4	5.6
	n) College counseling program	2.2	5.6	33.7	42.7	12.4	3.4
	o) Counseling the parents of students	1.1	6.7	31.5	30.3	22.5	7.9
	p) Drop out prevention program	3.4	3.4	24.7	32.6	24.7	11.2
14.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	1.1	2.2	32.6	25.8	28.1	10.1
15.	Teacher turnover is low.	5.6	2.2	15.7	18.0	42.7	15.7
16.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	1.1	1.1	24.7	20.2	44.9	7.9
17.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	1.1	1.1	23.6	20.2	43.8	10.1
18.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	1.1	1.1	14.6	27.0	47.2	9.0
19.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	1.1	2.2	25.8	40.4	20.2	10.1
20.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	1.1	1.1	24.7	15.7	28.1	29.2
21.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	3.4	2.2	28.1	15.7	32.6	18.0
22.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	2.2	5.6	31.5	12.4	30.3	18.0
23.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	1.1	9.0	47.2	25.8	14.6	2.2

C. Personnel

STATEMENT	CATEGORY

	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
24. District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	0.0%	5.6%	20.2%	5.6%	46.1%	22.5%
25. The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	0.0	1.1	36.0	21.3	27.0	14.6
26. Temporary workers are rarely used.	0.0	5.6	23.6	34.8	29.2	6.7
27. The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	0.0	2.2	18.0	25.8	33.7	20.2
28. The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	0.0	3.4	22.5	34.8	28.1	11.2
29. The district operates an effective staff development program.	1.1	3.4	40.4	23.6	19.1	12.4
30. District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	0.0	10.1	68.5	7.9	9.0	4.5
31. The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	0.0	1.1	14.6	21.3	39.3	23.6
32. Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	0.0	1.1	27.0	30.3	25.8	15.7
33. The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	2.2	2.2	29.2	44.9	16.9	4.5
34. The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	0.0	6.7	51.7	2.2	15.7	23.6

D. Community Involvement

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
35. The district regularly	0.0%	10.1%	49.4%	21.3%	16.9%	2.2%

	communicates with parents.					
36.	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	0.0	11.2	73.0	6.7	7.9	1.1
37.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	1.1	3.4	21.3	20.2	39.3	14.6
38.	District facilities are open for community use.	0.0	6.7	55.1	24.7	11.2	2.2

E. Facilities Use and Management

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
39. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	1.1%	5.6%	39.3%	30.3%	16.9%	6.7%
40. The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	1.1	2.2	14.6	60.7	13.5	7.9
41. Schools are clean.	2.2	10.1	59.6	9.0	14.6	4.5
42. Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	1.1	5.6	46.1	13.5	25.8	7.9
43. Repairs are made in a timely manner.	1.1	1.1	34.8	18.0	31.5	13.5
44. Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	1.1	5.6	61.8	14.6	12.4	4.5

F. Financial Management

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
45. Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and	3.4%	3.4%	34.8%	41.6%	12.4%	4.5%

	teachers.					
46.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	3.4	4.5	29.2	38.2	21.3	3.4
47.	The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	2.2	2.2	19.1	42.7	28.1	5.6
48.	Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	2.2	3.4	22.5	57.3	14.6	0.0

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
49. Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	2.2%	5.6%	37.1%	20.2%	25.8%	9.0%
50. Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	2.2	4.5	23.6	19.1	32.6	18.0
51. Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	3.4	4.5	25.8	30.3	28.1	7.9
52. The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	2.2	5.6	48.3	21.3	16.9	5.6
53. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	2.2	5.6	39.3	29.2	18.0	5.6
54. Textbooks are in good shape.	2.2	6.7	50.6	29.2	10.1	1.1
55. The school library meets student needs for books and other resources for students.	2.2	9.0	58.4	18.0	10.1	2.2

H. Safety and Security

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

56.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	1.1%	3.4%	16.9%	18.0%	43.8%	16.9%
57.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	1.1	3.4	10.1	18.0	47.2	20.2
58.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	1.1	2.2	11.2	18.0	50.6	16.9
59.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	1.1	9.0	51.7	31.5	5.6	1.1
60.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	1.1	9.0	32.6	48.3	7.9	1.1
61.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	1.1	7.9	46.1	37.1	6.7	1.1
62.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	3.4	6.7	41.6	16.9	25.8	5.6

I. Computers and Technology

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
63.	Students regularly use computers.	2.2%	5.6%	56.2%	15.7%	19.1%	1.1%
64.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	3.4	4.5	49.4	18.0	21.3	3.4
65.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	2.2	3.4	42.7	22.5	24.7	4.5
66.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	2.2	5.6	60.7	12.4	14.6	4.5
67.	The district meets students needs in computer fundamentals.	2.2	4.5	44.9	19.1	23.6	5.6
68.	The district meets students	3.4	2.2	24.7	30.3	29.2	10.1

	needs in advanced computer skills.						
69.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	2.2	5.6	38.2	20.2	21.3	12.4

Appendix D

PART C: VERBATIM

- I have been with the district for 25 years and I still say that if you hire a superintendent that is a businessman, he will make sure you have the money for education. There is a lot of waste in the district.
- Some of these questions were difficult to answer because campuses vary so much. Teacher turnover at my school is low. Teacher turnover at other schools is very high. I am lucky to work in a positive environment with good leadership, lots of parental involvement, and motivated students. My concerns are about our secondary schools. I feel that we are not meeting the needs of many students. Anderson and Murchison do a fine job with honors kids but there needs to be more emphasis on the average and below average students. We need more motivational programs available at the high schools. Our middle schools are contributing to the dropout rate. Elementaries seem to do a much better job of dealing with children's individual differences. By secondary school time, especially 7th and above, we keep trying to fit those variously-shaped pegs into round-shaped holes. We need to vary our holes somewhat. Too many students regard a day of class as comparable to a day in the dentist's chair. We need some more alternative, hands-on courses. Some charter schools have created courses that combine LA, SS and even Speech to achieve a multi-credit course. For those many, many freshman who have failed a course, that might be a useful idea. I am very concerned about the many, many students we have with Attention Deficit Disorders. I see bright kids who hit secondary school and start failing right and left. Disorganization is a disability just like blindness and yet we continue to fail students who are disorganized. They many know the content matter of a subject but be failing because of late work or work that never got turned in.
- AISD is, in my opinion, extremely inequitable. As a travelling teacher I see daily the differences in schools on the west side of town and the east side of town. I think it's crazy when a school line Casis has a sound field in every classroom and you go to Pearce and they have an entire hallway (newly built) without one phone! I think teachers as a whole, especially in high schools, are uninvolved and lackadaisical. I think the benefits package stinks, especially the management company chosen for flexible benefits and the changing of the "free" insurance every year. There is no support for teacher needs, so how can we keep giving our all to students?

- (1) Not all schools are equal. There are definite "haves" and "have nots." (2) Technology needs more input from campus levels. Every school needs a certified network administrator. (3) Attendance policy needs to be generated at campus levels especially for high schools. (4) Teachers need more support from administrators/district on discipline. (5) Teachers need to have "all" necessary instructional materials including enough textbooks for every student and textbooks that are supportive of the curriculum. (6) Low morale causes teachers, especially new teachers to leave the classrooms and teaching field. (7) Libraries need to have additional personnel in order to be able to supervise students using all the technology (computers) being placed in the libraries.
- The biggest problem I see would be the understaffing to meet the needs of the students. Lack of funding for salaries could contribute to this. It also seems as depending on the neighborhood so is the school which is unfortunate.
- I enjoy working in a school with children, enjoy my job but would never be able to live on my salary alone. The cost of living raises do not keep up with the cost of living in Austin. The health insurance cost for a family is unreasonable on my salary. Teachers are having to be in too many meetings after school and the paperwork is always increasing not only for teachers but clerical also.
- In spite of everything, the majority of the employees of AISD are doing their best to provide the best education possible for the children of Austin. AISD has outstanding educators who give unbelievable amounts of time and energy to this and with little positive feedback from the public.
- (1) As a support staff we are operating on outdated computers. Computers are often down and office staff of 8 share 2 computers. Info cannot get to CAC in a timely manner. (2) Office staff (9 or 10 month employees) began school behind in their work and do not have time unless late hours and Saturdays are used to complete work in timely manner. Examples, 1999-2000 last day to work for clerks is 1 day after school is out. Impossible to complete job. I stay at least a week late so my job is in order (my time). I think, considering workload (all office staff) should be 11 months. Thank you for listening.
- I filled out this survey based on what I know about my school within the district. At my school due to construction we are lacking classrooms and/or teachers. We have been without a library. Materials bought for classrooms are cheap and rarely work. Teachers are never rewarded for a job well done. Teachers who teach in at-risk schools deserve a stipend or some incentives.

- District needs to provide rewards for seniority and job performance. Pay raises need to be reinstated for secretaries. Health insurance companies keep changing every year - it is very difficult to keep the same doctor year after year.
- Pay rate should be more competitive or insurance rates lowered to compensate for lower wages. Teachers should not have to be bogged down by so much paperwork, behavioral problems. Need to be teaching. I am a taxpayer as well and feel my money is being wasted on teacher trying to discipline one child throughout the day instead of instructing.
- I feel health insurance is too, too expensive.
- Need more promotional opportunities for clerical staff. No monetary incentives tied to above average performance.
- Need more and better training of classified employees. Need to set policies and procedures regarding these jobs throughout the district. More employees in MIS downtown to trouble shoot.
- As usual, the northwest portion of Austin students get the better teachers, better principals and the lower income areas of Austin are not given the same attention. Nothing has changed from when I attended AISD 30+ years ago.
- (1) Special Education needs to be addressed. If a parent takes a child of a self contained classroom and puts the child with a T.A. as one on one and the child cannot do the work in academic classes, money to me is being wasted. If the child feels they have special needs and will pass no matter what, so they don't even try. (2) We need a better discipline action plan, these kids think its fun or they are more popular by how many times they go to ISS, get a referral or get suspended. They don't care. Its not effective to make them behave; in class these children are so disrespectful to teachers. It really makes ones job hard.
- Austin ISD has a good educational performance in some areas. In the areas of budget, the district should study the spending of money on the people attending conferences out of state. Do they really need to attend and/or does it cover any area to the title they have?
- I answered this survey from a clerk's point of view and what I see in the office and on our campus.
- We do not have enough faculty/staff to serve the number of students in the district. For this reason, students are "missing out" on a quality education and faculty/staff are frustrated. I feel, although your effort is appreciated, this survey will not solve the problem in our district. The district has many problems.
- Communications at Central Administration is greatly lacking. Many of our problems could be avoided if there was a more collaborative effort district wide. The feeling of "we're all in this together" does not exist.

- The district does not allow enough office staff on the campuses to get the work done on time without mistakes. Staff on campus do not have input into matters that involve us, such as construction/remodeling - teachers and office staff have a better idea of storage units and equipment for the campus than anyone else.
- I feel that this district is bowing down to the vocal minority. If a school is mostly white and upper middle class, they get the majority of attention and funding. In other words, the squeaky wheel gets the grease, not the broken one. There is a serious problem between the "haves" and the "have-nots," and watering down the district by building more schools isn't an adequate solution.
- Educational service area: Too many programs are implemented then dropped and others come in full force then dropped. We need to stay with one program which meets everybody's needs (not just G/T or lowest).
- Personnel: We are seen as "numbers" and not human beings. Teachers pulled from a school and dumped somewhere else. Too "business-like" instead of "people-like" organization. We do work with people (children, parents, etc.)
- AISD vehicles should not be driven home.
- (1) Lower class sizes must be addressed. (2) Drop the TAAS, too stressful on teachers and students. (3) 16 is the perfect class size and more individual attention could be given. With more attention there would be less discipline problems and less school dropouts. (4) All schools should have equal amounts of technology and other equipment. Not just the rich white areas. (5) Listen to teachers. (6) Let teachers design the buildings.
- Sports: If you are an excellent player some teachers are passing the students in order for them to play. But coaches have to like you. I disagree with that.
- In high school there needs to be more help for students that are in special education programs; they get lost somewhere in the shuffle of students. I feel teachers aren't aware that they have students that need extra help. Students get discouraged. There could be more one on one or at least effort made if teacher is aware of failing.
- I share my comments with great pride - it's a joy to see a child develop good homework habits and in doing so, the child gains respect for himself/herself, elders and peers. AISD is going a long way mailing and handing out newsletters, keeping us in touch with the school PTA and every member of the school staff. Important web sites are printed so that no parent is left in the dark. For (e.g.) "Think college early to" information to Homework Helpline - what more can you ask! The administration as a whole is maintaining a well-balanced work ethic and environment, making our AISD

schools and children a shining star, for a better tomorrow. Thank you administration for all you so.

- My complaints: I. Classroom size is too large. II. There is no such thing as Internet access. III. There are not enough hall monitors. IV. There are far too many students who do not attend school regularly.

- It would be better if class sizes would be smaller. With four classes a day in some schools, team teaching would be very helpful (especially in English classes and social studies classes, too). Kids need P.E. classes --exercise is good for the body and mind. Get rid of candy and drink machines. I know that we have good teachers; give them more money and raise their salaries. Retirement checks are too small.

- In the 10 years I have been in this district it has always been too top heavy. There are too many chiefs and nor enough Indians. Schools need to be the same throughout the district. With site-based management we are hurting some students within our own district. The administration needs to be cut back but it also needs more say as to what goes on in schools. For example, all schools need to be on block scheduling or none of them, but it needs to be district wide.

- This organization is filled with incompetent administrators and managers. A lot of employees are treated poorly because their superiors have to protect the fact that they are phonies and don't have clue to what they are supposed to manage. A clean sweep is desperately needed. Us old timers are real believers in climbing up from the ranks, not putting figureheads in these upper positions. Harsh but true.

- Programs need to be put in place to address the needs of work bound students and students at risk of dropping (out). AISD's Garza High School should be expanded to allow students with less than 10 credits to attend. More high schools should offer late afternoon or evening classes. No busing is going to lead to separate and unequal schools. Schools east of IH 35 will suffer. I suggest a monthly or quarterly parent newsletter from the Board explaining upcoming events, procedures, polices, etc.

- The superintendent is new to AISD. Therefore, I can not respond to the questions concerning him. But it appears that he is concerned about parents, teachers, and community participation with school affairs. The school board is the worst one we have ever had and I first became involved with AISD as a parent in the 60's. I think, student-to-teacher relationships could improve in most of the middle and high schools. Also, parent-to-teacher.

- I am a former manager (retired) from a large computer manufacturer in Austin. In my opinion this is the most poorly managed organization I've ever seen. Since the Fox administration,

AISD has been operated under fear. Fear of losing your job. This attitude still prevails today at Central. If you are an at will employee or a lower level manager, you could lose your job for simply voicing your concerns or opinions.

- I believe each and every department in AISD should receive an independent audit. The first being Purchasing. Why does AISD have to pay such inflated costs for parts and equipment for technology, from one vendor. Many of these parts and equipment can be purchased for considerably less from other sources. I would hope the audit would look closely at all aspects of Purchasing. I can't help but wonder how many hands are under the table.

- Of course Food service should be at the top of the list. This goes without saying: $3.5 million.

- Technology has its problems too. Several questions come to mind. Why are there over 300 new Dell computers in the cafeteria at the Baker office complex for the past 2 to 3 months? Have these computers been paid for and with what money? Why did Central get all the new computers when the first contract was let. The schools are the last to get new computers. I've heard in the news media, Central administrators and the school board, the statement "THE CHILDREN COME FIRST." Ha! This is a joke. Central and administrators come first at AISD.

- I must say one thing about classified personnel! This is the most unprofessional group I've ever come in contact with. I've never seen a personnel department with so much controlling power. In all my years in dealing with personnel departments, I've always found personnel to be there to assist employees and the management team. This is not true at AISD.

- I have very mixed feelings about expressing my concerns this way. I have always been loyal to my employer and management team. But there are too many issues of concern in AISD.

- I wish to thank you for this opportunity and vehicle to share my thoughts.

- I have only commented about the areas on which I have direct knowledge. The teachers, administrators, and other clerical staff, on the whole, are trying their best to serve the needs of the students; however, many classes are overcrowded and much of the equipment, such as copiers and computers in the offices, are old and inadequate for the needs of the school.

- As a whole, I feel the teaching staff at our school is adequately trained and knowledgeable about their respective subject areas.

- I am employed with the support staff, and feel that certain areas are not seen as important. There's no communication between supervisors and many jobs are done several times, due to lack of communication. In my department there are three supervisors, and on any given day none of the three know what each other is doing.

Therefore any schedule we have is always changing. And jobs are being put aside because my area is not as important as others. Also nepotism is a problem, too many brother in-law, brothers, cousins, and nephews working together; that in itself will cause a problem. Thank you for this opportunity.

- ESL students and students who do not fit into traditional classroom settings are not well served. Special education students unfairly use their handicapping conditions to avoid discipline procedures. A campus is needed for special education students with discipline issues.
- Not about educational performance: How can we know who is going to be the newly promoted, even before all candidates are interviewed?
- Personal experiences: (1) Request for resolution of grievance ignored from Area Superintendent level all the way to the Executive Director of Personnel/Human Resources level. (2) AISD Technology Services' overall performance is poor. (3) Too many teachers are required to purchase teaching materials with their own funds because no procedures exist to provide them in a timely manner. (4) Overall AISD administrators lack good management and people skills.
- Need more bilingual teachers in classrooms.

Appendix E
PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SURVEY RESULTS
(Written/Self-Administered)

Demographics

The Austin Independent School District (AISD) has 102 principals and 158 assistant principals. TSPR mailed questionnaires to all principals and assistant principals. One hundred and sixty-two principals and assistant principals completed and returned the questionnaires. Sixty percent of the respondents were female and 34 percent were male. More than one-half (52 percent) were Anglo, 15 percent were African American, and 24 percent were Hispanic. One respondent classified him/herself as "other."

Respondents' length of employment with AISD varied greatly. About one-quarter of the principals and assistant principals have been employed at AISD five or fewer years. Sixty percent have been employed for 11 or more years: 11 percent for 11-15 years; 14 percent for 16-20 years, and 35 percent for 20 or more years. Fifteen percent have been with AISD 6 to 10 years.

More than one-half of the principals and assistant principals who responded to the survey (54 percent) have positions in elementary schools. About one-fifth are in middle school, and 20 percent are at high schools. Four percent of principals and assistant principals are in schools combining some elementary, middle and high school grades. Four percent of the respondents did not identify the level of their respective school.

The survey questionnaire was comprised of two sections: a multiple-choice section and a comment section. The multiple-choice section asked employees their opinions on 11 of the 12 areas under review. The 11 areas covered in the survey were:

- District Organization and Management
- Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement
- Personnel
- Community Involvement
- Facilities Use and Management
- Financial Management
- Purchasing and Warehousing
- Food Services
- Transportation
- Safety and Security

- Computers and Technology

The comment section asked employees their opinions on the overall educational performance of the district in general. Responses for the multiple-choice questions are summarized below.

District Organization and Management

Most respondents agreed that school board members allowed time for public input (76 percent), and listened to the opinion of others (65 percent). However, 51 percent disagreed while 31 percent agreed that board members understand their role as policymakers and stay out of the day-to-day management of the district. Principals and assistant principals were highly critical of central administration's efficiency: 73 percent thought that central administration was inefficient and only 15 percent thought it was efficient. Respondents were split nearly evenly regarding whether central administration supports the educational process.

More than one-half of the principals and assistant principals reserved judgment on the superintendent. Those who ventured an opinion, agreed that the superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader and business manager (only 4 percent disagreed).

Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Sixty to 90 percent of the principals and assistants principals agreed that education is the main priority of AISD (77 percent), that teachers are given an opportunity to suggest effective programs and materials (67 percent), that the needs of college-bound students are being met (60 percent), that the district provides curriculum guides (91 percent), that the guides are appropriately aligned (76 percent), and that the guides clearly outline what to teach (62 percent). Principals and assistant principals were divided in their opinion as to whether the district meets the needs of the work-bound students: 39 percent did not think so, 32 percent did, and 26 percent had no opinion. More than 20 percent had no opinion whether the needs of college-bound students are being met.

Respondents were asked to assess the effectiveness of 12 educational programs. Sixty-four to 84 percent of respondents regarded eight of these programs as effective. Computer instruction was regarded as ineffective by one-half of the respondents, while 38 percent thought it was effective. Only one-half of the respondents were able to assess programs such as Business Education and Vocational Education and 65 percent assessed Foreign Languages. Most of those who provided data on these programs were positive in their opinions.

Principals and assistant principals provided mixed reviews of AISD's special programs. A majority of principals and assistant principals agreed about the effectiveness of Library Science, Special Education, Advanced Placement, Literacy, and Summer School programs. Respondents were split over the effectiveness of the Honors/Gifted and Talented programs: 46 percent of the respondents regarded the program ineffective and 42 percent regarded the program effective. Respondents also had split opinions about the effectiveness of the Dyslexia program and the student mentoring program. The Drop-out Prevention (47 percent--ineffective, 22 percent--effective) and Parent Counseling programs (44 percent--ineffective, 30 percent--effective) were regarded by a larger percent of respondents as ineffective than effective. A large percent of principals and assistant principals indicated that they had no opinion about most of the special programs. For example, 55 percent of the principals and assistant principals expressed no opinion regarding the effectiveness of Head Start and Even Start programs, 46 percent had no opinion about the college counseling programs, and 41 percent expressed no opinion about career counseling programs. More than one-third (36 percent) had no opinion vis-à-vis Advanced Placement and 28 percent had no opinion about the effectiveness of the drop-out prevention programs.

Most principals and assistant principals were critical of AISD, claiming that parents are not immediately notified that their child is absent (64 percent), that teacher turnover is high (74 percent), and that teachers filling job openings are not highly qualified (67 percent). Respondents also claimed that teachers are not rewarded for superior performance (86 percent) and that schools do not have equal access to materials (74 percent).

Most agreed that teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance (80 percent), and that classrooms are seldom left unattended (75 percent).

Personnel

The majority of principals and assistant principals disagreed that AISD salaries are competitive (83 percent), that staffing needs are successfully projected (69 percent), that the district has an effective recruitment program (69 percent), and that the district rewards competence and experience (79 percent). More than one-half of the respondents also disagreed that the district has a good orientation program and rarely uses temporary workers.

Most principals and assistant principals agreed that the district has an effective staff development program (62 percent), that employees receive annual evaluations (91 percent), that employees who perform below

expectations are appropriately counseled (67 percent), and that the re is a fair grievance process (78 percent). Respondents, however, were divided in their opinions as to whether the district's health insurance program meets their needs.

Community Involvement

Between 70 and 80 percent of principals and assistant principals agreed that the district regularly communicates with parents and that its facilities are open for community use. Most respondents did not think that schools have sufficient volunteers.

Facilities Use and Management

Principals and assistant principals were most critical of the district's way of handling routine maintenance and repairs: 53 percent disagreed that buildings received proper and timely maintenance, and 70 percent disagreed that repairs are made in a timely manner. However, more than one-half of the respondents agreed that emergency maintenance is handled properly (64 percent), that various groups have input into facility planning (59 percent), and that schools are clean (80 percent).

Financial Management

A majority of principals and assistant principals agreed that site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers (73 percent) and that financial resources are allocated fairly at their school (69 percent). Respondents were divided over whether campus administrators are well-trained in fiscal management.

Purchasing and Warehousing

Principals and assistant principals were critical of AISD's purchasing process. Nearly 70 percent thought that AISD's purchasing processes are cumbersome. About 60 percent did not think that Purchasing acquires high quality materials and equipment at the lowest costs. One-half of the principals and assistant principals also disagreed that Purchasing gets them what they need when they need it.

More than one-half of the principals and assistant principals agreed that the district provides an easy-to-use list of standard supplies (34 percent disagreed). Respondents also agreed that students are issued textbooks in a timely manner (62 percent), that textbooks are in good shape (80 percent), and that the library has the resources to meet students needs (63 percent).

Food Services

While only one-half of the principals and assistant principals thought that the cafeteria food in their school looks and tastes good (33 percent disagreed), they were most positive about the district's food services. About 70 or more percent of the respondents agreed that the cafeteria serves warm food (68 percent), that students don't have to wait in line more than 10 minutes (78 percent), and that students eat lunch at an appropriate time (81 percent). Respondents also agreed that discipline and order are maintained in the cafeteria (85 percent), that cafeteria staff are friendly and helpful (87 percent), that cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat (90 percent), and that students have enough to eat (91 percent).

Transportation

Principals and assistant principals were pleased with AISD's transportation services. More than two-thirds of the respondents agreed that their school has a safe drop-off zone (81 percent), that there is a simple method to request buses for special events (78 percent), and that buses arrive and leave on time (67 percent). Forty-five percent of the respondents were critical of the difficulty of adding or modifying a route for a student: 33 percent did not think that this process was difficult and 22 percent had no opinion.

Safety and Security

While most principals and assistant principals agreed that students feel safe and secure at school (94 percent), and that disturbances are infrequent (85 percent), 55 to 69 percent thought that gangs (55 percent), drugs (69 percent), and vandalism (65 percent) are district problems. Fourteen (14) to (21) percent had no opinion on these issues. One-half of the respondents did not think that school grounds pose safety hazards while 36 percent did. More than one-half of the principals and assistant principals were pleased with the campus security personnel and with the relationship the district has with local law enforcement; 22 to 32 percent expressed no opinion. Nearly 90 percent of the respondents also thought that students are fairly disciplined for misconduct.

Computer and Technology

Principals and assistant principals provided a mixed assessment regarding access to and use of computers and technology. Their assessment clearly portrays schools at different points on the technology continuum. More than one-half indicated that their students regularly use computers (62 percent), that students have access to computers in the classroom (52 percent), and that teachers know how to use computers for instruction (50 percent). However, 33 to 43 percent of the respondents reported that this is not the situation in their schools. Easy access to the Internet is available to

students and teachers according to 39 percent of the respondents, but not available according to 56 percent. Although 67 percent indicated that they have computers that are new enough for student instruction, 32 percent do not. Sixty to 65 percent of the respondents also did not think that the district meets students' needs for computer fundamentals or advanced computer skills.

Appendix E

PART A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

STATEMENT	CATEGORY		
	No Response	Male	Female
1. Gender (Optional)	6.8%	34.0%	59.3%

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Anglo	African-American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
2. Ethnicity (Optional)	8.0%	51.9%	15.4%	24.1%	0.0%	0.6%

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years
3. How long have you been employed by Austin ISD?	1.2%	24.1%	14.8%	10.5%	14.2%	35.2%

STATEMENT	CATEGORY						
	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5
4. What grades are taught at your school?	45.7%	53.7%	54.3%	53.7%	56.8%	54.9%	55.6%
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	35.2%	21.6%	22.2%	22.2%	22.8%	23.5%	23.5%

PART B: SURVEY QUESTIONS

A. District Organization & Management

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	2.5%	22.2%	54.3%	9.3%	11.7%	0.0%
2. School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	2.5	12.3	52.5	10.5	19.1	3.1
3. School board members understand their role as policymakers and stay out of the day-to-day management of the district.	2.5	6.2	24.7	15.4	38.3	13.0
4. The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	3.1	13.6	30.2	48.8	3.1	1.2
5. The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	3.7	12.3	30.2	50.0	2.5	1.2
6. Central administration is efficient.	1.9	0.6	14.2	10.5	51.2	21.6

7.	Central administration supports the educational process.	2.5	2.5	43.8	13.0	30.2	8.0
8.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	1.9	1.2	8.6	46.3	32.1	9.9

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	1.2%	20.4%	56.2%	2.5%	15.4%	4.3%
10.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	2.5	12.3	54.9	6.2	22.8	1.2
11.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	1.2	13.0	47.5	21.0	17.3	0.0
12.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	1.9	4.3	27.8	26.5	35.2	4.3
13.	The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and	1.9	32.1	59.3	3.1	2.5	1.2

	subjects.						
14.	The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	2.5	21.0	54.9	6.8	13.6	1.2
15.	The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	3.7	11.1	51.2	7.4	25.3	1.2
16.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	0.0	22.8	61.7	0.6	13.0	1.9
	b) Writing	0.6	16.0	61.1	4.3	16.0	1.9
	c) Mathematics	0.0	22.8	57.4	5.6	12.3	1.9
	d) Science	1.2	9.9	62.3	8.0	17.9	0.6
	e) English or Language Arts	1.2	14.2	67.9	6.8	9.3	0.6
	f) Computer Instruction	1.2	3.1	35.2	10.5	43.2	6.8
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	1.2	5.6	58.6	11.1	21.6	1.9
	h) Fine Arts	0.6	13.0	70.4	6.8	6.8	2.5
	i) Physical Education	0.0	14.2	69.1	6.8	8.6	1.2
	j) Business Education	1.2	1.2	35.8	48.8	11.1	1.9
	k) Vocational (Career and	1.2	1.9	29.0	46.3	18.5	3.1

	Technology) Education					
	l) Foreign Language	2.5	1.9	44.4	34.0	15.4	1.9
17.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a) Library Service	2.5	8.0	53.7	18.5	16.7	0.6
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	0.6	5.6	36.4	11.1	40.1	6.2
	c) Special Education	0.6	15.4	54.9	8.0	19.1	1.9
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	1.9	3.7	25.9	54.9	11.7	1.9
	e) Dyslexia program	0.6	1.2	34.0	22.8	35.2	6.2
	f) Student mentoring program	0.0	1.9	40.7	16.7	37.0	3.7
	g) Advanced placement program	0.0	8.0	45.7	35.8	9.3	1.2
	h) Literacy program	1.2	12.3	59.3	13.6	11.7	1.9
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	0.6	3.7	24.7	21.6	34.6	14.8
	j) Summer school programs	0.6	3.7	45.1	22.2	19.8	8.6
	k) Alternative	0.0	4.3	35.8	24.1	24.1	11.7

	education programs						
	l) "English as a second language" program	0.0	2.5	48.1	14.2	26.5	8.6
	m) Career counseling program	0.0	0.6	33.3	41.4	17.9	6.8
	n) College counseling program	1.9	0.6	28.4	46.3	19.8	3.1
	o) Counseling the parents of students	1.9	1.2	28.4	24.1	36.4	8.0
	p) Drop out prevention program	3.1	0.6	21.0	28.4	35.2	11.7
18.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	1.9	0.0	25.3	8.6	53.1	11.1
19.	Teacher turnover is low.	3.1	2.5	13.6	6.8	51.2	22.8
20.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	1.9	2.5	21.6	7.4	51.9	14.8
21.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	2.5	0.0	6.8	4.3	59.3	27.2
22.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	2.5	4.3	75.9	3.1	11.1	3.1
23.	All schools	1.2	1.9	17.9	4.9	40.1	34.0

	have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.						
24.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	1.9	3.1	37.0	3.7	34.6	19.8
25.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	2.5	13.6	61.7	7.4	11.1	3.7

C. Personnel

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
26.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	0.6%	0.6%	11.7%	4.3%	43.8%	38.9%
27.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	0.6	0.6	38.9	8.6	34.6	16.7
28.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	0.6	1.2	24.1	22.8	36.4	14.8
29.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	1.2	0.0	20.4	9.3	42.6	26.5

#						
30.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	0.0	0.0	14.8	16.0	43.8	25.3
31.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	0.0	5.6	56.8	6.2	21.6	9.9
32.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	0.6	17.9	73.5	4.3	3.1	0.6
33.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	0.6	0.0	8.6	11.7	51.2	27.8
34.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	1.2	4.9	61.7	11.1	18.5	2.5
35.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	0.0	11.1	67.3	13.0	8.0	0.6
36.	The district's health insurance	0.0	1.9	47.5	3.1	31.5	16.0

	package meets my needs.						

D. Community Involvement

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
37. The district regularly communicates with parents.	0.6%	8.6%	60.5%	11.7%	17.9%	0.6%
38. Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	1.2	2.5	11.7	7.4	55.6	21.6
38. District facilities are open for community use.	0.0	11.7	66.7	12.3	8.0	1.2

E. Facilities Use and Management

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
40. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	0.6%	8.6%	50.0%	16.0%	22.8%	1.9%
41. Schools are clean.	0.0	9.9	70.4	3.1	15.4	1.2
42. Buildings are	1.2	3.7	35.8	6.2	38.3	14.8

		properly maintained in a timely manner.					

		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
43.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	1.2	1.2	22.8	4.3	47.5	22.8
44.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	0.6	9.3	54.3	6.2	22.8	6.8

F. Financial Management

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
45.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	0.6%	6.8%	66.7%	8.6%	15.4%	1.9%
46.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	0.0	1.9	38.9	12.3	38.3	8.6
47.	Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	0.0	10.5	58.6	10.5	13.6	6.8

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
48. Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	1.9%	2.5%	35.2%	10.5%	34.0%	16.0%
49. Purchasing acquires high quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	3.1	1.9	25.9	11.1	40.7	17.3
50. Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	5.6	0.0	17.9	8.6	40.1	27.8
51. The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	1.2	1.9	53.7	9.3	25.9	8.0
52. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	0.6	6.8	54.9	3.7	23.5	10.5
53. Textbooks are in good shape.	0.6	5.6	74.1	4.9	11.1	3.7
54. The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	1.2	6.2	56.8	6.8	22.2	6.8

H. Food Services

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
55. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	0.6%	5.6%	44.4%	6.2%	28.4%	14.8%
56. Food is served warm.	0.6	6.2	64.2	4.3	21.6	3.1
57. Students have enough time to eat.	0.0	19.8	71.6	0.6	6.8	1.2
58. Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	0.6	12.3	69.1	3.7	12.3	1.9
59. Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	1.2	14.8	63.6	1.2	16.0	3.1
60. Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	0.0	10.5	74.7	1.9	11.7	1.2
61. Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	0.6	22.2	63.6	4.3	7.4	1.9
62. Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	1.2	21.0	69.1	3.1	5.6	0.0

I. Transportation

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
63. The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	0.0%	13.6%	67.9%	2.5%	12.3%	3.7%
64. The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	0.6	7.4	71.0	8.0	11.1	1.9
65. Buses arrive and leave on time.	1.2	3.7	63.0	5.6	22.2	4.3
66. Adding or modifying a route for a student is easy to accomplish.	0.6	0.6	32.1	21.6	37.0	8.0

J. Safety and Security

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
67. Students feel safe and secure at school.	1.2%	22.2%	72.2%	0.6%	3.7%	0.0%
68. School disturbances are infrequent.	0.0	17.9	67.3	2.5	11.1	1.2
69. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	0.6	2.5	21.0	21.0	49.4	5.6
70. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	0.6	1.9	9.3	19.1	53.1	16.0

	STATEMENT	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
71.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	0.6	1.2	18.5	14.2	53.7	11.7
72.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	0.0	14.8	67.3	11.7	4.9	1.2
73.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	0.0	9.3	54.3	32.1	3.1	1.2
74.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	0.0	6.8	63.6	21.6	7.4	0.6
75.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	0.0	17.9	69.1	3.1	9.3	0.6
76.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	0.6	4.3	45.7	13.0	32.1	4.3

K. Computers and Technology

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
77. Students	0.0%	10.5%	51.9%	4.3%	28.4%	4.9%

	regularly use computers.						
78.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	0.0	11.1	40.7	1.9	40.1	6.2
79.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	0.0	11.7	54.9	1.2	24.1	8.0
80.	The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	0.6	6.2	30.9	3.7	46.3	12.3
81.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	0.0	4.3	14.8	16.0	45.1	19.8
82.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	0.6	2.5	47.5	6.8	36.4	6.2
83.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	0.0	4.9	34.0	4.9	31.5	24.7

Appendix E

PART C: VERBATIM

- The 2 areas I need the most help with are: (1) finance - quick, easy support system and turnaround. (2) Record keeping/access - a way to generate lists, information so schools do not need to constantly be handwriting class lists for LEP, PALM, rosters, perfect attendance, etc. and a system that can be referenced for multiple purposes.
- The technology department does more to hinder than help. I can find the superintendent easier through technology. All of the calls are screened through the Help Desk. None of them give out their own numbers and the Help Desk is beyond help. No one in Central understands elementary curriculum/needs. All of the area superintendents and curriculum heads came out of secondary.
- Austin ISD employees are very hard working and loyal to their profession. Due to too many top level changes, their jobs have been hampered by continued upheaval and turmoil. We look forward to stability and focus.
- Honor classes need criteria such as a grade average of 85+. We need to provide technology hardware and software <u>NOW</u> - 5 workstations for every classroom and 1 or 2 computer labs per campus. Middle schools should <u>actually</u> be able to offer all courses listed in the choice sheet. Ex Tech Ed labs and Skills labs, as well as other tech courses listed. Old schools should get some learning equipment as new schools. The district needs to update office equipment such as computers, scanners, etc. We need to revisit block scheduling for middle school campuses. Please allow input from all middle school math teachers (6th-8th grades) on the effectiveness of the Connected Math Program.
- Overall AISD has excellent curriculum frameworks, good teachers, and clean and safe campuses. Campus leadership is strong but Central Office leadership has been fragmented for many years. There is a lack of systems thinking at the district level, with a lack of coordination. MIS is a mess and Finance and Personnel and Board work are not far behind. We are hopeful new superintendent will get things organized at central.
- Staffing. Well trained teachers for this school is problematic (77 percent low SES).
- This is a good district in trouble. The new superintendent is making the changes needed to get us back where we once were. We have the potential to be the best urban district in our state. We have to acknowledge the problems and identify realistic solutions. Looking the other way won't work.

- I think AISD does a good job of preparing students that want an education. We do need to work on ways to reach the student that does not see the value of an education.
- It is essential that central office, in both function and attitude, is realigned to serve campus needs. District administration meetings must be completely revamped in order to be successful. The cabinet should coordinate by looking at items and classifying them according to how and where they should be presented to principals: memo, meeting, etc. If a meeting of elementary, secondary, high area, or all? Right now we waste much time, which is something we desperately need to leverage. Technology could help immensely with the incredible amount of paper I get everyday. Coordination of reports, etc. is a necessity. Finance is not user friendly. Instructional technology lacks resources and is not knowledgeable. Language arts is both service oriented and informed.
- AISD is on the cutting edge of developing high expectations for our students and staff. I believe that Mr. Forgione and his staff will model the level of education that we as educators and parents will be proud of. With our wonderfully diverse population, we will facilitate each student's needs with the support of central office through financial aide and the continual training of teachers to meet each student's learning style. I believe in public education and we will succeed as a team.
- I believe AISD has a good potential of being an excellent school district. However, the lack of good leadership ... as well as mismanagement and incompetence has placed the district in a serious bind. Central office's procedures are so antiquated and inefficient that it affects every aspect of running an effective school. There are rampant inequities and abuses of authority everywhere. But there are many honest, hard working competent people that hopefully will come forward and help our new superintendent to move forward. We can only try.
- May be moving in the right direction now, but has a long way to go. Personnel issues are the most troublesome, large turnover rate, lots of incompetence.
- A significant amount of defeating processes are mandated by state regulation. It is almost impossible to terminate a professional staff contract without dedicating a huge amount of time. The district is primarily focused on accomplishing "minimum" education requirements-- not really facilitating advanced students. This district tends to an adversarial relationship with TEA-- tends to hurt delivery of education programs.
- Being a new principal, I had great difficulty answering many of these questions. Overall though, my initial impression of the faculty, staff, and administrators are very positive. Most are

working very, very hard. What is <u>not</u> working is related to the systems in the district. Financial, data, technology, transportation--all seem the need of restructuring. Thanks for helping us attack these issues.

- AISD does not actively seek out and hire minority teachers and administrators in order to reflect our high number of minority students. We are also losing many of our best and brightest teachers and administrators to districts offering higher salaries, opportunity for advancement and less political tension. Too few, who hold positions of power, determine who gets hired and/or promoted. The mentality is that of a <u>1960's</u> small <u>southern</u> town.
- I am proud to be a teacher/administrator in the Austin ISD, but I can't help but be frustrated at times with situations that occur on the campus level that are caused by central office level decisions that are obviously "out of touch" with what the needs of the campus might be. In the past, the district's desire to create uniform policies and procedures for all campuses, i.e., course choices, etc. has caused schools to sacrifice student needs in the name of conformity.
- I truly feel that the new superintendent will be more focused on student success. Changes in personnel have already been made and will make a difference in how well central administration is run and services the local campuses. (2) Salaries for teachers and elementary principals need to be improved. Good administrators and teachers will be lost if changes are not made.
- AISD makes many decisions based upon what "looks good" for public relations. The district shies away from making tough decisions that may not provide for good "public relations." (2) Curriculum implementation in mathematics is done in an autocratic, top down way that alienates campus administrators and teachers. (3) High turnover exists among teachers especially in Eastside schools because teachers do not receive enough support in terms of classroom teacher assistants. Also, the district puts a lot of pressure on teachers in east-side schools that tend to have lower academic performance. Children in the east side often come to school with more personal problems and less parental support. This makes east-side kids more difficult to teach. Between pressure from administration, children who are difficult to teach, lack of parental support, and little or no rewards for superior performance, teacher turnover is especially high in east-side schools.
- Much expense goes into maintaining central office administration. Their function is to assist and support our schools. Monies should be spent in salaries, curriculum, technology, supplies, etc. of individual schools rather than the colossal district offices.
- Technology and special ed. are our main problems. Technology: The district "throws" computers, etc. at schools that either a) don't

work properly; b) aren't installed by AISD technology properly; c) aren't supported by teacher training on how to use them. Special ed. Students should be "weighted" because they need special attention. Our school has approximately 29 percent of our student body already identified as special ed. This presents a tremendous challenge for our teachers. We need more state initiatives (like special ed. inclusion).

- In general, teachers and staff are working diligently to challenge students and to help all students experience success. Many extra hours are spent preparing for instruction.

- The public schools are being asked to accomplish tasks that aren't relevant to education. Schools should not have to worry about which students have all their "shots." Items such as this should be the domain of the county/city Health Department.

- We are also told that we must take on every task including parent/child relationships, special need children, etc. For decades politicians have jumped on the problems in education. This survey is just another example of this trend. It just amazes me how many people want to come to the U.S./Texas/Austin to live. Maybe politicians should start talking about the "pluses" in education not just the "problems."

- Solutions to fix problems: (1) Attach people to this profession by making the pay competitive with other jobs. (2) Pay experienced people what they are worth. (3) Improve the working conditions in schools. Many people do not respect teachers because all they have heard of since they were children is the "problems" with education. (4) When I grew up, if a problem arose - the parent said "what did you do to cause the problems?" Now, parents say "What did the teacher do to you to cause the problem?"

- The operations of central office put a great burden on school administrators. They do not appear to be "user friendly." The people when contacted directly usually very friendly and helpful. However, the process is the problem. Many times departments do not have adequate personnel to act in a timely manner.

- AISD needs to spend more time in evaluating principals at the schools, not just on paper. Input from faculty, parents, and students should be included. Central is often unaware of real problems. Administrators at some schools do not have appropriate updated technology software or hardware.

- Administration (assistant principals) are not paid enough above teachers (veteran) to be equitable in light of the 10-13 hour days and additional demands to attend athletic events, band events, drama productions, etc.

- Central administration is not supportive of campus discipline decisions. If parents are able to cause trouble either by threatening to hire a lawyer or calling the superintendent. This is sending the

message that principals do not have authority on campus and that the system works for students with aggressive parents. Then disadvantaged students who do not have family or financial support (lawyer fees) receive or seem to receive more and stricter discipline consequences. In addition, the already wide gap between east and west Austin, this situation must be examined and restored to a fair and equitable and consistent policy.

- I think the district does a strong job educationally, in spite of the instability of leadership...at the moment very negative public perception.
- The district sorely needs a new data/information management system.
- Overall, I think AISD does a "fair" (C if it were a grade) job in educating the students. There are areas that need help-- special ed. especially and math. Too many majorities are in special ed; so many are kept out of the higher level math classes that are "gatekeepers" for advancement-- college, jobs, etc. I don't think counseling is adequate/appropriate for other minorities. I don't think students who aren't "the stars" are helped or encouraged as much as they should be.
- I wrote a statement in an earlier page. I feel very adamant that a vocational/technical school is needed to meet educational needs of students who aren't able to do the higher math-- who is going to be our electricians, masons, carpenters, repair small appliances, lawn mowers, etc. P.S. This is a critical issue and I feel there are many school people who think as I do.
- Many decisions come from the top down. Teachers are not really asked about what they need. The pay is not keeping with the cost of living. There is a lot of politics and bureaucratic policies that need to be changed or eliminated so that we can do what is best for our students.
- AISD overall performance is high-average.
- I have been with the district for 27+ years as a junior high/middle school teacher and as an administrator at the middle school and high school level. I am a product of AISD. I am proud of the educational opportunities we offer students. Could we be doing a better job-- you bet. We should and can never be satisfied with the status quo, but rather always look for a "better" more efficient and effective way to provide education for our students. Have we made mistakes? Yes. Have we short-changed our students? I don't think so and I hope we never do!
- There still exists a very inequitable state of education performance in AISD. This is largely due to the lack of resources, personnel and financial that are allocated to campuses that serve low income and limited English-speaking children. Until the district realizes that

- low income children need more services and deserve equity, the educational performance of these children will suffer.
- Needed: (1) continuity of leadership at all levels. (2) Set a clear focus. (3) Recognize that it took longer than 1 year to create these issues and it will take longer than 1 year to "fix" them.
- I believe that AISD is doing a fairly decent job in terms of educational performance for many students in AISD. A big area that needs to be looked at is equity and access to more experienced and better trained teachers for minority students. These students are being taught by many new or uncertified teachers. District should remedy this.
- At my school the maintenance personnel sent from the service center work very inefficiently. Examples: 3 men are sent to replace ceiling tiles. One is on the ladder, one hands the tile to him, and the third one is watching, holding the ladder. This is poor use of manpower. They also take very long breaks, make numerous trips to the truck, etc.
- (1) The bureaucracy that is currently in place in AISD is a nightmare. No one wants help in central office. If you call, you are always passed around. It is like no one wants to give any information for fear that they might have to do something. (2) Work orders are not completed in a timely manner. Technology work orders can take up to 6 months to get to. That is useless.
- As public dollars are directed at salaries, the rewards being directed to building administrators are neglected in comparison to teaching, etc. Do we wish to attract and hold the best people and leaders also?
- There is something wrong with a system when clerical staff and central office makes more $ than classroom teachers. Where teachers make more $ than administrators. Where is the value in our profession-- it's not in our pocketbooks and thank goodness for committed professionals who hang on and work more than one job to continue to do what they love to do. (2) All schools need same equitable facilities. All schools have the same ingredients even students! Challenges on each campus are different, but level out the playing fields. Give us our worth. We try everyday to give to students their worth.
- Staff development for strengthening teachers to work with ___ students is needed. We need to educate our students about the seriousness of the use of drugs and its impact on their lives. The bottom line is that schools need intervention programs and a school psychologist. Many of the students use drugs for an antidepressant which assists them to numb their emotions.
- I firmly believe there is an abundance of qualified, committed, and eager professionals sincerely interested in the education of students in AISD. I believe that AISD has the potential to become an

exemplary district that offers a rigorous and challenging program for all students in all grades in every type or special program available. I am concerned that it is not uncommon for employees to be treated as an expendable commodity instead of a valued resource. Issues ranging from poor salaries, inequities in schools that both students and teachers face on a daily basis and inconsistent policy mandates all lead to frustration, low morale, and employee turnover. For example, Teachers are required to take and pass computer competency skill tests. When they pass, that teacher is allowed computers for their classroom and a laptop computer. If teachers have difficulties with their competencies and are unable to computer classes at sites off campus due to other required in-service training, then who suffers the most? The answer is the children. Assistant and Helping Teachers are also being required to pass computer competency tests. However, they are not allowed to have laptop computers. Training for Assistant Principals and Helping teachers is very weak. There are administrators who will one day become district administrators and campus principals, yet are not provided time during paid hours for training and allowed to attend professional conferences. How effective is it to not cultivate the leadership skills of those who have already been identified and possess the potential of being good leaders? Perhaps this is one reason why AISD continues to have difficulty keeping good leaders, and recruiting good leaders, lack of support. Salary disparities between administrators must be addressed and corrected. There are elementary school administrators with more experience than secondary administrators who receive significantly less pay simply because they are on an elementary campus. I look forward to the day that AISD is recognized as a district that does not just have great potential, but is truly a good place to be.

- I feel the biggest problem is in technology and safety. We need more officers and hall monitors at the schools. I have a major problem with computer people at central administration. They never fix anything and they take weeks to respond to problems.
- Turnover and unplanned movement of staff have affected the effectiveness of educational performance. (2) Lack of consistency and support by central office staff such as dress codes, etc. (3) Failure to acquire quality principals from within the district. (4) Using interim principals for full school years. (5) Lack of long-term planning and follow through.
- The district is taking necessary steps under the new superintendent to make changes. Pockets of progress have been made in AISD and these areas must share their experience with all Austin schools.
- (1) The district is getting to be too large to manage. It may have to be split into North Austin and South Austin ISD, etc. (2) One goes

through the motions of running a school but it feels as if one does so in isolation. Support is missing or so it feels that way. We need a District Improvement Committee with across the board representation for input to change existing structure.

- If often feels like AISD is divided by IH-35. East IH-35 educates students from low-income families with significant challenges. The challenges facing these schools are significant! Staff work many hours, discipline, health, and social issues require time from schools. Curriculum and staff development in AISD is effective and very child centered. Students are performing well. TAAS does not measure the success students achieve. How sad it is that TAAS has taken over. I'm not sure students will ever make connections in their learning if the only measure is a TAAS test.

- Any failure of AISD is due more to a decided lack of continuity in leadership. A school district must keep a superintendent 5 to 7 years in order to achieve change, maximum stability, produce order, and more curriculum forward.

- Campuses have continued to maintain an instructional focus, teaching staff and campus administrators, for the most part, are strong. Collapse of central systems in personnel, student records and finance have been costly to our efficiency and especially to our credibility with the public. Low point for me was informing families that indication of "promotion to next grade" was erroneous in many report cards last May.

- I am proud to be employed by AISD!

- Focus, organization and productivity have greatly improved at Central Office since Dr. Forgione's arrival. Campuses have shown consistent, legitimate improvement in the last five years, particularly in the areas of student achievement, employing best practices and collaborating with the community. For every bad aspect of the district, there are at least 25 great stories to be told!

- Our district is going through troubled times. With a new superintendent and focus on consistent quality education with participating parties carrying our their designated responsibilities, the district can begin to move forward.

- If any urban school district can become world class, Austin ISD can! All the resources are here to make it happen. Best wishes and may the force be with you Dr. Forgione!

- Central Office needs to be a <u>support</u> system for the local campuses, instead, Central winds up creating more work, more conflicts, and less time helping us resolve issues.

- AISD has gotten very large. (2) Without a superintendent for a short period central office was in confusion. (3) Some elementary campuses have excellent academic programs. Some, not! We need campus administrators to be supervised <u>closely</u> by area

superintendents. Austin ISD has <u>experts</u> we need to make better use of, to make our education program an excellent one.

- I believe our district has been floundering for several years because of lack of strong leadership whose focus is a quality product: educating children. Resources are not equitable. Schools, especially elementary, are too large. Too little support structure is provided for appropriate ways to handle discipline issues. Teachers are not supported by central office. Too often the area superintendent is our resource and I find they (several of them) play favorites.

- Overall, AISD has wonderful schools, programs, teachers, administrators and staff. The students are the best. My singlest greatest concern is the lack of acceptance of students with special needs by administrators on campuses as their own. The director of special ed. in this district has done her very best to educate, cajole, influence, etc. all educators from the top down, that <u>all</u> children are "regular" education students and that special education is a service, not a place or a student!!! Lastly, I believe that there has been a "feeding frenzy" by the media and some politicians on AISD. I am proud to be serving students in AISD.

- Overall, Austin ISD has a pretty good school system. Maybe more than "pretty good." I feel that my school prepares students adequately for college and they perform very well academically. Students entering the workforce after graduation leave with skills that will help them get jobs.

- (1) AISD is concerned with image rather than with really helping students learn. The TAAS problem and the dropout problem are examples of this. We say we want dropouts to come back but we do not offer them doable programs when they get here. They are here to be counted for a report. (2) The district ignores the excellent assistant principals in AISD who have experience, integrity, and concern for children to do world wide searches for principals in Temple, Victoria, Killeen and other small Texas towns. AISD has lost a lot in prestige and actual student achievement since many mediocre people (principals) have been hired. (3) The district tries to please every political group and really pleases very few people. The school board is so afraid of not getting re-elected that they do not have the courage to say no to keeping certain programs. We all want our children to be achievers. This can be accomplished by smaller classrooms, one on one work if necessary, and by having caring well-trained teachers in the classroom. We need to put more money into academics. We need to help each child learn and to remember that to hone a child's mind we must have his heart. I believe that this will please everyone. We want children to learn (not to report manipulated statistics).

- Personnel/administrators are moved frequently without notification before the decision is made. Positions are often filled by transferred personnel used to fill a position that requires learning specific tasks. Schools are required to do more and more paperwork, reports, etc. because inadequate technology and communication between and among departments in central office. Schools are not consulted before major decisions are made by central office and they often have very negative consequences for campuses. Decisions are made without considering current resources, personnel and budget at campus level. Training of administrators is almost non-existent.
- East Austin is ignored-- lack of parent involvement. Some schools have 15 computer labs-- none at our school. Least qualified teachers for most needy schools. Never enough subs for teachers to be out even for staff development opportunities. Class sizes up to 43 in new teachers' classrooms. Technology for administrators almost non-existent. Perception of school in Austin as a whole-- unjustly deplorable. No teachers for some electives-- closed down. Credit not given to teachers who are doing outstanding job in spite of tremendous obstacles. Austin ISD has made a good move to put instructional specialists in place at low-performing schools, but low pay, lack of computer technology for the positions, and space to office not included in the package; thus, hindrances to job performance. Administrators at low performing schools need more administration to help provide steps to better discipline so students can learn better and thus achieve better.
- It's too large a system with too many "players" to run effectively. It's difficult to get a handle on the whole picture.
- My hopes for the district are I hope reasonable and feasible: (1) A clear, equitable, and efficient accounting system that gives schools latitude to make purchases they need. (2) A clearly defined focus in a curricular area (such as history) that will be carried to fruition, not replaced by a newer, flashier initiative.
- The main priority in the school district is to receive a high performance from the TAAS test. In the last two years the stress level of central office, campus administration and teachers has been extremely high. It is not desirable in this district to be an administrator. The principal's position has changed in that the only way to survive is to maintain status quo. To be a leader and innovator is impossible.
- There are, of course, needs for improvement. I believe our district employees are aware of these and are working toward such improvement. Outside "assistance" is probably not needed.
- AISD has been without true leadership for so long that it's going to take a great deal of effort and time to turn things around. The vast majority of teachers I have worked with are dedicated,

- professional, and love teaching. Their morale is low, and they feel the lack of support they get from central office and too many principals have contributed to many of them leaving their profession. AISD is run by area superintendents that intimidate people and have forgotten that the bottom line is what's best for the kids. Thanks for your help and concern!
- These questions will serve a certain purpose, but the lack of good managers at the central office is embarrassing. The lack of leadership is startling. A system of she said/he said and people refusing to make decisions is alarming. The central office is the worst I and many others have ever seen it. Even the good old boy system was better than people placed because of ethnicity and/or a friendship network. It will continue until someone with the knowledge of what managers and leaders should be starts recruiting qualified individuals. We are a laughing stock to the community.
- The fiasco with "tampered" data regarding dropouts is a small part of the educational process. Individual campuses put out their heart and soul for students district wide. Many success stories around on school campuses.
- The district is <u>not</u> equitable in allocating resources. Some schools have to beg for necessities or go to the public. i.e., look at comparison of bond monies, resources, and buildings.
- I am feeling very optimistic about the new leadership in our school district. I am confident that the results of such a survey as this one would be very different a year from now than now. I don't know that this is the best time to be conducting this survey. As you know, the ASD has recently faced and experienced enormous trials and challenges. Again. I am confident that under the leadership of Dr. Forgione, our district will soar.
- AISD uses state leave just even where a person has local leave. State leave is the only leave that can be applied toward retirement. I don't think it is fair to use state leave funds. AISD leave has no value to employees.
- The district needs to improve the manner in which it handles new hires. Often times salary negotiations become very tiresome.
- There is NO EQUITY in the distribution of technology to minority schools which are considered to be at risk for low performance. Computers are not in classrooms and libraries as other schools. Board members favor schools on certain sides of town.
- Although our district many not always meet everyone's needs at 100 percent it strives to continue to reach 100 percent. East Austin schools need more experienced teachers and more support from the curriculum department. Middle schools need a reading program with an array of modules to meet student needs.

- Austin ISD had a very good record educating our children until recently. Possibly some of the problems have been due to so many changes in the last ten years. Austin only had three superintendents from the 1950's to 1990. We had many years of stability. Recently, we have had fine leaders (since 1990) which presents more opportunity for chaos, insecurity, and the rise of personal agendas overtaking the district's mission of educating <u>all</u> of Austin's children. We welcome your audit to help get us going in the right direction again.
- I have been with AISD only 4 months coming from Dallas ISD, but I am very impressed with the district on the whole. Their efforts to provide "equity" to schools with low socio-economic status is commendable.
- I came to the district 4 years ago and I was totally surprised to learn that principals and teachers did not have faith in the superintendent. Furthermore, I was stunned to see a lot of "underhanded" politics occurring in Austin. I have worked in Goose Creek, Pasadena, and McAllen school districts. In these districts, teachers were respected and appreciated as educators. This was especially evident in the salary and staff development opportunities. In Austin, teachers and administrators are overworked and severely underpaid, especially teachers and classified personnel. As an administrator, I can make approximately $10,000 more in Alief (Houston suburb) and approximately $7,000 more in South San Antonio ISD. This may very well be my last year in the district if administrative salaries are not raised to be more competitive with other urban districts. Teachers are doing it, why shouldn't I?
- AISD's central office is not supportive of campuses. They pose a barrier to schools in meeting the needs of students. Human resources and purchasing are two of the biggest obstacles we face. Purchase orders have been lost resulting in campuses losing federal funds when timelines are associated with the timelines of purchasing. Additionally, it has been very difficult to get timely and accurate information from Human Resources-- salaries have been misquoted, applications. No part of Human resources is computerized.
- The district has hired some school administrators who lack the credentials. There are many assistant principals, helping teachers, counselors, etc. that have worked hard to prove themselves, but they are overlooked when applying for a higher position.
- (1) School board is undereducated about most AISD matters. A comment made by a member of the board at the budget meeting that helping teachers "they just want to be principals. They don't need a raise. They can make big money when they are principals." (2) School staff and parents do not have input into any AISD

decisions. On two principal interview panels, principal candidates were a "done deal"-- one by superintendent and one by area superintendent, even though staff and parents choose one candidate, the job was given to a "shoo in" solicited by either the superintendent or area superintendent.

- Many of the responses/questions vary from campus to campus or by level. I'm not sure how you will take that into account as you summarize your data.
- In areas that I discerned to be unsatisfactory, I know that AISD is making efforts to improve their services, equipment, and programs. I am pleased with the high expectations AISD sets for students and the efforts they are making to provide an equitable education for all students. I am, however, discouraged and concerned with the board's decision to adopt a neighborhood school boundary concept, in effect segregating students by economics and ethnicity. We must do a better job of assuring our students have the skills to work with others who are different from themselves.
- There are many wonderful things happening in the AISD. However, we have some challenges to solve.
- There are many very dedicated people working in AISD. They are not paid as they should be; do not have access to quality insurance or wellness programs; are not valued, encouraged or supported in many instances; and usually hear only criticisms and complaints. And yet-- the public expects them to be positive and upbeat on a daily basis.
- Due to the handling of a situation with an employee, I am not sure AISD central office administration allows situations to be handled at the campus level as they should. Central administration should be a support and appeal position. They should not be the 1st step in handling a campus situation. I wonder whether there are "personal issues" resulting in situations such as these where a person may have a personal agenda they are trying to entertain with their position of authority?
- As a newly hired administrator from outside the AISD, I have been very impressed with the quality of training I have received as an administrator. In addition, I have attended training with teachers that was of the highest quality. The district initiatives of Balanced Literacy and Investigations are quality programs that will continue to improve AISD.
- I have a lot of confidence that the new superintendent is going to "correct" most things that are wrong with AISD. I am encouraged by what I have seen in the short time since he has been here. I love this district in spite of the "things" that are happening-- we do good things for children.
- (1) Central office support and assistance for local campus needs is extremely inadequate. They don't even return phone calls. (2)

Central office does not clearly articulate a "direction" for the district. Therefore, individual schools go in many directions. (3) Campuses need to be brought to a set standard in terms of physical facilities. Example: PA system, computers, furniture, professional resources, etc. (4) Cafeteria food is unacceptable, unappetizing, and over-priced (i.e. cold and bland, poor quality). Adults should have choices other than student tray. (5) The phone system is a joke. My phone does not work at least every 1-2 weeks. I go without access to a phone for 2-3 days at a time. Lack of access to a phone makes it very difficult to do my job and be responsive to parents. Parents cannot reach me or the school. it is an inconvenience and a safety concern. (6) Textbook record keeping should be done utilizing computer software, not by hand. There are too many possibilities for errors to be made. Textbooks should be bar coded, like library books, for efficiency and accurate inventory. (7) Continue the Principals Academy. Administrators need specific training in areas that sometimes are not of interest to teachers. (8) As I work and travel throughout the district, I am shocked and dismayed to witness the vast differences in physical facilities and conditions for students. Students from low-income homes are entitled to comparable schools like those located in more affluent neighborhoods. This includes items such as student furniture, the library collection, computers, science equipment, playground facilities, etc.

- Overall, the quality of education students receive in Austin ISD is exemplary. District and campus initiatives are focused on providing what we know is "best practice" for instruction and curriculum. Human support to campuses is excellent, however, support systems (i.e., computers, tracking, achievement and data systems) are sadly lacking. While area superintendents should provide campus support, they are stretched too thin and have too many other duties to be effective at supporting principals and campuses.

- Thank you for having a chance to provide this input. I hope these surveys will be read, to bring about the standards of service and changes that we so desperately need.

- An educational program initiative must be given ample time to show student growth. It can not be started one year and not supported in the next years to come. There needs to be enough time for staff development and effective follow-up of these program initiatives. There needs to be a system of recognition for teachers and administrators that allows for compensation for experience and competence. The school budgets also need to be approved earlier on in the year so that effective planning of campus improvement plans can be made.

Appendix F
TEACHER SURVEY RESULTS
(Written/Self-Administered)

Demographics

The Austin Independent School District (AISD) has more than 4,800 teachers. The Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) selected a random stratified sample of 400 teachers. The sample was composed of 180 elementary school teachers, 100 middle school teachers, 100 high school teachers, and 20 teachers from special campuses. One hundred and sixty-four teachers completed and returned the questionnaires. Seventy-six percent of the teachers who responded to the survey were female and 23 percent were male. About three-quarters (74 percent) of the respondents were Anglo, 4 percent were African American, and 18 percent were Hispanic. One teacher classified him/herself as "other." Teachers' length of employment with the district varied greatly. Forty (40) percent of the teachers have worked in the district for 1 to 5 years, 20 percent have been AISD employees for 6 to 10 years, and 40 percent have worked at AISD more than 10 years. Specifically, 13 percent have worked at AISD for 11-15 years, 11 percent for 16-20 years, and 16 percent for 20 or more years. Teachers who responded to the survey represented all grades and school levels. Thirty-eight percent taught elementary (grades 1-5), 30 percent taught in middle school (grades 6-8), and 28 percent taught in high school (grades 9-12). One percent taught in both elementary and middle, and two percent taught in both middle and high school grades.

The survey questionnaire was comprised two sections: a multiple-choice section and a comment section. The multiple-choice section asked employees their opinions about 10 of the 12 areas under review. The 10 areas covered in the survey were:

- District Organization and Management
- Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement
- Personnel
- Community Involvement
- Facilities Use and Management
- Financial Management
- Purchasing and Warehousing
- Food Services
- Safety and Security
- Computers and Technology

The comment section asked employees their opinions on the overall educational performance of the district. Responses for the multiple-choice questions are summarized below.

District Organization and Management

Teachers were asked for their opinions of the school board, superintendent, and central administration. Teachers tended to agree that the school board allowed time for public input at meetings (47 percent) and listened to the opinions and desires of others (43 percent agreed, 25 percent disagreed, 29 percent had no opinion). Teachers were most critical of the board's image in the community: 66 percent thought that the board did not have a good image; 18 percent thought it did. Teachers were also critical of central administration. About 80 percent of the teachers did not think that central administration was efficient (10 percent did). Fifty percent of the teachers did not think that central administration supports the educational process (29 percent did). Thirty-five percent did not think that the morale of central administration staff was good (11 percent did and 53 percent had no opinion). Sixty or more percent of the teachers have not yet formed an opinion about the superintendent. About one-quarter of the teachers agreed that the school board worked well with the superintendent and that the superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader and business manager. About 10 percent of the teachers disagreed.

Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Teachers had mixed reviews of the district's performance in this area. More than one-half of the teachers agreed that education is the main priority at AISD (55 percent) and teachers are given opportunities to suggest programs (49 percent); however, 40 percent disagreed with these statements. More than 75 percent agreed that the district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects and that guides are effective (59 percent). However, teachers were more divided as to whether the guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it: 44 percent agreed and 36 percent disagreed. Also, while 55 percent agreed that the needs of college-bound students are being met only 29 percent thought that the district was meeting the needs of work-bound students.

Fifty-five to 69 percent of teachers thought that the district has effective programs in most areas. The strongest support was for Fine Arts and Physical Education, both of which had two-thirds agreeing and less than ten percent disagreeing. Only 40 to 50 percent of the teachers were familiar with Vocational Education and Business Education. Those who were familiar were split in their opinion about the effectiveness of these programs. Teachers had mixed opinions about the Computer Instruction

program: it was regarded as ineffective by 43 percent of the teachers while 35 percent considered it effective.

Overall, teachers' views of the effectiveness of AISD's special programs varied. Special Education was considered effective by the highest percent of teachers (64 percent). Programs seen as effective by the smallest percent of teachers included Drop-Out Prevention (19 percent), Career Counseling (20 percent), Parent Counseling (23 percent), College Counseling (25 percent), Dyslexia (25 percent), and programs for students at-risk of dropping out (27 percent). One-third to over one-half of the teachers were not familiar with most of the special programs.

Most teachers (70 percent) thought that they and their peers did a good job, agreeing that teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach and that teachers seldom leave classrooms unattended. At the same time, most teachers were critical of the way the district deals with teachers. Eighty-seven percent of the teachers did not think that the district rewards teachers for superior performance (only 5 percent did) and 80 percent disagreed that teacher turnover in the district is low. Sixty to 64 percent disagreed that teacher openings are filled quickly and that highly qualified teachers fill these positions. More than 50 percent of the teachers agreed that teachers are being counseled about less than satisfactory performance (27 percent disagreed and 26 percent had no opinion).

Teachers also were most critical of the district's treatment of schools. Nearly 75 percent of the teachers did not think that schools have equal access to educational materials (compared with 18 percent who did). Sixty-four percent did not think that the student-to-teacher ratio was reasonable.

Personnel Management

Teachers were very critical of AISD's personnel policies. Seventy-five percent of the teachers did not think that the district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications for promotion. Seventy percent of the teachers did not think that district salaries are competitive. Sixty percent were critical of the district's ability to project future staffing needs. More than 50 percent of the teachers did not think that the district has an effective employee recruitment program; only 10 percent thought it did and 34 percent had no opinion. Nearly one-half of the teachers did not think that the district's staff development program was effective; 35 percent did. Nearly 50 percent were also dissatisfied with the district's health insurance package while 41 percent were satisfied.

Teachers were split in their opinions with regard to the district's orientation program for new employees (40 percent thought it was good

and timely and 38 percent disagreed) and the district's grievance process (31 percent thought it was fair and timely, 28 percent disagreed, and 49 percent had no opinion). Teachers were also divided in their opinion of counseling of employees with low performance: 37 percent thought the counseling process was appropriate and timely, 30 percent disagreed, and 31 percent had no opinion.

Community Involvement

Teachers had a positive opinion of AISD's community involvement efforts. Between 60 and 75 percent of the teachers agreed that the district communicates regularly with parents, that local radio and television stations report school news, and that facilities are open for community use (24 percent had no opinion). About 65 percent of the teachers did not think that the schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.

Facilities Use and Management

More than 50 percent of the teachers did not think that the district plans and manages its facilities well. Sixty-two percent did not think that repairs are done in a timely manner. About 60 percent of the teachers did not think that the district does a good job of planning facilities (16 percent thought it did). More than 50 percent did not think that buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner while 36 percent did. However, 55 percent of teachers agreed that schools are clean (34 percent disagreed) and that emergency maintenance is handled properly. More than 40 percent of the teachers were not knowledgeable of the quality of new construction and nearly 70 percent could not offer an opinion about the selection process of the architects and construction managers.

Financial Management

Teachers were almost equally split on financial management issues. Forty percent agreed and 35 percent disagreed that site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers (22 percent had no opinion). Thirty-four percent of the teachers agreed 33 percent disagreed that campus administrators are well-trained in fiscal management techniques (30 percent had no opinion). However, 52 percent disagreed and 41 percent agreed that financial resources are fairly distributed in their schools.

Purchasing and Warehousing

About 50 percent of the teachers were critical of some of the district's purchasing practices. They did not think that the district purchases the

highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost; that the purchasing processes are easy to follow (not cumbersome), and that teachers can get from Purchasing what they need when they need it. More than 50 percent of the teachers agreed that the district provides teachers with an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment (54 percent); that textbooks are issued to students in a timely manner (55 percent) and are in good shape (65 percent), and that libraries are well stocked (59 percent). Nearly 70 percent of the teachers were not familiar with the process of vendor selection.

Food Services

Teachers had a positive view of AISD's Food Services. Eighty percent of the teachers agreed that cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat and that cafeteria staff are friendly and helpful (5-10 percent disagreed). More than 60 percent agreed that the food served is warm and that discipline and order are maintained in the cafeteria. Teachers were split regarding the length of time students have to wait in line: 54 percent thought it was no longer than 10 minutes and 30 percent disagreed. Teachers were also split in regard to the look and taste of cafeteria food: 46 percent agreed that it looked and tasted good and 38 percent disagreed.

Safety and Security

Most teachers (74-87 percent) thought that gangs, drugs, and vandalism are a problem in the district. Forty-five (45) percent also thought that safety hazards exist on school grounds (37 percent disagreed). Over 50 percent of the teachers thought that schools have infrequent disturbances (37 percent disagreed). About one-half of the teachers responded favorably regarding security personnel and relationship with local law enforcement; however, 31 to 42 percent had no opinion on these issues.

Computers and Technology

Teachers provided a mixed view of the use of computers and technology in the classroom. Teachers were divided as to whether students regularly use computers in the classroom (53 were positive; 43 percent were negative) and whether students have regular access to computers in the classroom (46 percent responded in the affirmative and 51 percent in the negative). Similarly, 49 percent of the teachers agreed that teachers know how to use computers in instruction while 40 percent disagreed. The highest percent of teachers (60 percent) agreed that computers are new enough to be useful in instruction. However, 62 percent of the teachers indicated that teachers and students do not have easy access to the Internet. More teachers disagreed than agreed that the district meets student needs in advanced computer skills (26 percent agreed; 44 percent

disagreed; 29 percent had no opinion) or in computer fundamentals (37 percent agreed; 44 percent disagreed).

Appendix F

PART A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

STATEMENT	CATEGORY		
	No Response	Male	Female
1. Gender (Optional)	1.8%	22.6%	75.6%

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Anglo	African-American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
2. Ethnicity (Optional)	3.7%	73.8%	3.7%	18.3%	0.0%	0.6%

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years
3. How long have you been employed by Austin ISD?	0.0%	39.6%	20.1%	13.4%	11.0%	15.9%

STATEMENT	CATEGORY						
	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5
4. What grade(s) do you teach this year?	4.3%	10.4%	14.6%	14.6%	13.4%	11.0%	14.0%
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	17.1%	18.3%	18.9%	21.3%	23.8%	23.2%	20.1%

PART B: SURVEY QUESTIONS

A. District Organization & Management

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	2.4%	3.0%	44.5%	35.4%	12.8%	1.8%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	3.0	4.3	39.0	28.7	23.2	1.8
3.	School board members work well with the superintendent.	3.0	1.8	22.6	63.4	8.5	0.6
4.	The school board has a good image in the community.	1.8	0.0	17.7	14.0	40.2	26.2
5.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	4.9	3.7	22.0	57.9	9.1	2.4
6.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	5.5	3.7	24.4	56.7	8.5	1.2
7.	Central administration is efficient.	2.4	0.0	9.8	9.1	42.7	36.0
8.	Central	0.6	0.6	28.0	15.2	30.5	25.0

	administration supports the educational process.						
9.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	1.2	0.0	11.0	53.0	21.3	13.4

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	1.2%	11.0%	44.5%	3.0%	32.3%	7.9%
11.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	2.4	6.1	43.3	9.1	26.8	12.2
12.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	0.6	10.4	45.1	17.7	19.5	6.7
13.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	1.2	3.0	26.2	21.3	35.4	12.8
14.	The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	1.2	16.5	61.0	5.5	12.2	3.7

15.	The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	2.4	8.5	50.6	12.2	23.8	2.4
16.	The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	1.2	4.3	39.6	9.1	37.2	8.5
17.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	1.2	7.9	49.4	12.2	22.6	6.7
	b) Writing	1.8	6.1	51.2	15.2	20.7	4.9
	c) Mathematics	1.8	7.9	50.0	14.6	18.3	7.3
	d) Science	3.7	6.1	50.0	18.9	14.6	6.7
	e) English or Language Arts	3.7	5.5	53.0	12.8	22.0	3.0
	f) Computer Instruction	2.4	3.0	31.7	19.5	34.1	9.1
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	3.0	3.7	51.2	24.4	15.9	1.8
	h) Fine Arts	1.8	11.0	54.3	23.2	9.8	0.0
	i) Physical Education	3.0	8.5	58.5	23.8	4.9	1.2
	j) Business Education	3.0	1.2	28.0	57.9	9.1	0.6
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	3.7	2.4	19.5	47.6	16.5	10.4

	l) Foreign Language	2.4	4.3	38.4	42.1	11.6	1.2
18.	The district has effective special programs for the following:	:					
	a) Library Service	3.7	5.5	50.6	21.3	13.4	5.5
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	1.8	5.5	42.7	14.0	28.0	7.9
	c) Special Education	3.0	6.7	57.3	7.3	16.5	9.1
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	3.7	1.8	29.3	56.7	7.3	1.2
	e) Dyslexia program	2.4	0.6	24.4	34.8	28.7	9.1
	f) Student mentoring program	2.4	5.5	37.2	32.3	17.1	5.5
	g) Advanced placement program	2.4	9.8	36.0	39.0	8.5	4.3
	h) Literacy program	1.2	6.1	36.0	36.0	15.2	5.5
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	1.2	1.8	25.0	28.0	26.8	17.1
	j) Summer school programs	1.8	3.7	45.1	31.1	12.8	5.5
	k) Alternative education programs	1.8	3.0	31.7	35.4	16.5	11.6
	l) "English as a	3.0	3.0	37.8	22.0	29.9	4.3

	Second Language" program						
	m) Career counseling program	3.7	0.6	18.9	48.2	22.6	6.1
	n) College counseling program	3.7	1.2	23.8	46.3	19.5	5.5
	o) Counseling the parents of students	3.7	0.0	22.6	29.9	32.9	11.0
	p) Drop out prevention program	3.0	0.6	18.3	30.5	34.1	13.4
19.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	1.8	3.7	26.8	14.0	31.1	22.6
20.	Teacher turnover is low.	2.4	0.6	7.9	9.1	48.2	31.7
21.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	1.8	1.8	25.0	11.0	43.3	17.1
22.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	1.8	2.4	19.5	12.2	45.1	18.9
23.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	1.8	0.0	4.9	6.7	43.3	43.3
24.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	1.8	1.8	43.3	25.6	18.9	8.5
25.	Teachers are	1.8	9.8	61.0	14.0	11.6	1.8

	STATEMENT	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.						
26.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	1.8	1.2	16.5	6.1	40.2	34.1
27.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	1.8	0.6	23.8	4.3	35.4	34.1
28.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	0.6	12.8	56.7	12.8	12.2	4.9

C. Personnel

	STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
29.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	1.8%	0.6%	15.2%	3.7%	29.9%	48.8%
30.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	3.0	1.2	38.4	19.5	23.2	14.6
31.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	1.8	1.2	14.6	28.7	39.6	14.0

32.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	1.8	0.0	9.8	22.0	42.1	24.4
33.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	1.8	0.0	9.8	34.1	34.1	20.1
34.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	1.8	4.9	30.5	15.2	29.9	17.7
35.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	1.8	18.9	70.7	7.9	0.0	0.6
36.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	1.8	0.0	10.4	12.8	46.3	28.7
37.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	2.4	1.2	35.4	31.1	23.2	6.7
38.	The district has a fair and timely grievance	2.4	1.8	29.3	48.8	11.6	6.1

	STATEMENT	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	process.						
39.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	2.4	3.0	38.4	6.7	28.0	21.3

D. Community Involvement

	STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
40.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	2.4%	6.1%	57.3%	10.4%	16.5%	7.3%
41.	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	1.8	7.3	69.5	14.0	6.1	1.2
42.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	1.8	2.4	23.2	7.9	45.1	19.5
43.	District facilities are open for community use.	1.8	7.9	50.6	23.8	13.4	2.4

E. Facilities Use and Management

	STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

44.	The district plans facilities far enough in the future to support enrollment growth.	2.4%	1.2%	13.4%	15.9%	37.8%	29.3%
45.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	1.8	2.4	35.4	20.1	29.9	10.4
46.	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	1.8	1.2	13.4	66.5	10.4	6.7
47.	The quality of new construction is excellent.	1.8	1.2	16.5	41.5	23.8	15.2
48.	Schools are clean.	1.2	6.7	49.4	8.5	24.4	9.8
49.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	1.8	1.8	34.1	9.8	37.8	14.6
50.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	1.8	1.2	26.8	7.9	39.6	22.6
51.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	1.8	4.3	51.2	17.1	16.5	9.1

F. Financial Management

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
52. Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	2.4%	4.3%	36.0%	22.0%	22.0%	13.4%
53. Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	2.4	4.9	29.3	30.5	25.0	7.9
54. Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	2.4	7.3	34.1	14.0	25.6	16.5

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
55. Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	3.0%	1.8%	31.7%	15.2%	34.8%	13.4%
56. Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest	3.0	1.8	17.7	23.8	33.5	20.1

	STATEMENT	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	cost.						
57.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	3.0	0.6	24.4	22.6	31.7	17.7
58.	Vendors are selected competitively.	3.0	0.6	20.1	65.2	4.9	6.1
59.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	2.4	3.0	50.6	14.6	22.0	7.3
60.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	3.0	3.0	52.4	12.2	18.9	10.4
61.	Textbooks are in good shape.	3.0	3.7	61.6	15.2	10.4	6.1
62.	The school library meets the student needs for books and other resources.	3.7	11.0	48.2	6.7	20.7	9.8

H. Food Services

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
63. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes	1.8%	4.9%	41.5%	14.0%	26.2%	11.6%

		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	good.						
64.	Food is served warm.	2.4	4.9	61.0	12.8	13.4	5.5
65.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	4.3	6.7	68.3	5.5	12.2	3.0
66.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	1.8	7.9	45.7	14.0	21.3	9.1
67.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	1.8	6.7	53.0	11.0	17.7	9.8
68.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	1.8	23.8	54.9	9.8	7.9	1.8
69.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	2.4	15.9	64.0	12.2	4.9	0.6

I. Safety and Security

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
70.	School disturbances are infrequent.	1.2%	5.5%	49.4%	6.7%	23.2%	14.0%
71.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	1.2	0.6	7.3	16.5	51.8	22.6
72.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	1.2	0.0	4.9	11.0	48.2	34.8

73.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	1.2	0.0	3.0	8.5	51.8	35.4
74.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	1.2	5.5	48.2	31.1	10.4	3.7
75.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	1.2	5.5	40.9	39.6	9.1	3.7
76.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	1.2	4.9	43.3	42.1	5.5	3.0
77.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	1.8	4.9	41.5	11.0	19.5	21.3
78.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	2.4	1.2	35.4	15.2	31.7	14.0

J. Computers and Technology

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
79. Students	1.2%	9.8%	43.3%	3.0%	29.3%	13.4%

	regularly use computers.						
80.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	1.2	6.1	40.2	1.8	32.9	17.7
81.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	1.2	4.9	43.9	10.4	30.5	9.1
82.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	1.2	8.5	51.8	9.1	19.5	9.8
83.	The district meets student needs in classes in computer fundamentals.	1.8	4.9	32.3	16.5	30.5	14.0
84.	The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.	1.2	3.7	22.6	29.3	23.8	19.5
85.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	1.2	6.1	28.7	2.4	34.1	27.4

Appendix F

PART C: VERBATIM

- Help schools become more equitable across A.I.S.D. (make sure everyone has almost the same resources). Help district hire high quality teachers, the district needs to make salaries more competitive and needs to reward for all extra work teachers do!
- I'd like to see more 2nd grade bilingual specialists or teachers doing training for us specifically. (It would benefit specific grades if teachers in that grade could be taught by their peers). I think we need a better computer system and technology department training.
- I think the district is heading the right way in the "technology" department, though some teachers do not have computers due to their teaching field. This is a small concern but all teachers should be given the opportunity to apply technology to the class.
- The Central Administration is "bloated" without effectiveness to the classroom teacher. Sharp's Effectiveness Audit suggested removing 100+ jobs from AISD Central Office. No positions were eliminated. The community does not vote in elections and no end is in site of Central Administration ineffectiveness. Site-based management is a joke, because no decision power of money expenditure is given outside of Central Administration.
- The biggest problems in the district are teacher-to-pupil ratios and the large inequities that exist between campuses in poorer areas and campuses in richer areas. The neediest children (needing food, clothing, shelter and safety) should have the best teachers and the best resources and the smallest classes. Any evaluation of a school must take into account that different schools serve very different populations with very different needs. My students will enter a class where they are loved, valued and respected. I will teach them to the best of my ability and I will not allow them to make excuses for their failures, but many of my students, despite all this, will not pass TAAS and will not graduate. Any suggestions would be welcomed.
- Distribution of materials does not seem to be equitable in AISD. Also if a Spanish bilingual program is going to exist, adequate materials should be provided. Our school has a computer lab that no one is allowed to use. We also have a "finished" playscape that has not been "inspected" so the children can't play on it, even though it seems completed to them! Torture.
- I feel that administrators do not do the job they were hired to do. Many are either too soft or extremely difficult to work with. But many seem to be incompetent in the work they do.

- I think Central Administration needs to improve its image. (2) I think site-based management is a mistake. Site-based management gives principals more freedom to be autocratic. Also wastes time. (3) I do not see the need for area superintendents. I do not think they effectively monitor principals or schools. (4) I think the strength of AISD is in its well trained and dedicated teachers.
- AISD provides guidelines for effective educational programs that incorporate research and best practices. However, each campus has individuals who are uncomfortable with change or reluctant to work together towards change, regardless of the rationale or staff development provided. This small group becomes powerful because it prevents curriculum alignment in critical areas, such as Balanced Literacy and Bilingual Education. The district provides the guidelines, but does not appear to have the authority to implement them or hold individuals accountable. (2) AISD does not provide adequate services to Spanish-dominant students needing speech therapy in Spanish. This is the third year Brooke Elementary is without such badly needed services.
- The number one problem I have as a teacher is too many students! I cannot effectively teach all I need to in 7th grade (writing, computer, study skills, discipline, manners, etc, etc.- in addition to my own subject area!) When I am dealing with 180+ students! Middle schools must be more evenly assigned student numbers!
- Re: Purchasing: The requirements and "red tape" involved in the spending of any money is such that I am unable to spend my budget to get what my students need. The quality of school bid items is truly poor. With technology purchases: I could have purchased a 3 1/2 disk drive for 1/2 the bid price to the district but had to pay double because of "rules." Why? Someone is making money somewhere in the bid process.
- The Central Administration has always been top heavy! When a principal or assistant principal couldn't or wouldn't do their job a position was created for them at central. When you (comptroller) announced your plans for an audit of AISD, a large number (I'm told 83 or 84) of central administrators were reassigned. All the while, my classroom numbers increased to 30-32 in math classes. (2) Discipline is a problem in middle school. Students with little or no motivation bring the learning level down for serious students. And yet, we are to keep our failure rate to less than 10%. The idea is to pass the students on to the next grade. (3) Low pay for substitutes results in no subs available. Thus, teachers have to cover two classes (their own class plus that of an absent co-worker). In such cases, learning is non-existent. I come to school even sick or dead (not yet!) because I don't want my team-members to have to control their classes and mine. That's why I have a year of sick leave and probably will lose it when I retire. (4)

I am still concerned about how the health insurance was handled last year. The district had already settled on plan options before anyone knew they were dropping Blue Cross. I understand that Blue Cross forced the issue; however, if employees had been informed of the problem, we could have contacted Blue Cross and our doctors to persuade them to reconsider. At least we could have tried! As it is, my entire family has had to change doctors. But this is not the first time; it seems only a few years ago that we had PCA and then Travelers and Blue Cross before that! For anyone with a critical illness or with children, this is a major issue of concern. Now that we have elected representatives for consultation, I hope they will keep employees informed and I hope this process will improve. P.S. Who paid for that consultation election, anyway?

- Bilingual and ESL students' needs are not being met. The funds for the above programs are not being properly used. AISD needs to find a way to hire more bilingual teachers.

- I think the District has a wonderful Professional Development Academy (PDA). I am a new teacher and I have taken excellent workshops offered by PDA. Also, I know that schools are assigned some money and it is up the to school how to use this money; however, it will be nice if some basic guidelines were given. The teacher/student ratio in my school is terrible; however, teacher's assistants are not a priority and it should be to serve our little ones better.

- I have strong concerns about the leadership of principals in this district. I have worked under 3 principals since August 98--1 1/2 years, at 2 different schools. The lack of support they offer their teachers, the way they handle parental concerns, the way the move behavioral problems from class to class to class, in the schools I've been--2 principals are not enough to handle the office mandated problems--the backlog is tremendous.

- I feel AISD is moving in the right direction. Still (there is) inequity between low Socio-Economic status (SES) and high SES schools as far as teacher experience and available programs. Health insurance is a concern; it is getting very expensive--not a fault of AISD but of the entire Health Insurance Industry as a whole. Teacher pay is getting better but demands on our time outside the work day are also increasing.

- I believe there is too much red tape in the school district and not enough actions.

- There is inequality between schools within the district. I personally view this as much a parent issue as a school district issue. Those campuses where parents are involved through PTA, volunteer programs, etc... students have more resources available. Campuses where parents choose not to be involved tend to be lacking in

- various resources frequently. Parents need to take responsibility in supporting their child's education and be involved at the school.
- Very top heavy at 6th street. A real lack of effecting leadership at junior high and high school levels. Junior and senior high principals are selected and retained by a standard of "keep the head off 6th street"--<u>not</u> decisions which are in the best interest of students and community. Student behaviors are allowed that are against the student code of conduct. Teachers have no authority in discipline matters at school in or out of the classroom.
- It is hard to talk about the entire district when you just work at one school.
- The Alternative Learning Center is more necessary that ever and less effective. Attendance is ignored. Literacy, reading, and writing instruction are <u>crucial in elementary</u>. They are not being taught effectively. Physical education is ignored and "sports" are emphasized in middle school. Students are fatter and less in shape than ever. <u>All children are important</u>. Kindergarten should be offered to all students. We built Paredes--spending millions--and will not be using it because parents are refusing and our school board (invertebrates that they are), is wasting money appeasing parents, rather than doing what is beneficial for students.
- Continued efforts to increase equity in the best resources should be the major focus of Austin ISD. All students in the district deserve the right to have the best teachers, materials, computers, and supplies.
- Teacher salary is incredibly disproportionate to the amount of outside time that is required and uncompensated. (2) Also, a $50.00 stipend does not even begin to cover a teacher's expenses especially when you have to hire a day care provider for your own child. So go to a summer workshop, get $50.00--spend $30.00 for childcare and receive no additional funds. The lack of salary is unprofessional.
- I think there should be much fewer employees at the administrative level. I believe the teachers should earn a competitive salary and have a daily schedule comparative to another professional. Students who refuse to attend school or refuse to participate in class should be fined. I think we need more vocational training at the middle school level for those students who clearly indicate a need for non-academic preparation for life.
- Students are not punished for misbehavior or are not punished enough. Teachers are not able to teach because of disrespect from students. Many good teachers are leaving the profession or the district because of these problems. The needs of the regular education student are suffering because of a few select students.
- Hard working teachers. Professional administrators. Some outstanding students. Some "very lost" students.

- The biggest problem in my opinion is lack of discipline (and lack of attendance) but primarily, the loose discipline effects everything else--it is the root of our problems.
- Have had to spend over $2,500.00 out of pocket for <u>Special Education materials</u> in the last year and a half (I'm broke). (2) My hiring was botched! (3) AISD needs to create more <u>L.D.</u> and <u>E.D.</u> units to meet the growing population in those areas. (4) There needs to be one <u>diagnostician</u> per campus!
- The job is getting done, but it could be done much more effectively.
- Too many chiefs and not enough Indians! They need to clean out the central office of those people not doing their jobs. They also need to talk to the teachers who deal with day to day problems in the classroom to help resolve problems--not to administrators who haven't been in classrooms in a long time or are not even on campus very much to do their job--they push it off on others to do their work.
- Academically speaking--standardization and expectations are realistic for all AISD. Sub-standard "management" experience has been replaced by "administrators" who often have incompetent employees. Schools should be run like businesses with proper management practices at every level--including board on down. Maintaining interests of students' well-being 1st, with decisions which are conducive to learning and high expectations, geared with success. The system overall is highly bureaucratic and top heavy. Cumbersome, insensitive, does not make best use of all assets in a timely, <u>effective</u> communication.
- Lately, I have been <u>very</u> embarrassed to tell anyone that I am a teacher in AISD! I work in a school that has far too many computers in the classroom, a bad discipline behavior problem that is ignored by the administration, and severe parental/community involvement. Our children are suffering and good quality teachers are being chased out of education due to poor pay, overcrowded classrooms, and the lack of administrative support.
- Working hard to educate all the children in the district. Many children come to school not ready to learn and facing many problems at home, etc.
- The computer competencies that the district requires of teachers is useless because it does not teach teachers <u>how</u> to teach technology to the students or <u>what</u> to teach at each grade level. (2) There are some resources given by the district, but school to school it varies what is being taught and <u>how</u> it's taught in all subject areas. For example, ask any K-5 teacher how to teach phonics--you will get a wide variety of answers on one campus.
- Teachers don't have time to fill out subjective, meaningless paper work such as PALM. It is not reliable, accurate, or useful. Teacher

turnover can be low if you get in a supportive school. <u>Huge</u> dollars were <u>wasted</u> by hiring consultants to build new schools. They should have used AISD architects who know how to build quality schools that make sense, at a reasonable cost. Example--our school is two years old and still has roof leaks. Student projections need to be forecast more accurately to assure proper textbook allotments.

- The AISD schools, to my experience, are far too permissive. Far too much money is invested in babysitting troublemakers. There is far too much vandalism, theft, and violence. Students do not feel safe because they are not. There is a great lack of discipline, 3% of the students are ruining it for the other 77% (magnet schools are basically segregated from the regular population. In-class environment is good for them). ALC 2? Want to know more, ask a teacher.
- NEED laptop computers for Internet staff. Special education classes are too big. No support for behavior problems in special education classes. NEED ED-MR classes. NEED space for all services being offered; for example, physical therapy room, speech room, adopted P.E. room, music therapy room. New schools are being built and not including these services in construction of school. Teachers teach in inappropriate rooms. Adapted PE, music therapy, and adapted art should not be a planning period for regular education teachers. Cut down on paperwork for Music Therapy, Adapted Art, and Adapted PE--over 100 students to a teacher--hard to do paperwork for that many STUDENTS. (Put paperwork time in schedule for teachers.) More educated assistants for special education Rooms. More training for special education teachers.
- The best thing about AISD is the availability of a sound and complete education for those children who are interested. This is basically supported and fronted by the strong interest in education in the Austin area. (2) The worst and weakest aspect of AISD is the poor quality hiring of principals who are gravely ill-prepared to make the best use of their best teacher resources and who are generally unable to make decisions based on good judgement.
- East Side schools have a harder time maintaining discipline within a classroom. We have few classroom volunteers and the resources are not the same as those found in more prominent communities. This becomes challenging in meeting the "equal" needs of every child. Teacher turnover in some schools may decline if higher salaries and more teacher support were taken into consideration!
- Staff development: AISD has many days of staff development, but no planning/preparation days to prepare/plan for new programs. (2) Facilities: The new addition at my school has classrooms smaller than planned for; not enough storage space and certain things are already coming apart. (3) Insurance: AISD only offered 2 insurance companies to select from this year. I had to change from

a company I was pleased with and am not happy with new insurance. We had no impact in the decision to change companies.

- We have never received any educational programs for any subject other that math at our school. We aren't even wired for computers. We often wait up to and over a month for repairs with repeated requests.
- Please check and find out if there is any clinical evidence that the Investigation Math really teaches the skills that are needed. Also check and see if the cost of implementing the program is cost effective. I know that most of it comes from the ACME grant. I am teaching it as AISD suggests this year but feel that there are some really big gaps in skills needed.
- The administration is top-heavy and too political. What's wrong with Texas being #1 in teacher salaries? What's wrong with a maximum class size of 20, so what if you have to hire more teachers, build more classrooms? I thought that was supposed to be part of the lottery package. Why is there so much paper work for teachers that has nothing directly to do with what is being done in the classroom? Nothing is going to change but this was an excellent opportunity to vent a small amount of frustrations. It's like the TAAS; it's the biggest joke I have ever seen anyone play on the State of Texas! What a waste of money and time (the comparison is TAAS to AISD administration)
- The teacher-pupil ratio in special education is too high. As a special educator, I cannot meet the individual needs of these high-risk students. These children are at risk of dropping out. They are reaching high school illiterate due to high numbers in these classes. I don't believe funds for staffing in this area are adequate or used properly.
- It seems, more often that not, that AISD is more interested in "looking good" and preventing law suits than in truly educating the students. Even under the best of circumstances the lack of discipline is abysmal. What, in reality, are our goals and prerogatives? Sometimes AISD seems to feel that the staff and faculty are of minimal importance. No wonder so many teachers flee the area, i.e. to Round Rock. PS: The new TEA policy and guidelines on tardies and absences is a joke!
- In 20+ years of teaching and having worked in 5 districts (including AISD) I have to say this is the worst managed and most stressful I have been involved with. (2) This district has a long way to go. There are more rules and consequences for the teachers than for the students.
- In regards to the insurance package, the district ranks poor in selecting bids for the new insurance. They wrote to us about a lame excuse why they didn't select Prucare and only had a few insurance packages to select. I detest the idea that I have to change insurance

so often. Often having to select new doctor there is no consistency. Most libraries I have visited, lack the bilingual/Spanish books. They have 1 shelf with Spanish reading, while there are 50 others with English books. Mac's are a wonderful teaching tool to have in our classrooms, but we lack software and printers to run a successful computer lesson.

- NO DISCIPLINE! IT IS A FREE FOR ALL!!!
- Reasons you lose good teachers: (1) poor administration, (2) poor pay, (3) overcrowded classes, (4) no support from administration, (5) wrong kids in wrong classes, (6) poor benefits.
- All we need at Central Office is a payroll department. The only instructional leadership in this district comes from the campus level, and these guys are so distracted with discipline problems they rarely focus on curriculum. (2) The professional development center is a joke. From what I've seen, all Central Office administrators are too far removed from the classroom to know what's going on. Technology personnel are also rude to us when we call for help. Actually, that was last year, They're more helpful now. (3) The question about site-based management baffled me. That's been gone for about 6 years as the committee size grew and was turned into an advisory committee. Site-based management does not exist in AISD. Teachers are not motivated to be involved in committees that don't make things happen. (4) Also, our mentor program runs well because of what individual teachers do to make it work. Ask to see what the district gives mentors. The booklet is a sad excuse for what beaurocrats create. Central office wastes money. Thank you for addressing this.
- The jury is still out on Forgione. It's too early to tell. Schools that are low performing need and require more resources and money. The district DOES NOT meet the needs of these schools. In high schools, the teacher/student ratio is too high. Internet? Where? Support staff in the buildings for technology? None. All teachers having access to computers AND printers? Not! My science lab is a joke-1970 something is when it was last renovated. Competent programs for students with special needs? NO!! Taught in Plano for a few years in the early 90's; AISD still does not have it together like Plano did back then. Problems getting substitutes? Yes. Many teachers see the school board as wishy-washy, that is, unwilling to take a stand on any issue-- middle of the road attitude.
- Central Administration doesn't really know or care what happens in the classroom as long as no one complains. For the past 2 years I have had over 195 students who range in skills from Honors to special education in the same classroom. This year we have increases in our staff but no help for reduction of classroom size. I have taught over 35 years and know enough is enough. I am a very

good teacher but there are not the rewards to watch the extra work!!

- One of the biggest problems is class size above 4th grade.
- My school is overcrowded. I do not have one class of less than 30 students. I spend more time on discipline and not enough on teaching. I am a good teacher who likes teaching and loves her kids but I am being driven out of AISD because of the large class sizes. The children's future is in jeopardy. They deserve more!
- The school board is kept clueless as to what really goes on at each campus. The school board is wasteful with tax payer's money. AISD bends the Education Code to fit its own needs. Magnet schools are used to mask (hide) the real problems at their host school.
- At the secondary level, the district is passive in its approach to the drug problem in the district. Drugs are <u>pervasive</u>, and certain high schools in southwest Austin have <u>serious</u> drug problems that principals are not serious about addressing due to concerns about "image." The problems extend into the homes to parental levels and the kids are the ones paying the price--as well as society.
- The literacy, math and science are some of the best programs in the district!
- This district is completely reactionary. There has to be a problem before anything is done; often at a time when it is pointless. Renovations are a joke! We have no access to computers and the Internet service we have been told to expect is still just a myth. Teachers are no longer expected to teach; we are expected to make miracles happen (example > 40% lab with 35+ students and no water or gas in our rooms). Lets just pass the buck once again to the real members of the district--teachers. It's OK, we are easy targets. The <u>only</u> redeeming quality about AISD is the diversity of the students!
- Teachers need more incentive to do good work. Students need more accountability for their work. No more administrative positions should be created until teachers are given more money and responsibilities. Central Texas should consolidate the school districts into one: Hays, Dripping Springs, Round Rock, AISD, Eanes, etc.
- I am very disappointed and frustrated with the way the school board and special education (C.A.C.) make decisions about the needs of special education students. Giving 1:1 assistance to students whose parents have an attorney, but denying 1:1 assistance to special education students who <u>really need</u> it, but don't have an attorney.
- I feel that largely, the school board and central office tend to bend policy so that parents don't complain or sue the school. There is an incredible amount of bureaucracy--and there are many teachers

who don't work nearly as hard as I do, yet they are paid the same as I am. Gifted education in this district is a joke, and special education is very difficult for a regular classroom teacher to incorporate. Frequently, I have between 5-10 students in a class who have as many as 10-15 individual modifications I am supposed to make. My son is in a classroom where he is not learning anything and there is no classroom management. I have tried repeatedly to follow procedure to get his schedule changed, but with no response. Teachers are required to pass competency exams on computer software that is substandard. I could go on. I enjoy teaching children- but not the bureaucracy, wastefulness, and mismanagement this district forces upon us.

- Human Resources does not have a contract policy. Contracts and the oxymoron "non contract agreements" are sent out after October 15th when teachers start work on Aug. 6th. Austin ISD program of giving their word for teaching positions (a long standing procedure) is no longer good when AISD can over ride other's commitments (and after 6 weeks of commitments at that). Also Human Resources "non contract agreement" is neither signed nor dated--just from Human Resource Office.

- My school, Lamar Middle School, has grown in strength, focus, and competency and is only held back by district limitations. We have an outstanding principal who brings resources, techniques, and leadership to use every day we are there. It was with great sadness that our strong TAAS gains were buried by central administration scandals. Truly, were you to visit here, you would find a strong educational focus on an ethnic diverse campus.

- My campus is running very well and is the best campus I have ever been involved with. I have worked in other districts and this campus is excellent. In reference to the superintendent questions I don't have an opinion because he is still new to the job. However, my personal opinion is that we are headed in the right direction.

- I feel that AISD is always too anxious to jump on new "bandwagons" and abandon old programs too quickly. We have had three different report cards in the last three years. I believe AISD tries to please too many groups and ends up becoming ineffective with seemingly weak administrative leadership. It has been detrimental not having a superintendent. We need a strong leader who will make the most of the talented teachers we have in this district. I have always been proud to teach in AISD is spite of all the negative media attention this last year. Just downplay the TAAS and let us TEACH! If we feel that we are supported by our administrators we will bend over backwards. I've been teaching in this district for 15 years and I feel I'm working harder and longer hours now than I ever have. I feel I am juggling too many things the district expects of us, yet they never take anything away. I

really hope someone <u>reads</u> this because I have begun to feel that what us "lowly" teachers have to say never gets heard by the higher-ups or that they have their own separate agendas. Ultimately, I feel the district is too large and should be split into a north and south. It is impossible to manage a monster that has grown this large. I hope these comments don't seem too negative and that someone actually <u>reads</u> them.

- It seems that AISD recycles bad teachers by passing them from school to school or by giving them a job downtown. In every other job you are fired for not doing your job. I think that this should be the case in AISD as well. Also, it would be nice if AISD would help employees with grants for masters or Ph.D. programs. This would also help the students become more competitive.

- Four computers are not enough when you have 30 students at a time in class.

- PALM is a sham.

- Why are there district curriculum guides as well as TEKS? Can't there be one? There is a <u>non-existent</u> Gifted and Talented program. Special education needs more direction. Math textbooks, but no support materials for teachers for 9 weeks? TAAS over testing. Results in 10 days--try 5 WEEKS! What are the district's goals for technology? (Besides more teacher training) How about support materials.

- Our technology. Too many students not enough computers. (2) Repairs take forever! Then not done correctly. (3) Lunches--Do not have variety as in years before. Need to bring back soups, something other than pizza and peanut butter sandwiches. (4) We tend to negatively recognize and discipline teachers who do poorly. Do not recognize teachers. Who do quality work.

- We need better and improved security. Feeling safe is important for all. (2) We need better administrative and staff support. People with a personality and experience. (3) We need more computers in the classrooms and in the library.

- I feel all teachers should have a computer in their room! Not for the teachers use, but more for the student's benefit!

- Support of teachers by administration at this school is weak. Teachers are continually given more jobs and paperwork to do; most of the time there is no feedback at all. Classes in some subjects, such as English, are huge. Enrollments of 37 per class are not uncommon, with 6 or 7 special education students and 4 or 5 LEP students included. There are no support personnel to keep these teachers. Staff morale is very low.

- I think it's ironic that while whole language, hands-on math and portfolios are considered appropriate and current, the district is so TAAS oriented. Also, as a special educator I find it unfair that all special education classes are targeted at 12 but early childhood

classes can exceed 12 because we have TA's: 2 adults for 12 young special needs kids is barely doable. Especially when your kids range from 3 to 6 and have seizures, cerebral palsy, emotional disturbances--you name it. It's sad that Texas salaries are so low for teachers as Austin is an expensive city!

- As a teacher in the district for 20 years, there is no incentive in place to be an excellent teacher, other than knowing that the children benefit from your extra work. Also, I feel that there is an emphasis in the district on the special education child and the gifted child has not had their needs met by the district programs in place. Therefore, low number of National Merit Scholars! We are also very top heavy with administration: administrators vs. more direct student services. Thank you for your attention to our district. It is a very good district!

- I have zero time. I work 60+ hours a week and still do not accomplish all that is expected of me. I even have to do repairs to my classroom myself because I cannot get anyone else to do them. Low-achieving and special education students sap my time and energy, and Honors students get overlooked because of it.

- Classes are too large! (36-38 per class) Students are being passed on to high school without having the prerequisite skills to meet the objectives of high school courses. Most of the students have not passed the 7th or 8th grade TAAS but their transcripts show course grades of 70's and 80's! The district needs to come up with more vocational programs. The few that are offered at my high school are only available to juniors and seniors. By that time quite a few students have dropped out. The Delta program is a disservice to our students. Students can earn a full credit in 2 weeks!!

- This school district does not value its teaching staff. The planning department never gives accurate student projections. We routinely open schools at capacity and start the school year short staffed. The personnel department is non-effective--it is the worst department in the district. We, as teachers, are "expenditures" to the H.R. people. The H.R. department tries to cheat teachers out of money. They don't inform teachers of stipends, and therefore don't pay them out until they are caught. In Sunday's paper--10/31/99: *American Statesman*--there is an advertisement in the education section of the classifieds stating: " Bilingual, Special Education, and Math teachers will receive a $1,500.00 "sign on" bonus and $1,000.00/year stipend". But call personnel--math teachers don't qualify-- it's a mistake--yea right. Teachers have to file grievances to make the district pay stipends or contract bonuses. We had to grieve and sue to get the bilingual stipend reinstated. We had to grieve to get them to pay the full special education bonus. I'm sure we'll have to grieve for math, too.

- I feel that this district does many things well. The implementation of technology in the classroom is a great example. The district has provided decent equipment and training in a reasonably timely manner. Programs vary considerably in quality from campus to campus. The recruitment and selection process for professional personnel seems haphazard at best. Often, the most qualified people are not even interviewed. I have known some very qualified and experienced teachers who have applied with this district and were never even called for interviews and yet I know of uncertified and unqualified people being hired as classroom teachers.
- Need low ratio, special reading program beginning in 4th or 5th grade for students who are behind grade level.
- Regularly, we can not get normal and necessary supplies (cum folders, Student-Parent agreements) from supply. Cum folders are so basic. It takes too long to get extra duty pay and it's hard to figure out what it is for. On my campus level I feel sure of the teachers' commitment to children first and to their education. I am embarrassed by the scandals that exist downtown. I know TAAS fraud exists but I feel fortunate to be so far removed from that. Our principal sets such a fine example to us.
- I do not believe that funding and facilities are equitable throughout the district. The district pays lip service to the needs of low performing schools but offers no substantial aid to these schools. These schools must in reality fend for themselves.
- Many questions have widely different answers depending on the campus site.
- Any and all of these questions are useless unless applied to a specific work environment. Everything varies from campus to campus--it is virtually impossible to answer this questionnaire fairly. Most of the "no opinion" answers are because I have worked on more than one campus. What I would "agree" with for one campus, I would "disagree" with for another and vice-versa. I think this is basically a useless tool because circumstances vary so much across the district!
- I feel the inequities in what resources some schools have and others don't are very obvious and the kids are suffering. They haven't been exposed to computers and many are very uncomfortable around them. Other resources are lacking also.
- I feel special education students need more materials or computer programs to improve skills. The Alternative Learning Center needs materials. They do not have textbooks or other things regular schools have.
- Two years ago the class + 1/3 policy in Specials was supposed to have ceased. It continues across the district. It is unfair for Specials teachers (or Music and P.E.) to teach overcrowded classrooms with 7 to 8 classes a day.

- The Alternative Education Program is used for a dumping ground when teachers are not able to handle students. Teachers at home schools need lessons themselves about how to diagnose learning problems and other issues which leave students frustrated and angry. Teachers at ALC handle the students easily and actually get work out of them. However, when the students go back to home schools, they are not welcomed, they are already labeled, and few teachers try to change their approach to meet the needs of the child.
- There is concern with the number of hours students are being required to focus on TAAS objectives. After all, when students say, "If we didn't have so many tests (i.e. TAAS, ITBS, etc.) we could learn something." That tells me there's a problem people aren't addressing!
- Since you all are examining the school districts--why not continue your examinations and review other state agencies, especially child support collection--monitor yourselves. It seems that there are too many examining groups and not enough workers. A parallel in the school group are the construction consultants.
- Investigations: The elementary math adoption is inadequate and being shoved down teachers' throats. At meetings to discuss options for adoptions, advocates for other programs were not allowed to speak. Teachers are not teaching it, merely putting it on lesson plans to appease administrator. Central Office is out of touch.
- I am fortunate to be at one of the new schools where we do have technology, parental volunteers, lots of resources and support. However, some of my answers are based on the needs of my former school, where there was little or no parental volunteers, lack of materials and technology. Thank you for taking an interest in helping our children!
- First, the teacher and staff of LBJ were not notified of the public hearing that was held here. Discipline is a joke. The students are running the school. The administration is not competent. I've been a teacher for 9 years and I'm going to leave education this year because of my experience with AISD. The turnover rate is extraordinary. The kids need your help. I've tried and I'm tired.
- The preferential funding of some of the district's projects is a slap in the face to every classroom teacher. The schools that appear to receive the most funding and support are the ones that get board members on television.
- AISD is a large district. What is happening on one campus may not be happening on others. I think we need more parental contact as far as secondary level students are concerned. We need a way to let parents know immediately when students are absent. Having

teachers call is not an option. We are already overloaded. (Purchase a communication program).

- Our very at-risk students are lost in the technological race. Special education classrooms are the last to get computers. We need vocational training at ALL campuses!!! Not everyone will be a WEBMASTER - some will be auto mechanics, hairdressers, cooks, etc.
- There is tremendous inequity between the West Austin and East Austin school, because of differences in populations. Discipline is a big problem because students do not know how to behave properly in a classroom and disrupt the educational process frequently.
- It would be of great help to have a computer lab in schools where students do not have access to computers at home. (2) When teachers are absent and there is not a substitute available, we have to split that class, since the district does not pay for a sub on those days. The substitute money should be paid to the teachers who are filling in.
- The morale of this district is very low. New teachers talk about getting out after the 3rd year because the salaries do not compare to what other professionals get. Also, we attend 3 to 4 meetings most weeks that run over 3:30. We don't get overtime, but are <u>expected to attend</u>. Our administrators don't spend the time at school that we do. They usually leave between 3:30 - 4:00. Take off when they want to and do not communicate with us. When this issue is brought up they get upset and call us troublemakers. So, we continue to work within our areas. Administrators (downtown) are forever changing positions. Who knows what's going on. It's difficult to get answers. The assessment on Technology which has been around for 4 years now is a complete mess. No clear direction. We're still wondering who wrote it. You are expected to pass it without support from the school. Also, after a principal takes over why are they not monitored? So much goes on. Why can't teachers have a survey to mail in to AISD as they do us?
- I feel a major problem for AISD is the lack of support felt by teachers and administrators. We have many students who do not make learning their number one priority for attending school. Many of these students are disruptive and ill-behaved. As teachers, we need to be able to teach and not spend so much of our time and energy on discipline problems. We need to adopt a true zero tolerance policy and follow it--not just say we have one. Unfortunately, many of our brightest and best students don't get their needs met, because of the unnecessary time spent on those students who don't care to learn.
- (1)Although the district may be conservative in what it pays for simple equipment such as tape and staplers, they need to consider

quality and durability. What good is a cheap stapler if the kids break it the first time it's used? And just <u>try</u> using the cello tape! (2) Computers are good, but technology is <u>over</u> emphasized; the IMAC's were a showy waste of money. Focus on the practical basics! Administration needs to make purchasing decisions grounded in practicality of basic use and not be "swept off their feet" by "high" tech.

- Teacher salaries need to be increased to stay competitive w/other states and attract quality teachers. More specialized teachers in special education is needed in the district. Administrators (campus) seem overworked and stressed.
- The educational performance of AISD is TAAS driven. What I hear on TV and read in the newspaper seems to indicate that our performance isn't very good. (2) I do not feel that this is a valid survey. Most teachers are familiar with and can speak only about their teaching environment. Statements that encompass the entire district are difficult to rate from our narrow viewpoint.
- I'm concerned that teachers do not have to be certified in the areas in which they teach. They have to take an exam sometime during the year and pass. I've see non- certified teachers teach for 5-6 months before taking the exam. These teachers do not have experience or knowledge in a particular area. I feel our students deserve better than this!
- It is difficult to fully evaluate the superintendent since he is new. (2) School board listens <u>too much</u> to the opinions of the influential. The latest attendance boundaries are grossly inequitable, some schools are vertically teamed (ie. Murchison to Anderson, Bailey to Bowie), while other schools have little teaming (ie. Crockett, which gets <u>part</u> of the student body from Bedichek, Covington, and Porter). (3) AISD is generally very strong in the area of curriculum considering the size and diversity of the population.
- We have a HUGE problem in the area of technology. The district has not trained teachers appropriately on computers, therefore teachers are not using them in the classroom. Also, the new "no staff development will take place during work hours" policy is the pits. Teachers are expected to go for any extra training (technology, methods, best practice) on their own time after work or on Saturday. Teachers are not paid for their extra time. They are not treated as professionals. Another problem is the substitute teacher shortage. Teachers are constantly asked (or forced) to give up their conference time to go sub in another teacher's room because there is no sub. This leaves the district ripe for a lawsuit as teachers are entitled to a conference period. Finally, eight graders this year will endure 3 days of Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) testing, 5 days of TAAS testing and 6 days of practice TAAS

testing as mandated by the district. This is too much time testing and not enough time in class.

- Teachers at "high stress" schools should be paid more; this will decrease our high turnover rate. Or, hire more teachers so each only teaches two block classes per day, using the rest of the time for planning, calling parents, conferences, and home visits. Changes like this will make the "challenging" schools keep more and attract more caring teachers.
- The district seems to spend more time on services available for college bound students and not on those that will be entering work after high school. The school-to-career office needs more financial support as well as support from the entire district. The majority of students in AISD will not finish college and need work skills.
- My greatest fear as a parent is that teachers are being so overworked that the excellent ones can't stay long enough, so students are served mostly by newer and less effective teachers. (2) I do my best to meet the needs of all my students and satisfy district and parent expectations. I always work 15-20 hours of overtime each week. This is more than a family can handle a mother to work. This will lead to my early retirement. I know many teachers who have left due to too much work and trying to meet so many expectations. Parents,TAAS/PALM, Gifted and Talented, Special Needs Accountability Documentation etc etc.
- AISD is in trouble. The TAAS test scandal was not the fault of teachers or students but administrators who are more concerned about how the district looks on paper than it does in the classroom. I have talked to many teachers over the past two years and most are frustrated by students who refuse to do homework, read, or even come to class regularly. Believe me, there are many more dropouts than the administration claims. I am carrying eight students who have not been in class for over forty days and they usually do not get dropped until the last few days of the semester. Things are not going well.
- Must follow through on policies, otherwise must be rewritten!
- It will take a few years for AISD to build up their credibility. Teachers are working hard on all levels. Central Administration needs revamping and monitored more closely for mismanagement.

Appendix G
STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS
(Written/Self-Administered)

Demographics

The Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) student sample consisted of junior and senior high school students. TSPR sent 200 Student Questionnaires to the 11 Austin Independent School District (AISD) high school principals asking them to distribute 18 or 19 questionnaires to a junior or senior class. Out of the 200 questionnaires mailed out, TSPR obtained responses from 162 students: 52 percent were juniors, and 45 percent were seniors; more than 2 percent did not identify their grade. Fifty-four percent of the students were female and 46 percent male. Forty percent of the students were Anglo, 17 percent were African American, 35 percent were Hispanic, 1.5 percent Asian American, and 4 percent classified themselves as "other."

The survey questionnaire was comprised of two sections: a multiple-choice section and a comment section. The multiple-choice section asked students their opinions about seven of the 12 functional areas under review. The seven areas covered in the survey were:

- Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement
- Facilities Use and Management
- Purchasing and Warehousing
- Food Services
- Transportation
- Safety and Security
- Computers and Technology

The comment section asked students their opinions on the overall educational performance of the district in general. Responses to the multiple-choice questions are summarized below.

Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Overall, students expressed a positive view of the education services that AISD provides. Of the seven curriculum content areas that students were asked to assess, 10 were positively assessed by 55 to 80 percent of the students. The programs considered effective by the largest percent of students (more than 70 percent) were Math, Science and English. About 40 percent of the students agreed that AISD provides effective Vocational Education and Business Education programs. However, more than 40 percent of the students indicated that they were not familiar with these

programs. Also, more than 20 percent of the students expressed no opinion about Computer Instruction (25 percent), Physical Education (23 percent), and Fine Arts (21 percent).

Twenty to fifty percent of the students were not familiar with special programs and did not express an opinion about their effectiveness. Most of those who were familiar with the programs had a favorable view about their effectiveness. Special programs offered by AISD were regarded as effective by more than 40 percent of the students. The Advanced Placement program was regarded as effective by the largest percent of students (70 percent) followed by the Honors/Gifted and Talented program (62 percent). The Career Counseling and College Counseling programs generated the highest percent of criticism: more than one-quarter of the students did not regard these programs as effective while one-third and one-quarter of the students, respectively, had no opinion.

More than half of the students agreed that AISD has high-quality teachers, that it provides high-quality education, that teachers do not leave classrooms unattended, and that AISD's educational services meet the needs of college-bound students. About one-quarter of the students had no opinion about these issues. Less than half of the students thought that the district also meets the needs of work-bound students (31 percent had no opinion).

Facilities Use and Management

Students were divided in their views of AISD's facilities' maintenance. Nearly one-half of the students agreed that schools are clean and are properly maintained. However, 38 and 33 percent, respectively disagreed with this assessment. Forty-five percent of the students agreed and 22 percent disagreed that emergency maintenance is handled in a timely manner (34 percent had no opinion). Forty-five percent of the students did not think that AISD makes regular repairs in a timely manner (28 percent did and 27 percent had no opinion).

Purchasing and Warehousing

Students were also significantly divided in assessing the availability of textbooks and library books. More than half of the students agreed that there are enough textbooks in their class (44 percent disagreed), that textbooks are issued to students in a timely manner (57 percent agreed and 25 percent disagreed), and that the library resources meet students' needs (52 percent agreed and 31 percent disagreed). Students exhibited the lowest level of agreement with regard to the status of textbooks. Only 38 percent agreed while 45 percent disagreed that the textbooks students get are in good shape.

Food Services

Students were critical of AISD's food service. More than half of the students (53 percent) did not think that the food at school cafeterias looks and tastes good (27 percent had no opinion) or that they have enough time to eat (55 percent). More than 60 percent also indicated that they have to wait in line longer than 10 minutes. Students were roughly split in their opinions regarding the food being served warm (42 percent agreed, 33 percent disagreed, 25 percent had no opinion) and that discipline and order are being maintained in the cafeteria (39 percent agreed, 31 percent disagreed, 28 percent had no opinion). Forty percent or more of the students agreed that the breakfast program is available to all (62 percent) and that lunch is served at the appropriate time of day (68 percent). They also agreed that cafeteria staff are friendly (54 percent), and that cafeteria facilities are sanitary (43 percent agreed, 25 percent disagreed, and 30 percent had no opinion).

Transportation

Questions regarding transportation services were answered by about 30 percent of the students. Only 20 percent of students indicated that they regularly ride the school bus. Most of the students who use school transportation appeared to be pleased with the services provided with two exceptions. Students were nearly evenly split as to whether buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school: 18 percent disagreed and 15 percent agreed. Also, bus cleanliness was confirmed by 19 percent of the students. Ten percent disagreed.

Safety and Security

Most students (68 percent) feel safe at school (18 percent do not) because the school atmosphere is peaceful: nearly 60 percent indicated that schools disturbances are infrequent. At the same time, more than 55 percent of the students thought that drugs and vandalism are a problem (although not gangs). More than 40 percent also thought that school grounds have safety hazards (31 percent had no opinion). Respondents were split equally on whether students receive fair and equitable disciplinary treatment for misconduct. Nineteen percent of the students strongly disagreed that schools apply fair disciplinary measures. Forty to 50 percent of the students were appreciative of campus security personnel and the local law enforcement, while 26 to 28 percent expressed no opinion.

Computers and Technology

More than half of the students expressed positive opinions about computer and technology use at school. More than half of the students agreed that

they have regular access to computers in the classroom (38 percent disagreed) and that teachers know how to use computers for instruction (28 percent disagreed). Nearly twice as many students agreed (60 percent) as disagreed (31 percent) that teachers and students have easy access to the Internet. Students were also pleased (71 percent) that computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction. About half of the students also agreed that enough classes are offered in computer fundamentals (25 percent disagreed, 25 percent had no opinion) and in advanced computer skills (21 percent disagreed and 28 percent had no opinion).

Appendix G

Exhibit G-1
Management Review of the Austin Independent School District
Student Survey Results

PART A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

STATEMENT	CATEGORY		
	No Response	Male	Female
Gender (Optional)	1.5%	44.6%	53.8%

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Anglo	African-American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
Ethnicity (Optional)	3.8%	39.2%	16.9%	34.6%	1.5%	3.8%

STATEMENT	CATEGORY		
	No Response	Junior	Senior
What is your classification?	2.3%	52.3%	45.4%

PART B: SURVEY QUESTIONS

Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	1.5%	10.8%	46.2%	14.6%	23.1%	3.8%
2. The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	1.5	10.8	37.7	30.8	16.9	2.3

3.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
	a) Reading	2.3	14.6	53.8	18.5	10.0	0.8
	b) Writing	2.3	20.0	49.2	13.1	13.8	1.5
	c) Mathematics	2.3	27.7	45.4	11.5	10.8	2.3
	d) Science	3.1	26.2	53.1	10.0	7.7	0.0
	e) English or Language Arts	2.3	30.8	46.2	13.8	6.9	0.0
	f) Computer Instruction	3.1	21.5	36.2	25.4	11.5	2.3
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	2.3	24.6	44.6	17.7	10.0	0.8
	h) Fine Arts	2.3	21.5	46.9	20.8	7.7	0.8
	i) Physical Education	3.1	15.4	40.0	23.1	14.6	3.8
	j) Business Education	3.8	12.3	28.5	41.5	10.8	3.1
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	2.3	13.8	25.4	40.8	14.6	3.1
	l) Foreign Language	6.9	18.5	42.3	15.4	13.8	3.1
4.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a) Library Service	3.1	10.8	33.8	27.7	16.2	8.5
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	3.1	17.7	44.6	20.8	10.8	3.1

	c) Special Education	3.1	16.2	27.7	49.2	2.3	1.5
	d) Student mentoring program	3.1	13.8	37.7	32.3	12.3	0.8
	e) Advanced placement program	3.1	30.0	40.0	20.0	6.2	0.8
	f) Career counseling program	3.8	11.5	26.9	32.3	18.5	6.9
	g) College counseling program	3.8	18.5	25.4	23.8	22.3	6.2
5.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	1.5	12.3	32.3	16.2	26.9	10.8
6.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	0.8	10.8	41.5	23.1	16.9	6.9
7.	The district provides a high quality education.	1.5	13.1	40.8	25.4	15.4	3.8
8.	The district has a high quality of teachers.	1.5	18.5	32.3	26.9	19.2	1.5

B. Facilities Use and Management

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9.	Schools are clean.	0.8%	8.5%	40.8%	12.3%	25.4%	12.3%
10.	Buildings are properly maintained in	0.8	13.1	35.4	17.7	22.3	10.8

	a timely manner.						
11.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	0.8	9.2	18.5	26.9	25.4	19.2
12.	Emergency maintenance is handled timely.	0.8	11.5	31.5	33.8	14.6	7.7

C. Purchasing and Warehousing

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13. There are enough textbooks in all my classes.	0.8%	15.4%	34.6%	5.4%	34.6%	9.2%
14. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	1.5	11.5	45.4	16.9	16.2	8.5
15. Textbooks are in good shape.	0.8	5.4	33.1	16.2	30.8	13.8
16. The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	0.8	16.9	35.4	16.2	19.2	11.5

D. Food Services

STATEMENT	CATEGORY

		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
17.	The school breakfast program is available to all children.	0.8%	25.4%	36.9%	22.3%	9.2%	5.4%
18.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	0.8	5.4	13.8	26.9	27.7	25.4
19.	Food is served warm.	0.8	8.5	33.1	24.6	25.4	7.7
20.	Students have enough time to eat.	0.8	9.2	30.0	4.6	24.6	30.8
21.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	0.8	17.7	50.0	12.3	10.8	8.5
22.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	1.5	6.2	18.5	11.5	25.4	36.9
23.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	1.5	6.9	32.3	28.5	18.5	12.3
24.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	2.3	15.4	38.5	23.8	12.3	7.7
25.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	2.3	9.2	33.8	30.0	15.4	9.2

E. Transportation

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
26. I regularly ride the bus.	3.1%	7.7%	12.3%	34.6%	16.2%	26.2%
27. The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	5.4	6.2	13.1	67.7	4.6	3.1
28. The length of my bus ride is reasonable.	6.2	7.7	14.6	64.6	4.6	2.3
29. The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	6.9	11.5	16.2	61.5	1.5	2.3
30. The bus stop near my house is safe.	6.2	12.3	16.2	63.8	1.5	0.0
31. The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	5.4	10.8	17.7	61.5	1.5	3.1
32. Buses arrive and leave on time.	6.2	8.5	9.2	65.4	8.5	2.3
33. Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	6.2	6.9	8.5	63.8	7.7	6.9
34. Buses seldom break down.	6.9	7.7	13.1	68.5	3.1	0.8
35. Buses are clean.	6.9	4.6	14.6	63.8	4.6	5.4
36. Bus drivers allow	6.2	10.8	14.6	64.6	3.8	0.0

students to sit down before taking off.						

F. Safety and Security

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
37. I feel safe and secure at school.	1.5%	16.2%	52.3%	12.3%	12.3%	5.4%
38. School disturbances are infrequent.	1.5	11.5	45.4	17.7	18.5	5.4
39. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	1.5	16.9	32.3	26.2	14.6	8.5
40. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	1.5	6.9	14.6	17.7	27.7	31.5
41. Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	1.5	3.1	16.2	23.1	33.1	23.1
42. Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	2.3	7.7	40.0	35.4	8.5	6.2
43. Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	1.5	8.5	40.0	26.2	13.8	10.0
44. A good working	2.3	4.6	34.6	47.7	6.2	4.6

		arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.						
45.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	2.3	8.5	29.2	21.5	20.0	18.5
46.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	2.3	6.2	18.5	30.8	29.2	13.1

G. Computers and Technology

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
47.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	1.5%	16.9%	34.6%	8.5%	30.8%	7.7%
48.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	1.5	13.8	41.5	14.6	20.8	7.7
49.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	1.5	20.8	50.0	11.5	14.6	1.5
50.	The district offers enough classes in computer	1.5	15.4	33.8	24.6	16.2	8.5

	fundamentals.					
51.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	1.5	13.8	34.6	28.5	14.6	6.9
52.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	1.5	23.1	36.9	7.7	21.5	9.2

Appendix G

- The work is extremely easy and is never challenging. There are fights every day and drugs are like second nature to me. Please raise the standards of our education so in the real "world" we might have a chance.
- I need to have the school's appearances look better, and kept looking nice. We need an increase in pay for our teachers, so we can have better educated teachers. We also need monitors that will do something more than sit and watch TV. We should also have open campus lunches for upper classmen. The underclassmen have to earn the right to go off campus, and stricter penalties for underclassmen who go off.
- The educational system is not currently meeting the needs of the students it is serving. AISD spends too much time teaching the TAAS and not nearly enough time making sure the students are equipped for their future.
- I think we have a good school system and much opportunity is open to this school.
- Construction to improve the schools has caused a disturbance to the learning environment of our schools because of the untimely manner in which it is accomplished.
- I am a student at William B. Travis High School and our library is still under construction. It has taken a long time and I know the workers are doing their best, but it's a real inconvenience having to go to a public library where they may or may not have the book in one facility but there is one across town. I am not complaining but I think they may need to hustle a little. A senior.
- I think that the AISD personnel should get to work instead of trying to get into peoples' lives. I think they should figure it out for yourself, take a tour around.
- I feel we should have had a library a long time ago like when the first day of school was around.
- I feel that everyday I attend school, there are cocaine smokers, and snorters trying to influence me to use these drugs. I feel also that the right to wear caps should not be neglected. That is a freedom of speech and opinion, and yet this principal will not let us wear them.
- The Internet server used for AISD should be open to all students with some type of a server censorship program, as opposed to devolving to a less system of parental consent. Many more students would use the Internet, including myself, if it were easier to be signed on. I also feel as though there should be a "no hat"

policy here at Travis because it is one of the main infringements to your rights. Thank you for your consideration.

- I believe Austin High to be an excellent school that provides for almost all my needs and desires. I do, however, believe that AISD has poor data processing and the central administration is often slow in meeting the needs of each individual school.

- Construction is a hassle and very unsafe.

- The lunches at our school are a problem, they are too crowded because we are down to two lunches and there are always good fights and the lines are too long, the food is so nasty!! (except the rolls). The security at our school is good, they just aren't nice or liked by anyone.

- I would like to see less separation of respected attitudes and class leaders from regular people. If its' one person's word against another, the volleyball player or football player is believed every time. That really upsets me.

- This survey generalizes the district as a whole but each region/area and school has different needs. I think Austin High has superior educational needs met but lacks in other areas such as student-administrator communication. Other groups besides student council need to be formed because student council is not representative of the student population and their views, rather a small group of the students. The administration doesn't know about REAL student concerns.

- Need to hire actual teachers with real diplomas, real qualifications for teaching. Don't just look "at their past;" see if they are actually capable of teaching high school students. Some of the teachers are babies, very young, just out of college. Its like our peers are trying to control us. I know it's hard to judge the future but you need to find a better way of hiring the people that are going to teach the future of this country. Make sure that when teachers issue textbooks they issue the issued ones, not ones that students have no access to.

- I feel like I am receiving a wonderful education and I am learning a whole lot, however, I feel that school is much too competitive. There is too much emphasis on grades, and not enough on learning and receiving good grades. There is a difference between learning and receiving good grades. I feel like I learn very much, but my grades aren't the best in the class. I'm not sure what can be done about this situation, but I hope that you are now aware of it.

- I agree in the freedom right we have in this country, but I also agree that many people abuse it and many students at this school don't respect other people's freedom.

- I feel that the learning requirements for honors and regular classes need to be more different. When I talk to friends about what we do in class they make it seem that the regular classes are honors. They

basically do the same thing except they have more free time and group projects. Also, racism is a problem at my school; teachers and students should not be racists, especially teachers. Some teachers will see me with my hand raised and just ignore me. I would like to see these problems come to an end. (Hispanic student).

- I feel that some of the teachers love their job but not some of the students. Sometimes they pick favorites. The educational performance of Austin ISD has been good to me but others disagree. I think the teachers should motivate and help the students more.
- With the exception of Garza, the whole district is not worthy of recognition. The AISD is one of the last, if not the last, school districts for a higher learning.
- I feel if students graduate and barely pass the TAAS, then we have failed as a state.
- Administrators and teachers have absolutely no respect for students. There are not enough options for people who need to go to work, have children, or are not intent on going to college. AISD is a giant bureaucracy that the students detest. There is no sense of community and the students are treated like babies.
- School administrators are racist and try to catch the wrong people and bother those who aren't doing anything wrong. I am very disturbed about this aspect of AISD. I expect a re-staffing very soon.
- The school nurse is never there. The cafeteria and the food are nasty and the buses drop us off three minutes before the bell rings.
- Educationally, I think our school serves its students well. The environment could be improved.
- Anderson is good for the most part, however I do not hear good things about other schools. This may stem from not paying competitive salaries that draw top quality teachers to the district. By the by...the administrators are unreasonable and racist toward Anglos that deserve more respect.
- The treatment and dolling out of justice is unequal, students who are caught out of class and are Mexican or African American are released by our assistant principals. Lunch time is too short; at West Lake they have an hour. My girlfriend's car was keyed with gang signs and no one has done anything.
- There is a big problem with stealing at my school. Also I think that lunch should be at least one hour because with the long lines there is not enough time to eat.
- If y'all actually give a DARN about the kids you "care about sooo much," you need to (1) Be more strict and control the troublemakers who disrupt school for the rest of us. (2) If y'all want to teach "tolerance to all," quit stuffing down all of the

"wonderful minority figures" down our throat and quit prohibiting those who want to pray in a group and post signs about prayers from doing that. Because that is preaching the intolerance which you so often shun.

- Relatively concerned about safety of automobiles at McCallum.
- I believe it is overall well done. I just question the off-campus rules. Also, there is a problem with students and cigarettes and drugs. They hang outside of the school in surrounding roads before, during, and after school.
- I feel safe!
- I feel that AISD needs to care about their students more and try harder. Also, money is a big problem. The teachers would act and be nicer if they get paid more. AISD should make sure the teachers want to teach. No one wants a bad teacher.
- This school is a great place to have an education!!
- All around I think that AISD is pretty good-maybe they could change some things like at my school only seniors are allowed to get off but they say everyone else is too irresponsible to come back. I think they give the juniors a chance. Oh well AISD is pretty nice so no real bad complaints. (a junior).
- We don't have enough computer access.
- I think it is O.K.
- Honestly, I do not like the way administration is running LBJ this year. Some policies they have come up with are extremely absurd. One thing that I have noticed is that students are basically free to walk in the halls disturbing classes. I have never seen an administrator ask for a pass. They simply don't care about the students being in the halls or they probably trust them that they are out for a good reason.
- About the lunch situation I think juniors with and without senior credits should be eligible to have off campus lunch. It should at least be on a trial basis.
- I believe that teachers are worried more about who (is) DOING what than who's LEARNING what. The whole system is messed up. Some schools have five classes one semester and five the next but with some other schools they have eight; four one day, four the next. This school has two lunches and that school has just one and it's too too crowded and there's not enough space to move around. So the whole way of doing things is backwards and confusing.
- The educational problem at LBJ is so slow, we are far behind other schools. I think that if we can catch up with the other schools we will be a better school for learning.
- The food is all right and not always warm. My school is safe and a great place to learn at.
- I feel more teachers need to be understanding to most students' needs. Some teachers are too afraid to stand up to students and

students start taking advantage of it. Then the class becomes of those students with whom the teacher is afraid of.

- I think the teachers and principals need to be more helpful and respectful towards students, especially towards the students who treat them with courtesy and respect!!
- The performance is O.K., but needs a little more attending to than it has.
- I have been to a couple of high schools and I must say that Lanier has best curriculum.

Appendix H
PUBLIC INPUT RESULTS
(TELEPHONE INTERVIEW)

Austin Citizenry
n=650

METHODOLOGY

The 1999 Austin Independent School District (AISD) community survey was based on the results of 650 telephone interviews conducted with adults residing in the area served by AISD. A random sample of households in the AISD service region was provided by Survey Sampling, Inc. Interviewing was conducted between November 2, 1999 and November 9, 1999 using the standardized Texas School Performance Review general population survey instrument provided by the Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts.

OBJECTIVES

Primary objectives of the 1999 AISD community survey included:

- Assess general perceptions of AISD among residents living within its boundaries.
- Measure the level of awareness of AISD programs and services.
- Measure the enrollment rate in AISD schools.
- Assess public perceptions of the quality of education in AISD.
- Assess public opinion of AISD schools and school-related issues and identify reasons for those perceptions.
- Assess public opinion on the efficiency of AISD operations.
- Measure any differences in opinions between respondents with a child or children currently enrolled in an AISD school and those without.
- Measure any differences in opinions among different ethnic groups.
- Develop a demographic profile of AISD residents.

PRIMARY RESULTS

Significant findings of the 1999 AISD community survey include:

- Public awareness of AISD programs and services is moderate.
- A majority of households that include school-aged children indicate that they are enrolled in AISD schools.

- Anglo parents are more likely to enroll their children in private school than are Hispanic parents.
- The percentage of respondents who indicate that the quality of education in AISD has gotten worse is larger than the percentage who think it has improved.
- Elementary schools in AISD receive the highest ratings in terms of the quality of education provided.
- Hispanic respondents have more positive opinions of AISD schools than their Anglo counterparts.
- Parents with a child or children in AISD schools tend to be more positive about the quality of education in AISD than those without children in school.
- Generally, residents within AISD feel that its schools are provided sufficient teachers and supplies.
- A majority of respondents feel that schools in AISD can be described as good places to learn.
- A majority of respondents indicate that parents and the community are supportive of AISD schools.
- A substantial majority of respondents feel that too much emphasis is placed on passing the TAAS and not enough on total education.
- Approval of bilingual education is moderate, with the same number of respondents rating it fair as those rating it positive (excellent or good).
- On the whole, respondents tend to be highly positive about current magnet school programs and their proposed expansion to include science, engineering and music.
- A majority of respondents do not believe that AISD is run efficiently.
- Respondents provide low approval ratings of how well AISD manages tax dollars used to operate the district.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

Levels of public awareness for AISD programs and services appear moderate:

- Almost six in ten (57 percent) respondents indicate that they know "a little" about programs and services provided by AISD.
- Almost three in ten (28 percent) respondents indicate that they know "nothing at all," while one in seven (14 percent) states that they know "a lot" about AISD programs and services.

ENROLLMENT IN AISD SCHOOLS

Almost six in ten (58 percent) respondents indicate that they do not have school-aged children living at home. Among the 42 percent who have

school-aged children, more than eight in ten (85 percent) have a child or children enrolled in AISD. Among those who have children enrolled in an AISD school:

- More than half (55 percent) indicate they have a child or children attending an AISD elementary school.
- Three in ten (32 percent) have a child or children attending an AISD middle school and four in ten (40 percent) have a child or children attending high school.

Enrollment and Race/Ethnicity

Households that include a school-aged child or children were examined by race/ethnicity of the respondents to assess differences in enrollment rates across different racial and ethnic groups:

- The results indicate that Anglo parents are more likely (17 percent) to enroll their children in private schools than Hispanic parents (4 percent).
- The number of African-American households with school-aged children is too small to support statistically reliable projections.

PERCEPTIONS OF THE QUALITY OF AISD EDUCATION

Overall positive ratings of AISD are moderate, with four in ten (44 percent) respondents rating the quality of education at AISD as excellent (6 percent) or good (38 percent). One third (33 percent) of respondents believe that the quality of education in AISD is fair, and one in seven (15 percent) provide a rating of poor.

- Respondents are most likely to indicate that the quality of education in AISD over the past three years has stayed the same (43 percent).
- Almost two in ten (19 percent) respondents indicate that the quality of education over the past three years has improved, while slightly less than one quarter (23 percent) believe that it has gotten worse.

Respondents who indicated that they have a child or children attending AISD schools were asked if they had children in elementary, middle or high school. Among parents of children currently enrolled in AISD schools, ratings of the quality of education are most positive for elementary schools:

- More than three fourths (78 percent) of respondents who have a child or children in an AISD elementary school indicate that the

quality of education their children receive is excellent (33 percent) or good (45 percent).

- Among the respondents who have a child or children in an AISD middle school, six in ten (62 percent) indicate that the quality of education their children receive is excellent (16 percent) or good (46 percent).
- Ratings of the quality of education in an AISD high school are similar to middle school ratings. Six in ten (60 percent) respondents who have a child or children in an AISD high school indicate that the quality of education their children receive is excellent (13 percent) or good (47 percent).

The percentage of respondents indicating the quality of education their children receive is poor is highest for AISD middle schools:

- Fourteen percent of parents with a child or children in an AISD middle school indicate that the quality of education their children receive is poor.
- Slightly more than one in ten (11 percent) with a child or children in an AISD high school rates the quality of education as poor, and fewer than one in 16 (6 percent) with a child or children in elementary school provide a rating of poor.

Quality of Education and Race/Ethnicity

Hispanic respondents generally are more positive about the quality of education in AISD schools than their Anglo counterparts:

- Six in ten (59 percent) Hispanic respondents rate the quality of education as excellent (13 percent) or good (46 percent). In comparison, less than half (47 percent) of Anglo respondents rated the quality of education as excellent (5 percent) or good (42 percent).
- Anglo respondents are slightly more likely (37 percent) to rate the quality of education as fair than their Hispanic counterparts (32 percent).
- Additionally, Anglo respondents are more likely (16 percent) to rate the quality of education as poor than Hispanics (10 percent).

Hispanic respondents are also more likely to believe that the quality of education in AISD has improved than are Anglo respondents:

- Hispanic respondents are twice as likely (29 percent) as Anglo respondents (14 percent) to indicate the quality of education provided by AISD has improved.

- Conversely, Anglo respondents are more than twice as likely (29 percent) as Hispanics (13 percent) to indicate that the quality of education in AISD schools has gotten worse.

Quality of Education and Households with Children Enrolled in an AISD School

Further analysis of opinions of educational quality indicates that respondents who have a child or children currently enrolled in an AISD school hold more positive opinions than those who do not:

- Six in ten (61 percent) respondents with children in AISD schools rate the quality of public education in AISD as good (49 percent) or excellent (12 percent).
- In comparison, slightly over four in ten (43 percent) respondents with no children in school, rate the quality of education in AISD as excellent (4 percent) or good (39 percent).
- Almost half (46 percent) of respondents with children attending AISD schools believe that the quality of education has stayed the same. More than one quarter (26 percent) indicate that the quality of public education in AISD over the past three years has improved, while two in ten (19 percent) believe it has gotten worse.
- In comparison, one fourth (25 percent) of respondents with no children in school indicate that the quality of education in AISD has gotten worse. One in seven (15 percent) believe that it has gotten better, and four in ten (40 percent) indicate that the quality of education in AISD has stayed the same.

Appendix H

IMAGE OF AISD EMPLOYEES

Respondents were asked to rate AISD school board members, superintendent, and administrators using a grading scale of A through F.

AISD School Board Members' Knowledge of Educational Needs
Total Response Frequencies

Grading Scale	Percent
A	7
B	31
C	32
D	10
F	10
Don't Know	10

- Almost four in ten respondents (38 percent) provide positive ratings of AISD school board members' knowledge of educational needs. While one in 14 (7 percent) gave the school board members' knowledge of educational needs a grade A, almost one third (31 percent) gave a B.
- An additional third (32 percent) gave a grade C and two in ten (20 percent) gave grades of D (10 percent) or F (10 percent).

Performance of Current School Board
Total Response Frequencies

Grading Scale	Percent
A	5
B	27
C	34
D	13
F	12
Don't Know	10

- Almost one third (32 percent) of respondents gave a grade of A (5 percent) or B (27 percent) when rating the overall performance of the current school board.
- Slightly over one third (34 percent) of respondents gave a grade C, and one quarter (25 percent) gave grades of D (13 percent) and F (12 percent) when rating the school board's overall performance.

**Overall Performance of Superintendent
Total Response Frequencies**

Grading Scale	Percent
A	13
B	28
C	16
D	8
F	8
Don't Know	26

- When rating the overall performance of the AISD Superintendent, more than four in ten (41 percent) respondents provided positive ratings. More than one respondent in ten (13 percent) gave a grade A and almost three in ten (28 percent) gave a grade B.
- Fewer than two in ten (16 percent) respondents gave a grade C. An equal number provided poor ratings (16 percent) with fewer than one in ten giving grades D (8 percent) or F (8 percent).

**Performance of Top Administrators
Total Response Frequencies**

Grading Scale	Percent
A	6
B	25
C	32
D	13
F	9
Don't Know	16

- AISD residents are somewhat less positive about top administrators below the superintendent. When rating this group's

overall performance, only three in ten (31 percent) respondents provided positive ratings. Less than one respondent in ten (6 percent) gave a grade A and one fourth (25 percent) of respondents gave a grade B.

- Almost a third (32 percent) of respondents gave a grade C. Over two in ten (22 percent) provided poor ratings with slightly more than one in ten giving a grade D (13 percent) and just under one in ten giving a grade F (9 percent).

Image of AISD Employees and Households with Children Enrolled in an AISD School

When opinions of AISD schools and school related issues are analyzed by enrollment in AISD, respondents with a child or children attending AISD schools generally tend to be more positive about AISD than those with no children in school. Parents with children in private schools are not included in this analysis because their numbers are too few to allow statistically reliable projections.

AISD School Board Members' Knowledge of Educational Needs Respondents with Child or Children in AISD

Grading Scale	Percent
A	9
B	41
C	32
D	10
F	8

- Half of respondents (50 percent) with children enrolled in AISD gave positive grades when rating AISD school board members' knowledge of educational needs. Approximately one respondent in ten (9 percent) gave a grade A and over four in ten (41 percent) gave a grade B.
- One third (32 percent) of respondents with children enrolled in AISD gave a grade C, while one in ten gave a grade D (10 percent). Slightly under one in ten (8 percent) gave a grade F.

AISD School Board Members' Knowledge of Educational Needs Respondents with No Children in School

Grading Scale	Percent
A	7
B	32
C	38
D	11
F	12

- Four in ten (39 percent) of respondents with no children in school gave positive grades when rating AISD school board members' knowledge of educational needs. One respondent in fourteen (7 percent) gave a grade A and almost one third (32 percent) gave a grade B.
- Almost four in ten (38 percent) respondents with no children in school gave a grade C, while slightly more than one in ten gave grades D (11 percent) or F (12 percent).

**Performance of Current AISD School Board
Respondents with Child or Children in AISD**

Grading Scale	Percent
A	8
B	36
C	35
D	14
F	8

- More than four in ten (44 percent) respondents with children enrolled in AISD provided positive ratings of the school board's overall performance, with almost one respondent in ten (8 percent) giving a grade A and well over one third (36 percent) giving a grade B.
- More than one third (35 percent) of respondents with children enrolled in AISD gave a grade C and approximately two in ten (22 percent) gave grades of D (14 percent) and F (8 percent) when rating the school board's overall performance.

**Performance of Current AISD School Board
Respondents with No Children in School**

Grading Scale	Percent
A	4
B	28
C	38
D	14
F	16

- Almost one third (32 percent) of respondents with no children in school provided positive ratings of the school board's overall performance, with under one in twenty (4 percent) giving a grade A and three in ten (28 percent) respondents giving a grade B.
- Four in ten (38 percent) respondents with no children in school gave a grade C and three in ten (30 percent) gave grades of D (14 percent) and F (16 percent) when rating the school board's overall performance.

**Overall Performance of AISD Superintendent
Respondents with Child or Children in AISD**

Grading Scale	Percent
A	21
B	40
C	20
D	11
F	8

- Respondents with children enrolled in AISD provided highly positive ratings of the superintendent's overall performance with over six in ten (61 percent) giving grades above a C. Approximately two in ten (21 percent) gave a grade A and four in ten (40 percent) gave a grade B. Two in ten (20 percent) of respondents with children in AISD gave a grade C.
- Less than two in ten (19 percent) rated the overall performance of the superintendent as poor, with slightly over one in ten (11 percent) giving a D and fewer than one in ten (8 percent) giving an F.

**Overall Performance of AISD Superintendent
Respondents with No Children in School**

Grading Scale	Percent
A	16
B	38
C	23
D	10
F	13

- Respondents with no children in school also provided positive ratings of the superintendent's overall performance with more than half (54 percent) giving grades above a C. One in six (16 percent) gave a grade A and four in ten (38 percent) gave a grade B.
- Almost one quarter (23 percent) of respondents without children in an AISD school gave a grade C. Additionally, almost one quarter (23 percent) rated the overall performance of the superintendent as poor, with one in ten (10 percent) giving a D and slightly more than one in ten (13 percent) giving an F.

Performance of Top Administrators
Respondents with Child or Children in AISD

Grading Scale	Percent
A	8
B	37
C	34
D	13
F	8

- Respondents with children enrolled in AISD gave moderately positive ratings to the performance of top administrators below the superintendent, with over four in ten (45 percent) giving grades above a C. Slightly less than one in ten (8 percent) gave a grade A and almost four in ten (37 percent) gave a grade B. One third (34 percent) of respondents with children enrolled in AISD gave a grade C.
- Two in ten (21 percent) rated the top administrators' performance as poor, with over one in ten (13 percent) giving a D and less than one in ten (8 percent) giving an F.

Performance of Top Administrators
Respondents with No Children in School

Grading Scale	Percent
A	7
B	27
C	40
D	16
F	11

- Respondents with no children in school gave less positive ratings of the performance of top administrators below the superintendent, with just over one third (34 percent) giving grades above a C. One in fourteen (7 percent) gave a grade A and almost three in ten (27 percent) gave a grade B. Four in ten (40 percent) of respondents with no children in school gave a grade C.
- More than one fourth (27 percent) rated the top administrators' performance as poor, with one in six (16 percent) giving a D and one in ten (11 percent) giving an F.

Image of AISD Employees and Race/Ethnicity

Hispanic respondents have a consistently higher image of AISD employees than their Anglo counterparts. Again, the number of African-American respondents is too small to support statistically reliable projections.

AISD School Board Members' Knowledge of Educational Needs
Hispanic Respondents

Grading Scale	Percent
A	13
B	43
C	32
D	5
F	6

- Almost six in ten (56 percent) Hispanic respondents gave high grades when rating AISD school board members' knowledge of educational needs. More than one in ten (13 percent) gave a grade A and over four in ten (43 percent) gave a grade B.

- Almost one third (32 percent) of Hispanic respondents gave a grade C, while one in ten gave grades D (5 percent) or F (6 percent).

AISD School Board Members' Knowledge of Educational Needs
Anglo Respondents

Grading Scale	Percent
A	4
B	31
C	40
D	13
F	12

- Slightly more than a third (35 percent) of Anglo respondents gave high grades when rating AISD school board members' knowledge of educational needs. Fewer than one in ten (4 percent) gave a grade A and three in ten (31 percent) gave a grade B.
- Four in ten (40 percent) Anglo respondents gave a grade C, while one quarter gave grades D (13 percent) or F (12 percent).

With respect to the performance of the current AISD school board, Hispanic respondents provide highly positive ratings.

Performance of Current AISD School Board
Hispanic Respondents

Grading Scale	Percent
A	11
B	45
C	30
D	8
F	6

- Well over half (56 percent) of Hispanic respondents provided positive ratings of the school board's overall performance, with more than one in ten (11 percent) giving a grade A and more than four in ten (45 percent) giving a grade B.
- Three in ten (30 percent) Hispanics gave a grade C and approximately one in seven (14 percent) gave grades of D (8

percent) and F (6 percent) when rating the school board's overall performance.

Performance of Current AISD School Board
Anglo Respondents

Grading Scale	Percent
A	2
B	25
C	43
D	15
F	15

- Slightly over one-fourth (27 percent) of Anglo respondents provided positive ratings of the school board's overall performance. Very few Anglo respondents (2 percent) gave a grade A, and one fourth (25 percent) gave a grade B.
- Four in ten (43 percent) Anglos gave the current school board a grade C and three in ten (30 percent) gave grades of D (15 percent) and F (15 percent) when rating the school board's overall performance.

Overall Performance of AISD Superintendent
Hispanic Respondents

Grading Scale	Percent
A	17
B	49
C	21
D	6
F	6

- Hispanic respondents provided highly positive ratings of the superintendent's overall performance with two thirds (66 percent) giving grades above a C. Approximately two in ten (17 percent) gave a grade A and half (49 percent) gave a grade B.
- Two in ten (21 percent) Hispanic respondents gave a grade C. Slightly more than one in ten (12 percent) rated the overall performance of the superintendent as poor, giving grades of D (6 percent) or F (6 percent).

Overall Performance of AISD Superintendent
Anglo Respondents

Grading Scale	Percent
A	17
B	36
C	19
D	14
F	14

- Anglo respondents also provided positive ratings of the superintendent's overall performance with over half (53 percent) giving grades above a C. Almost two in ten (17 percent) gave a grade A and over one third (36 percent) gave a grade B.
- Two in ten (19 percent) Anglo respondents rate the overall performance of the AISD superintendent with a grade C. Almost three in ten (28 percent) Anglo respondents rate the overall performance of the superintendent as poor, giving grades of D (14 percent) or F (14 percent).

Performance of Top Administrators
Hispanic Respondents

Grading Scale	Percent
A	12
B	41
C	36
D	7
F	5

- Hispanic respondents gave positive ratings to the performance of top administrators below the superintendent, with more than half (53 percent) giving grades above a C. More than one in ten (12 percent) gave a grade A, and four in ten (41 percent) gave a B.
- More than one third (36 percent) of Hispanic respondents gave a grade C. Slightly more than one in ten (12 percent) rated the top administrators' performance as poor, giving grades of D (7 percent) or F (5 percent).

Anglos respondents are considerably less positive about the performance of top AISD administrators than their Hispanic counterparts.

Performance of Top Administrators
Anglo Respondents

Grading Scale	Percent
A	3
B	25
C	41
D	18
F	13

- With slightly fewer than three in ten (28 percent) giving grades above a C, Anglo respondents were much more critical of AISD top administrators than Hispanics.
- Four in ten (41 percent) Anglo respondents gave AISD top administrators a grade C.
- Three in ten (31 percent) rated the top administrators' performance as poor, giving grades of D (18 percent) or F (13 percent).

Appendix H

IMAGE OF AISD SCHOOLS

Opinions of AISD Schools

In general, respondents believe that schools in AISD provide a good physical environment for students, although there is some concern about adequate space to learn. AISD teachers are perceived as caring about students' needs and AISD schools are thought to be good places to learn. However, there is a perception that AISD graduates are not sufficiently prepared to enter the workforce or college.

- More than half (53 percent) of respondents strongly agree (5 percent) or agree (48 percent) that schools in AISD have the materials and supplies necessary for instruction in basic skills programs, while three in ten (30 percent) disagree (24 percent) or strongly disagree (6 percent) that this is the case.
- Six in ten (59 percent) respondents strongly agree (4 percent) or agree (55 percent) that schools in AISD are clean and well maintained, while less than two in ten (17 percent) disagree (14 percent) or strongly disagree (3 percent).
- More than half (53 percent) of respondents disagree (38 percent) or strongly disagree (15 percent) that schools in AISD have sufficient space and facilities to support the instructional programs.
- Six in ten (60 percent) respondents strongly agree (5 percent) or agree (55 percent) that schools in AISD are good places to learn, compared to only two in ten (22 percent) that disagree (4 percent) or strongly disagree (18 percent).
- Almost as many respondents disagree (38 percent) that AISD students are prepared to go on to college or directly into the workforce when they graduate as agree (40 percent).

Once more, respondents are more positive about AISD elementary schools than secondary schools. With respect to schools handling misbehavior problems, over four in ten (44 percent) respondents agree that AISD elementary schools effectively handle these problems, compared to three in ten (30 percent) who agree that AISD secondary schools effectively handle problems of misbehavior.

Opinions of Parental Involvement and School Officials

Opinions regarding parental involvement in AISD schools are generally positive:

- Almost three-fourths (73 percent) of respondents agree (59 percent) or strongly agree (14 percent) that AISD parents are given opportunities to play an active role in public schools, compared to only one in seven (14 percent) who disagree (11 percent) or strongly disagree (3 percent).
- More than six in ten (62 percent) respondents agree (53 percent) or strongly agree (9 percent) that AISD parents feel welcome when they visit a school, compared to one in ten (11 percent) who disagree (10 percent) or strongly disagree (1 percent).
- More than half (55 percent) of respondents agree (50 percent) or strongly agree (5 percent) that AISD parents participate in school activities and organizations. Only two in ten (21 percent) respondents disagree (19 percent) or strongly disagree (2 percent) that parents actively participate.

On the whole, respondents hold positive views about the efforts of district residents and school officials to involve the community in school activities.

- Half (51 percent) of respondents agree (46 percent) or strongly agree (5 percent) that the district residents take an active part in the education of children at AISD. Fewer than three in ten (28 percent) disagree (26 percent) or strongly disagree (2 percent) that district residents are actively involved.
- More than four in ten (43 percent) respondents agree (40 percent) or strongly agree (3 percent) that community members feel welcome when they attend AISD school board meetings to express their views, compared to fewer than two in ten (17 percent) who disagree (14 percent) or strongly disagree (3 percent).
- Half (50 percent) of respondents agree (47 percent) or strongly agree (3 percent) that the superintendent and staff work to involve the community in school activities. Only two in ten (22 percent) respondents disagree (20 percent) or disagree strongly (2 percent) that the superintendent and staff work on community involvement.
- More than half (53 percent) of respondents agree (48 percent) or strongly agree (5 percent) that school principals work to involve the community in campus activities, compared to only two in ten (20 percent) who disagree (18 percent) or strongly disagree (2 percent).

Image of AISD Schools and Race/Ethnicity

With few exceptions, Hispanic respondents tend to be more positive about AISD schools than their Anglo counterparts.

- Six in ten (61 percent) Hispanic respondents agree (54 percent) or strongly agree (7 percent) that the community is proud of the public education in AISD. Only three in ten (31 percent) Anglo respondents agree (30 percent) or strongly agree (1 percent) with respect to community pride.
- Six in ten (60 percent) Hispanic respondents agree (54 percent) or strongly agree (6 percent) that AISD buildings are in good condition, compared to four in ten (43 percent) Anglo respondents who agree (41 percent) or strongly agree (2 percent).
- Over seven in ten (72 percent) Hispanic respondents agree (64 percent) or strongly agree (8 percent) that schools in AISD have the materials and supplies necessary for instruction in basic skills programs, compared to half (50 percent) of Anglo respondents who agree (47 percent) or agree strongly (3 percent).
- Two thirds (67 percent) of Hispanic respondents agree (61 percent) or agree strongly (6 percent) that parents actively participate in school activities and organizations, compared to almost six in ten (57 percent) Anglo respondents who agree (52 percent) or strongly agree (5 percent).
- An exception to this general trend occurs with respect to AISD teachers caring about students' needs. Almost eight in ten (78 percent) Anglo respondents agree (60 percent) or strongly agree (18 percent) that AISD teachers care about students' needs, compared to seven in ten (68 percent) Hispanic respondents who agree (55 percent) or agree strongly (13 percent).

Image of AISD Schools and Households with Children Enrolled in an AISD School

When opinions of AISD schools and school-related issues are analyzed by enrollment in AISD, respondents with a child or children attending AISD schools generally tend to be more positive about AISD than those with no children in school. Parents with children in private schools are not included in this analysis because their numbers are too few to allow statistically reliable projections.

- Over seven in ten (72 percent) respondents with children in AISD schools agree (65 percent) or strongly agree (7 percent) that schools in AISD are good places to learn, compared to six in ten (60 percent) respondents with no children in school who agree (56 percent) or strongly agree (4 percent).
- Almost eight in ten (77 percent) respondents with children in AISD schools agree (68 percent) or strongly agree (9 percent) that AISD parents actively participate in school activities and organizations. About half (51 percent) of respondents with no children in school

agree (48 percent) or strongly agree (3 percent) that AISD parents are active participants.

- Almost eight in ten (78 percent) respondents with children in AISD schools agree (73 percent) or strongly agree (5 percent) that AISD buildings are clean and well maintained, while fewer than six in ten (57 percent) respondents with no children in school agree (53 percent) or strongly agree (4 percent).
- Over six in ten (62 percent) respondents with children AISD schools agree (55 percent) or strongly agree (7 percent) that AISD schools are safe and secure, compared to more than half (52 percent) of respondents with no children in school who agree (51 percent) or strongly agree (1 percent).
- Almost half (47 percent) of respondents with children in AISD schools agree (43 percent) or strongly agree (4 percent) that the community is proud of public school education in AISD, compared to fewer than four in ten (37 percent) respondents with no children in school who agree (35 percent) or strongly agree (2 percent).

AISD and Specialized Services

Respondents were asked to consider specialized services such as bilingual education programs, magnet school, and the TAAS.

- More than seven in ten (71%) respondents agree (43 percent) or strongly agree (28 percent) that AISD places too much emphasis on passing the TAAS and not enough on total education. Fewer than two in ten (17 percent) respondents disagree (15 percent) or strongly disagree (2 percent) that too much emphasis is placed on the TAAS.
- Almost three-fourths (72 percent) of respondents agree (50 percent) or strongly agree (22 percent) that AISD should expand magnet school programs to include science, engineering and music. Fewer than one in ten (9 percent) respondent disagrees (7 percent) or strongly disagrees (2 percent) that magnet school programs should be expanded.
- Of those who could provide an opinion, more than half (52 percent) of the respondents gave positive ratings to AISD's magnet programs such as fine arts, health professions and languages. One in seven (14 percent) rate the magnet school programs as excellent and over one-third (38 percent) rate them as good. Two in ten (21 percent) gave a fair rating and less than one in ten (5 percent) rate magnet school programs as poor.
- Almost four in ten (37 percent) respondents agree (34 percent) or strongly agree (3 percent) that AISD does a good job of meeting the needs of disadvantaged children. Three in ten (32 percent)

respondents disagree (24 percent) or strongly disagree (8 percent) and more than two in ten (22 percent) have no opinion.

- When asked to rate how well bilingual education prepares students to perform at school, almost three in ten (28 percent) respondents who could provide an opinion gave positive ratings. Fewer than one in ten (6 percent) rate bilingual education as excellent and two in ten (22 percent) rate it as good. Almost three in ten (28 percent) rate bilingual education as fair, and one in ten (10 percent) gave it a poor rating.

Specialized Services and Race/Ethnicity

When AISD specialized services are analyzed by race/ethnicity, Hispanic respondents tend to be slightly more positive about AISD services than their Anglo counterparts.

- Over three-fourths (76 percent) of Anglo respondents agree (46 percent) or strongly agree (30 percent) that AISD places too much emphasis passing the TAAS, and not enough on total education. Two-thirds (67 percent) of Hispanic respondents agree (43 percent) or strongly agree (24 percent) that too much emphasis is placed on passing the TAAS.
- More than half (53 percent) of Hispanic respondents agree (49 percent) or strongly agree (4 percent) that AISD does a good job of meeting the needs of disadvantaged children. Fewer than four in ten (36 percent) Anglo respondents agree (33 percent) or strongly agree (3 percent) that AISD does a good job.
- Hispanics regard how well AISD bilingual programs prepare students to perform in school more highly, with almost half (49 percent) providing positive ratings. Fewer than four in ten (38 percent) Anglo respondents provide positive ratings with respect to bilingual education.
- Positive ratings of AISD magnet school programs such as fine arts, health professions and languages are virtually identical for Hispanics and Anglos (67 percent and 69 percent).
- With respect to expanding magnet programs, Hispanics tend to be more positive. More than eight in ten (81 percent) Hispanic respondents agree (58 percent) or strongly agree (23 percent) that AISD should expand its magnet school programs, compared to fewer than
three-fourths (73 percent) of Anglo respondents who agree (49 percent) or strongly agree (24 percent).

Specialized Services and Households with Children Enrolled in AISD

Although respondents with children attending AISD schools rate some specialized services more highly than respondents who have no children in school, opinions are comparable on the majority of items included in the survey instrument.

- With more than half (52 percent) providing positive ratings, respondents with a child or children in AISD schools hold higher opinions of bilingual education and limited English proficiency programs than do respondents with no children in school. Slightly more than one-third (36 percent) of respondents with no children in school provide positive ratings.
- Parents with a child or children attending AISD schools rate magnet programs highly, with almost three-fourths (73 percent) indicating that they are excellent (22 percent) or good (51 percent). Six in ten (61 percent) respondents with no children in school rate magnet programs as excellent (48 percent) or good (13 percent).
- Ratings regarding AISD expansion of the magnet program to include science, engineering and music are virtually identical. Seventy-eight percent of parents with children attending AISD provide positive ratings and 80 percent of respondents with no children in school rate magnet school expansion positively.
- One-fourth (25 percent) of respondents with a child or children attending AISD disagree (20 percent) or strongly disagree (5 percent) that AISD does a good job of meeting the educational needs of disadvantaged children. More than one-third (35 percent) of respondents with no children in school disagree (24 percent) or strongly disagree (11 percent) that AISD does a good job.
- Views concerning AISD placing too much emphasis on the TAAS and not enough on total education are highly similar. More than seven in ten (72 percent) of parents with a child or children attending AISD agree (41 percent) or strongly agree (31 percent) that too much emphasis is placed on the TAAS. Eight in ten (79 percent) respondents with no children in school agree (44 percent) or strongly agree (35 percent) that the TAAS receives too much emphasis.

OPINIONS OF AISD OPERATION

Survey results indicate that AISD residents have some concerns about the efficiency of operations and management of tax dollars:

- Almost six in ten (57 percent) respondents think AISD is operated "not very efficiently" (36 percent) or "inefficiently" (21 percent). Four in ten (39 percent) think that AISD is operated "efficiently" (36 percent) or very efficiently (3 percent).

- When asked if AISD does a good job of managing the tax dollars used to operate the district, more than half (54 percent) of the respondents disagree (36 percent) or strongly disagree (18 percent) that AISD does a good job. Slightly more than two in ten (22 percent) respondents agree (21 percent) or strongly agree (1 percent) that AISD does a good job of managing tax dollars.

With respect to the AISD administration and effective public relations, respondents tend to be moderately positive. Ratings of communications between the district and the community are slightly less positive.

- More than four in ten (44 percent) respondents agree (40 percent) or strongly agree (4 percent) that AISD does a lot to promote good public relations between the district and the community. Slightly more than one third (36 percent) of respondents disagree (30 percent) or strongly disagree (6 percent). Fifteen percent have no opinion on the issue.
- Almost half (46 percent) of respondents disagree (40 percent) or strongly disagree (6 percent) that communications are good between AISD administration and the community. More than a third (36 percent) of respondents agree (34 percent) or strongly agree (2 percent) that communications are good. As with effective public relations, 15 percent had no opinion.

Most Critical Issue Facing AISD

Respondents were asked what they believe to be the most critical issue facing AISD. The following are responses to this question:

- Bilingual education and teacher certification. The Spanish speaking population is growing at a rapid rate. We aren't educating that portion of the population as well as we could be due to a lack of qualified teachers.
- We need to place emphasis on English language proficiency.
- The violence and discipline in the middle schools need to be focused on.
- Personal safety is my biggest concern. The safety issue ranges from drugs to the learning environment itself. Those are the main reasons I don't send my children there.
- Overcrowded classrooms and underpaid teachers. My children's classes are full. The student - teacher ratio would be better if the pay for teachers was higher.
- We don't have enough facilities for all the incoming students. The student - teacher ratio needs to be twenty to one or less.
- We need to get the parents involved and interested in their children.

- The teachers have too many students to handle. They don't have parental support to discipline their children.
- The need to provide the proper education without a strong emphasis on TAAS. All they do is take this one silly test. They need to focus on learning reading, writing and arithmetic.
- The way the school board runs things. They built a distrust among the community and themselves. They're incompetent. They're not running efficient programs.
- The district has a very poor administration that we should weed out. The superintendent does a fine job, but all the publicity is negative. If something doesn't happen soon, we're going to lose the public schools to mismanagement.
- They aren't preparing the children to have the skills needed to enter the real world and make decisions after school.
- They aren't educating our children well enough. They won't be prepared for the future. They won't know the things they need to know.
- There's a great division between schools in lower income communities and the schools in higher income communities. There's a lack of materials and equipment in the low income areas where there is less parental support.
- They have to learn to utilize the tax dollars on the kids, not the administration. Place an emphasis on kids going to college.
- The quality of education needs to be focused on - teaching, not quieting them down. The time spent in class should be used for learning.