

Del Valle Independent School District

Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) is a district on the move, with a growing student body and a need for new facilities. Businesses are flourishing and the population is growing at a rapid pace, which translates into a 10 percent annual increase in student population. While doing well in a number of areas, the district lacks detailed plans for managing its money and building schools in the face of this unprecedented growth.

The Del Valle Board of Trustees unanimously voted to request a review of the district and agreed to pay for 25 percent of the cost of the review.

The district is struggling with student test scores on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS).

The district's 78 percent pass rate is below the state average of 80 percent--and that number has dropped almost two percentage points since last year. With a growing and diverse population, the district faces numerous challenges in its efforts to improve student education.

My Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) team and I found that the greatest challenges facing DVISD are inadequate financial controls and weak planning for the future. What this district clearly needs is help controlling costs and finding places to save money that could be used for programs that directly affect students. The following recommendations for DVISD will serve my goal of driving more of every education dollar directly into the classroom where it belongs.

We found several ways the district could better control its finances. For example, the board and some administrators have unregulated access to credit cards. The former superintendent, many of the current and some former board members, and at least one other former administrator have charged meals, hotels and airline tickets for themselves and family members over the past three years. The district cannot produce all documentation showing that it was reimbursed for non-district related charges, nor can it determine which charges were for school business. Less than half of those with credit cards have shown my TSPR team that they reimbursed the district for non-school related charges.

But this is only one symptom of the district's financial control problems. Another serious symptom can be seen in the district's recent transfer of \$5.4 million from the fund earmarked for building new schools to cover shortfalls in their health care, food service and other accounts. If proper

controls had been in place, these shortfalls probably would not have existed.

Though no fraud or abuse was detected, the potential for both is possible. The board and current administration asked if they needed a fraud audit, and we think they do. Any misdirection of funds could lead to fewer classrooms, as well as poor health and food services for staff and students.

In addition, we found the district could save more than \$1.3 million if it followed a controlled retirement plan for its 79 employees who face retirement beginning in the Fall. This includes using incentives such as lump sum payments to make the transition run more smoothly. The money saved could then be redirected into the classroom.

The new DVISD administration has been taking numerous steps to improve the district, and my report will help them do even more to make the district the best possible. I am confident that school board members, school administrators, teachers and parents are all committed to making the district the best it can be for their students.

Key Findings and Recommendations

During its seven-month review, TSPR examined Del Valle ISD (DVISD) operations and heard from employees, school board members, teachers, students, parents, and community and business leaders. Following are the major proposals TSPR has developed to help the district address various issues:

Major Proposals

Student Performance and Conduct

- Increase emphasis on testing all students. In 1999-2000, DVISD was testing only 82 percent of its students on the TAAS, compared to 90 percent tested statewide. The district ranks the lowest among the region and its peer districts in terms of TAAS participation due to a high number of exemptions. The district should regularly and continuously review TAAS exemptions and take steps to ensure every eligible student is tested.
- Conduct an audit of the In School Suspension (ISS) program. The ISS program is not being administered or used to reduce student discipline actions. The number of ISS disciplinary actions reported for the junior high school represented more than twice the school student population. A comprehensive audit of the ISS program is needed to determine the exact reasons for such large numbers of disciplinary actions within the district as well as the best solution to the problem.

Financial Controls

- Establish a reimbursement system for district credit cards issued to board members and administrators. Eight current and former board members and two former administrators had unregulated access to district credit cards. The purpose of the credit cards is to pay for administrative travel and related expenditures. The district had inadequate records of the charges and had no records of reimbursements for non-district expenses. Of the 125 statements that could be located by the district, charges amounted to more than \$47,000, and statements clearly showed travel charges for spouses and children, as well as some questionable in-town charges for meals and transportation. TSPR requested copies from the bank and sent those to the credit card holders. Some, but not all, of the individuals contacted have submitted documentation to show that reimbursements were made for non-district charges. Regardless of whether improprieties have occurred in DVISD, the current system of verification of payment

leaves the district open to the abuse and, therefore, the system needs to be strengthened.

- Restrict the use of capital project funds to school construction only. In 1998-99, the board transferred \$5.4 million from the capital projects fund designated for school construction to erase shortfalls in other district accounts caused by poor administration and planning. The \$5.4 million was used to supplement a \$1.2 million deficit in the health insurance fund and a \$722,248 deficit in the food service fund and the remaining \$3.6 million was placed in the fund balance of the general fund to replenish funds previously depleted. Moving capital funds to cover deficits in other funds is poor fiscal management and deprives the district of funds to maintain and build schools. By creating a policy to end that practice, the funds intended for new schools will indeed be spent on new schools.
- Conduct a fraud audit of DVISD's financial records. Though TSPR does not conduct criminal investigations or fraud audits, the team was asked by DVISD board members and administrators to determine if a fraud audit was warranted. While TSPR saw no direct evidence of fraud, the team did determine key indicators of fraud existed: the district has a weak system of internal controls which are, in some cases, being circumvented; key pieces of documentation are missing; and significant deficits in food service, health insurance and the general funds are unexplained. Taken together, this evidence justifies further investigation.
- Implement a controlled retirement incentive plan. Beginning in 2001-02, 79 professional and support employees in DVISD will be eligible for full retirement in the next five years. While the district may benefit from not replacing some retirees, a planned approach, using retirement incentives such as lump sum payments, could make the turnover rate more gradual. Providing the district with a phased retirement plan that allows the district to replace some staff at lower salaries would save an estimated \$1.3 million, but more importantly, controls the exit of veteran staff.
- Establish performance and productivity measures and benchmarks for Child Nutrition operations to improve services, while increasing revenues and reducing costs. In 1999-2000, the food service fund had a \$722,248 deficit. In July 2000, DVISD turned over the management of the food service operation to a private firm. Neither DVISD nor the contractor appears to prepare a separate budget, nor have they established performance and productivity measures. The contract requires the contractor to operate at a surplus or reimburse the district for any deficit up to the amount of the management fees. It will be difficult for the district or the contractor to monitor this situation without a separate budget or some form of performance and productivity measures.

- Process accounts payable on a monthly basis. The district's internal controls are weak, and the district has failed to recognize that it is no longer a small district. To assist the district in making the transition, more than 20 recommendations address setting in place sound financial policies, practices, procedures and controls. Processing accounts payable on a monthly basis allows the district to know how much cash it has on hand and would help it avoid interest payments and late fees. This could save the district \$140,000 over the next five years.
- Make financial accounting information available to campus and department administrators. DVISD's campus and department administrators do not have access to budget data because the district's administration information system will not allow it. Administrators cannot monitor their budgets and are not held accountable when their actual expenditures exceed their budgeted expenditures. The district should re-program the system's software to allow read-only access to the budget data for administrators and hold them accountable for their budget decisions.
- Automate the purchase requisition and order process. The district's purchasing process is basically manual and cumbersome, with a single order going through the hands of as many as eight different people before the order is even placed. The district's financial software has an automated purchase order module that could significantly streamline the process and get supplies to the classrooms much quicker.

Future Planning

- Develop a long-range facilities master plan. Although the district just built four new schools, it did not develop a facilities master plan to guide the building program. Consequently, the day the schools opened, portable buildings surrounded them. For a district growing at a rate of 10 percent annually, a facilities master plan is essential to effectively manage growth.
- Develop a strategic plan for DVISD. The district reacts to change rather than planning for it. It has no comprehensive plan for growth and lacks plans for building facilities, implementing technology, ensuring safety and security and providing food services. By developing a comprehensive strategic plan, the district should be able to focus the district's limited resources more appropriately.
- Develop staffing guidelines across all categories. The district does not use a staffing allocation model as a baseline for assigning school support positions. Using staffing guidelines for all categories will enable the district to be consistent when adding or reducing positions as student populations change in the future.

Exemplary Programs and Practices in the Del Valle Independent School District

TSPR identified numerous best practices in the Del Valle ISD (DVISD). Through commendations in each chapter, the report highlights model programs, operations and services provided by the district's administrators, teachers and staff. Other school districts throughout Texas are encouraged to examine these exemplary programs and services to see if they could be adapted to meet local needs.

- **Crisis Management Plan**—The district's plan to deal with the safety of its students and employees during a crisis event is a model for other districts. It includes such useful tools as crisis day checklists, emergency procedures, staff assignments for securing buildings and specific plans for each type of crisis.
- **Recognized schools, grants and awards**—Several of DVISD's campuses have received numerous grants, awards and other recognition. All of the elementary schools have received the Texas Successful School Award from the Texas Education Agency; several have received it more than once. Baty Elementary has been chosen a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence for 2000-2001. More than \$450,000 in grants has been awarded to DVISD for math, science, reading and at-risk student programs.
- **At-risk student programs**—The district targets students at risk for academic and social problems by offering a variety of programs aimed at specific problems. Available programs in DVISD include a family literacy program called Even Start, a district-level program for the families of migrant students called Project L.I.F.E. (Learning Involving Family Education), and a pregnancy education and parenting program.
- **Childcare program**—The childcare program benefits school-age parents who might otherwise not finish school. DVISD provides easily accessible, licensed childcare for student parents that enables high school teens to finish their education.
- **Technology infrastructure**—DVISD dedicated almost \$3 million from its 1997 bond election to design and develop a state-of-the-art information technology infrastructure. It includes a comprehensive district wide network, linking individual local area networks into a high-speed, high-bandwidth wide area network.

- Cooperative-purchasing organizations—By using many local and statewide cooperative-purchasing organizations, district officials save tax dollars through bulk and competitive bidding practices. DVISD uses these purchasing cooperatives whenever possible to obtain the best prices available for savings of more than \$250,000 for the district between 1998 and 2000.
- Cash forecasting—District officials developed a new cash forecasting tool that helps them manage the district investment portfolio more effectively. Based on weekly cash expenditure projections, any surpluses are planned for investment during the month. Until August 2000, the district did not have a cash management tool.
- Bus driver recruitment—Bus drivers receive highly competitive salaries and benefits, thereby attracting a surplus of candidates. Most school districts experience bus driver shortages due to low wages, often without benefits, and local or regional competition from other employers. DVISD, however, provides a higher average salary (\$13.41/hour) than the average provided in the region (\$12.88/hour). The district also provides benefits to its drivers. Consequently, the district always receives more applicants than the available number of open slots.

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 46 Texas school districts serving more than 1 million students, or 28 percent of the state's 3.9 million public school students. More than \$491 million in five-year net savings have been identified in the previous 46 reviews conducted to date.

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

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

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

Nearly 90 percent of all recommendations are being voluntarily implemented to date in the 31 districts that have had more than one year to implement TSPR recommendations.

TRANSMITTAL LETTER

May 31, 2001

The Honorable Rick Perry
The Honorable Bill Ratliff
The Honorable James E. "Pete" Laney
Members of the 77th Legislature
Commissioner James E. Nelson

Fellow Texans:

I am pleased to present our Texas School Performance Review of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD).

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

We have made a number of recommendations to improve DVISD's efficiency. We also have highlighted a number of "best practices" in district operations-model programs and services provided by the district's administrators, teachers and staff. This report outlines 95 detailed recommendations that could save DVISD more than \$3.9 million over the next five years, while reinvesting more than \$1 million to improve educational services and other operations. Net savings are estimated to reach more than \$2.9 million-savings that the district can redirect to the classroom.

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

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

Sincerely,



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. Executive Summary Overview

B. Summary of Costs and Savings by Recommendation (Exhibit 3)

At the request of the Board of Trustees, Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Rylander agreed to conduct a review of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD). State Representative Terry Keel also wrote the Comptroller requesting a performance review and State Representative Glen Maxey concurred on a review of the district. Based upon more than five months of work, this report identifies DVISD's exemplary programs and suggests concrete ways to improve district operations. If fully implemented, the Comptroller's 95 recommendations could result in net savings of more than \$2.9 million over the next five years.

Improving the Texas School Performance Review

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

Recognizing that only 52 cents of every education dollar is spent on instruction, Comptroller Rylander's goal is to drive more of every education dollar directly into the classroom. Comptroller Rylander also has ordered TSPR staff to share best practices and exemplary programs quickly and systematically with all the state's school districts and with anyone else who requests such information. Comptroller Rylander has directed TSPR to serve as a clearinghouse of the best ideas in Texas public education.

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

- Ensure students and teachers receive the support and resources necessary to succeed;
- Identify innovative ways to address the district's core management challenges;
- Ensure administrative duties are performed efficiently, without duplication, and in a way that fosters education;
- Develop strategies to ensure the district's processes and programs are continuously assessed and improved;

- Challenge any process, procedure, program or policy that impedes instruction and recommend ways to reduce or eliminate obstacles; and
- Put goods and services to the "Yellow Pages Test": government should do no job if a business in the Yellow Pages can do that job better and at a lower cost.

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

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

TSPR in Del Valle ISD

On August 22, 2000, the Del Valle Board of Trustees voted to request a performance review of the district and agreed to pay 25 percent of the \$125,000 cost or up to \$31,250. On November 7, 2000, TSPR began its performance review of the district.

The Comptroller contracted with IBM, the international computer, software and consulting firm headquartered in New York, at a cost of \$124,588. The team interviewed district employees, school board members, parents, business leaders and community members and held four public forums at Del Valle High School, Del Valle Junior High, Baty Elementary and Hornsby-Dunlap Elementary. The review team conducted additional focus group sessions with teachers, business leaders, Site-Based-Decision Making Committees, students and parent volunteer groups. The Comptroller's office also received letters, e-mails and phone calls from a wide array of parents, teachers and community members.

A total of 383 respondents answered surveys. Forty-seven central administrators and support staff; 11 principals and assistant principals; 183 teachers; and 142 parents completed written surveys. Details from the surveys and public forums appear in **Appendices A through E**.

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

DVISD selected peer districts for comparisons based on similarities in student enrollment, student performance and community and student demographics. The selected peer districts were Bastrop, Eanes, Georgetown, Hays, Lockhart, Manor and San Marcos.

Exhibit 1
Demographic Characteristics of DVISD
and Peer School Districts
2000-01

District	Student Enrollment	Percent Anglo	Racial and Ethnic Percentage			Percent Economically Disadvantaged
			Percent Hispanic	Percent African American	Percent Other	
Georgetown	8,041	72%	24%	3%	1%	26%
Bastrop	6,489	59%	29%	11%	1%	40%
Eanes	7,409	89%	5%	0.4%	6%	3%
Hays	7,408	48%	49%	3%	0%	35%
Lockhart	4,437	43%	47%	9%	1%	50%
Manor	2,713	35%	43%	21%	1%	58%
San Marcos	7,157	30%	63%	5%	2%	54%
Del Valle	6,694	20%	63%	16%	1%	64%
Region 13	278,484	54%	34%	9%	3%	36%
State	4,071,433	42%	41%	14%	3%	49%

Source: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 2000-01. Note: Percentages have been rounded to nearest whole number.

DVISD spans 174 square miles and serves the suburban communities of Montopolis, Frontier Valley, Sundridge Park and Pleasant Valley and the rural communities of Garfield, Creedmoor, Mustang Ridge, Elroy, Pilot Knob, Webberville and Hornsby Bend. The superintendent serves as the "unofficial mayor" of Del Valle according to a number of people we spoke with in Del Valle. The district serves 6,694 students in 2000-01 in eight schools: five elementary schools, one middle school, one high school and one special and/or alternative education school. The budget was \$43.9 million in 2000-2001.

The greatest challenges facing DVISD are inadequate financial controls and inadequate planning for the future. Student enrollment is growing at a rate of 10 percent per year, yet the district lacks plans for managing its money and building schools to meet student growth.

Business properties provide the majority of Del Valle's tax base. As the value of these properties increases in the next few years, the district could be classified as a property-wealthy school district, which means that state law would require the district to share tax revenue with the state so it could be distributed to property-poor districts. The district has no plan to deal with this situation.

Moreover, a lack of financial controls has already created fund deficits in the health plan and in the food services fund, requiring the district to transfer money from capital funds. The district's lack of financial controls place it at risk of fraud, which some in the community have alleged has already happened.

The review documented a number of commendable practices and produced 95 recommendations. A detailed list of costs and savings by recommendation appears in **Exhibit 3**. Many TSPR recommendations would not have a direct financial impact on the district, but they would improve the district's overall operations. Key findings, recommendations and commendations follow.

Acknowledgments

The Comptroller's office and IBM wish to express appreciation to the DVISD Board of Trustees, Superintendent Bernard Blanchard, district employees, students, parents and community residents who helped during the review. Special thanks go to Mrs. Helen Moran, director of Community Relations, who served as DVISD's liaison. She arranged for office space, equipment and meeting rooms, organized the findings meeting, responded to data requests and accommodated the review team's needs. DVISD administrators and staff were exceptionally courteous and cooperative in providing requested information and answering the team's questions with patience and good humor.

Key Findings and Recommendations

- *Establish a reimbursement system for board and administrative travel and related expenditures.* School board members and some administrators have unregulated use of district credit cards. At the time of on-site work, only 125 of the 255 credit card statements requested by TSPR were available for review, there were no copies of invoices and there was no documentation to show whether non-

district expenses were reimbursed. With cooperation from the district and the board, TSPR is attempting to reconcile these past charges. But, whether or not improprieties have occurred in DVISD, the current system of verification and payment leaves the district open to the possibility of abuse and must be strengthened.

- *Conduct a fraud audit of DVISD's financial records.* Understanding that TSPR does not conduct criminal investigations or fraud audits, the DVISD board and administration asked the review team to determine if a fraud audit was warranted. TSPR found no direct evidence of fraud, but did determine that key indicators of fraud exist: the district has a weak system of internal controls; existing internal controls are in some cases being circumvented; key pieces of documentation are missing; and, significant deficits in the food service, health insurance and general funds are unexplained. While no single indicator would alone be symptomatic of fraud, taken together there is sufficient evidence to justify further investigation.
- *Develop a strategic plan for DVISD.* The district reacts to change rather than planning for it. It has no comprehensive plan for growth and lacks plans for building facilities, implementing technology, ensuring safety and security and providing food services. By developing a comprehensive strategic plan, the district should be able to focus the district's limited resources more appropriately.
- *Increase the district's emphasis on testing all students.* In 1999-2000, DVISD was testing only 82 percent of its students on the TAAS, compared to 90 percent tested statewide. The district ranks the lowest among the region and its peer districts in terms of TAAS participation and more exemptions. The district should regularly and continuously review TAAS exemptions and take steps to ensure every eligible student is tested.
- *Develop staffing guidelines across all categories.* The district does not use a staffing allocation model as a baseline for assigning school support positions. Using staffing guidelines for all categories will enable the district to be consistent when adding or reducing positions as student populations change.
- *Implement a controlled retirement incentive plan.* Beginning in 2001-02, 79 professional and support employees in DVISD will be eligible for full retirement. By using a planned approach, the district can better manage the exit of experienced staff and the replacement of those retiring positions.
- *Develop a long-range facilities master plan.* Although the district just built four new schools, it did not develop a facilities master plan to guide the building program. Consequently, the day the schools opened, portable buildings surrounded them. For a district growing at 10 percent annually, a facilities master plan is essential to effectively manage growth.

- *Process accounts payable on a monthly basis.* The district's internal controls are weak, and the district has failed to recognize that it is no longer a "small" district. To assist the district in making the transition, more than 20 recommendations address setting in place sound financial policies, practices, procedures and controls. Processing accounts payable on a monthly basis allows the district to know how much cash it has on hand and would help it avoid interest payments and late fees.
- *Implement a board policy restricting the use of capital project funds for school construction only.* In 1998-99, the board transferred \$5.4 million from the capital projects fund designated for school construction to erase shortfalls in other district accounts caused by poor administration and planning. The \$5.4 million was used to supplement a \$1.2 million deficit in the health insurance fund and a \$722,248 deficit in the food service fund and the remaining \$3.6 million was placed in the fund balance of the general fund to replenish funds previously depleted. Moving capital funds to cover deficits in other funds is poor fiscal management and deprives the district of funds to maintain and build schools. By creating a policy preventing that practice from occurring, the funds intended for capital projects will indeed be spent on capital projects.
- *Make financial accounting information available to campus and department administrators.* DVISD's campus and department administrators do not have access to budget data because the district's administration information system will not allow it. Administrators cannot monitor their budgets and are not held accountable when their actual expenditures exceed their budgeted expenditures. The district should re-program the system's software to allow read-only access to the budget data for administrators and hold them accountable for their budget decisions.
- *Automate the purchase requisition and order process.* The district's purchasing process is basically manual and cumbersome, with a single order going through the hands of as many as eight different people before the order is even placed. The district's financial software has an automated purchase order module that could significantly streamline the process and get supplies to the classrooms much quicker.
- *Purchase a textbook management inventory system.* DVISD does not have a districtwide computerized textbook management system. A textbook inventory program is in place at the middle and high schools, and the textbook custodian has attended a training class on the system. Purchasing an automated textbook inventory system for the elementary schools will reduce textbook losses and improve accountability.

- *Develop performance standards for Child Nutrition operations that will accurately measure the effectiveness and efficiency of service provided to DVISD students, faculty and administration.* In 1999-2000, the food service fund had a \$722,248 deficit. In July 2000, DVISD turned over the management of the food service operation to a private firm; all food services workers, however, remain DVISD employees. DVISD does not prepare a separate budget for Child Nutrition, nor has it established performance and productivity measures. The contract requires the contractor to operate at a surplus or reimburse the district for any deficit up to the amount of the management fees. It will be difficult for the district to monitor this situation without a separate budget and some form of performance and productivity measures.
- *Conduct an audit of the In School Suspension (ISS) program.* The ISS program is not being administered or used to reduce student discipline actions. The number of ISS disciplinary actions reported for the junior high school represented more than twice the school student population. A comprehensive audit of the ISS program is needed to determine the exact reasons for such large numbers of disciplinary actions within the district as well as the best solution to the problem.

Del Valle ISD Exemplary Programs and Practices

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

- *DVISD's Crisis Management Plan contains guidelines to ensure the safety of students and employees in the event of crises within the district.* The district's plan is a model for other districts and includes such useful tools as crisis day checklists, emergency procedures, staff assignments for securing buildings and specific plans for each type of crisis.
- *DVISD has competitive salaries and benefits for bus drivers, thereby eliminating a need to recruit drivers.* Most school districts experience bus driver shortages due to low wages, often without benefits, and local or regional competition from other employers. DVISD, however, provides higher salaries (\$13.41 per hour on average) than the average provided in the region (\$12.88 per hour) and provides benefits to its drivers. Consequently, the district consistently has more applicants than the available number of open slots.

- *DVISD's campuses, particularly its elementary schools, have received numerous grants, awards and recognition.* All of the elementary schools have received the Texas Successful School Award, which is a financial award given to schools that have demonstrated high levels of sustained academic success. Several schools have received the award more than once. And, Baty Elementary has been chosen a Texas Blue Ribbon School of Excellence for 2000-2001. More than \$450,000 in grants has been awarded to DVISD for math, science, reading and at-risk student programs.
- *DVISD developed a new cash forecasting tool, which allows the district to manage its investment portfolio more effectively.* Beginning in August 2000, DVISD makes weekly cash expenditure projections and invests any surpluses during the month. This tool allows the district to maximize investment potential.
- *DVISD uses many local and statewide cooperative-purchasing organizations, thereby saving tax dollars through bulk and competitive bidding practices.* DVISD uses these purchasing cooperatives whenever possible to obtain the best prices available and has saved more than \$250,000 for the district between 1998 and 2000.
- *DVISD distributes comprehensive district and school specific employee handbooks to the staff each year.* The district publishes a comprehensive employee handbook for the faculty and staff annually. The handbook describes the school district's mission statement, goals, objectives, procedures, employee conduct requirements, Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators and schedules of all district meetings.
- *DVISD targets at-risk students with a variety of programs.* The district runs a family literacy program, Even Start, a migrant workers program, Project L.I.F.E. (Learning Involving Family Education) and a Pregnancy, Education and Parenting program.
- *DVISD distributes a comprehensive Student Code of Conduct.* Parents and students are required to sign an agreement form concerning the student's code of conduct. The code contains detailed explanations of the student's responsibilities and obligations, procedures for dealing with violations and the consequences of breaking the code.
- *DVISD has a state-of-the-art information technology infrastructure.* DVISD spent almost \$3 million from its 1997 bond issue to design and develop a comprehensive districtwide network, linking individual local area networks into a high speed, high bandwidth wide area network.
- *The DVISD childcare program benefits school age parents who might otherwise not finish school.* DVISD provides licensed

childcare for student parents. The program enables high school teens to finish their education.

Savings and Investment Requirements

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

TSPR recommended 95 ways to save DVISD more than \$3.9 million in gross savings over a five- year period and reinvestment opportunities of more than \$1 million during the same period. Full implementation of all recommendations in this report could produce net savings of more than \$2.9 million by 2005-06.

**Exhibit 2
Summary of Net Savings
TSPR Review of Del Valle Independent School District**

Year	Total
2001-02 Initial Annual Net Savings	\$286,035
2002-03 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$411,784
2003-04 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$411,784
2004-05 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$942,159
2005-06 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$942,159
One Time Net (Costs) Savings	(\$36,595)
TOTAL SAVINGS PROJECTED FOR 2001-2006	\$2,957,326

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

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

B. Summary of Costs and Savings by Recommendation (Exhibit 3)

Exhibit 3 Summary of Costs and Savings by Recommendation

Recommendation	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	5-Year (Costs) or Savings	One Time (Costs) or Savings
Chapter 1 District Organization and Management							
1 Establish a system to reimburse board members and administrators for district-related expenses and discontinue the practice of issuing personal credit cards. p. 26	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2 Establish a policy and procedure to comprehensively review board policy every five years. p. 27	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3 Develop standard operating procedures to implement board policy. p. 29	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4 Restructure the district organization to position the district for growth. p. 30	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

5	Provide more of the information the board desires in the board packets. p. 32	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
6	Develop a comprehensive strategic plan that links the various existing plans and ties them to the budget. p. 35	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
7	Identify, evaluate and determine the cost effectiveness of all major activities and programs in the Office of Community Relations. p. 38	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8	Train community liaisons and establish performance benchmarks. p. 39	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
9	Communicate with and involve small and minority-owned businesses in school district strategic planning. p. 40	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Totals-Chapter 1		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Chapter 2 Education Service Delivery								
10	Develop and implement strategies to ensure the	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	vertical alignment of curriculum and instruction across grade levels and the vertical teaming of elementary, middle and secondary teachers. p. 54							
11	Develop strategies to provide consistent educational technology curriculum and instruction on every campus. p. 55	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0
12	Eliminate the position of deputy assistant superintendent for Curriculum. p. 56	\$78,000	\$78,000	\$78,000	\$78,000	\$78,000	\$390,000	\$0
13	Develop targeted strategies to improve TAAS scores at the middle and secondary grade levels. p. 62	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
14	Increase the district's emphasis on testing all students. p. 66	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
15	Encourage students to take and pass advanced academic	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	all elementary schools. p. 81							
21	Employ an additional freshman counselor at Del Valle High School to prevent school dropouts, provide vocational counseling and meet the needs of the growing student population. p.87	(\$47,636)	(\$47,636)	(\$47,636)	(\$47,636)	(\$47,636)	(\$238,180)	\$0
22	Develop strategies to lower class sizes in physical education classes. p. 91	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
23	Require the athletic director to evaluate the physical education staff in collaboration with the principal for that campus. p. 91	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
24	Report revenues earned from athletic events to all interested parties each month. p. 92	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Totals- Chapter 2		\$27,364	\$27,364	\$27,364	\$27,364	\$27,364	\$136,820	\$0
Chapter 3 Personnel Management								
25	Review and update all job descriptions for each position every three years	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	and standardize the format. p. 103							
26	Develop standard operating procedures to ensure performance evaluations are completed properly and submitted to the Human Resources office in a timely manner. p. 105	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
27	Eliminate the position of administration office receptionist. p. 106	\$23,370	\$23,370	\$23,370	\$23,370	\$23,370	\$116,850	\$0
28	Implement a controlled retirement incentive plan. p. 110	\$0	\$69,734	\$69,734	\$600,109	\$600,109	\$1,339,686	\$0
29	Develop staffing guidelines for all employee categories. p. 112	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
30	Develop an employee retention plan. p. 114	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
31	Develop a policy and standard operating procedure to permit job sharing and flextime. p. 115	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
32	Evaluate hiring	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	permanent substitutes for teachers at each campus. p. 117							
33	Survey faculty needs for staff development to better plan for development activities. p. 120	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Totals-Chapter 3		\$23,370	\$93,104	\$93,104	\$623,479	\$623,479	\$1,456,536	\$0
Chapter 4 Facilities Use and Management								
34	Develop a long-range facilities master plan. p. 129	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
35	Develop and implement a work order management system. p. 134	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
36	Institute ASBO and APPA staffing formulas for custodial and maintenance staff. p. 136	(\$89,668)	(\$89,668)	(\$89,668)	(\$89,668)	(\$89,668)	(\$448,340)	\$0
37	Create a preventive maintenance schedule for each of the district's buildings. p. 137	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Totals-Chapter 4		(\$89,668)	(\$89,668)	(\$89,668)	(\$89,668)	(\$89,668)	(\$448,340)	\$0
Chapter 5 Asset and Risk Management								
38	Revise board policy to increase investment diversification. p. 147	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
39	Verify that	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	depository "sweep" repurchase agreements are secured in compliance with the Public Funds Investment Act. p. 148							
40	Review Policies CDA (H) and CDA (L) Investments and update the policies to include benchmarks for investment vehicles. p. 150	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
41	Post direct deposit payrolls on the actual pay date. p. 151	\$61,088	\$61,088	\$61,088	\$61,088	\$61,088	\$305,440	\$0
42	Require financial institutions to provide quotations for DVISD employee accounts as part of the district depository quotation process. p. 152	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
43	Develop procedures that require two employees to participate in counting cash receipts and deposit of funds. p. 153	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
44	Develop	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	fixed assets management system to ensure that district fixed assets are properly identified, monitored and safeguarded. p. 172							
56	Adopt a policy on the issuance of Tax and Revenue Anticipation Notes (TRANS) and issue TRANS in each year the district qualifies under IRS Code. p. 173	\$38,725	\$69,958	\$69,958	\$69,958	\$69,958	\$318,557	\$0
57	Hire an internal auditor. p. 177	(\$51,930)	(\$51,930)	(\$51,930)	(\$51,930)	(\$51,930)	(\$259,650)	\$0
58	Conduct a fraud audit of the district's financial records, giving careful consideration to the unexplained losses of funds in food service, health insurance and the general fund. p. 179	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$12,000)
Totals-Chapter 5		\$143,257	\$250,902	\$250,902	\$250,902	\$250,902	\$1,198,795	(\$27,000)
Chapter 6 Financial Management								
59	Develop a formal procedures manual for the business office that details day-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	operating procedures for textbook distribution and collection. p. 215							
70	Purchase a textbook management inventory system for each elementary campus and maintenance agreements for elementary, junior high and high school campuses. p. 216	(\$700)	(\$700)	(\$700)	(\$700)	(\$700)	(\$3,500)	(\$4,975)
Totals-Chapter 7		(\$700)	(\$700)	(\$700)	(\$700)	(\$700)	(\$3,500)	(\$4,975)
Chapter 8 Food Service								
71	Develop performance standards for Child Nutrition that will accurately measure the effectiveness and efficiency of service provided to DVISD students, faculty and administration. p. 227	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
72	Establish Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH) standards and evaluate each cafeteria's productivity. p. 228	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

73	Publish the district's Child Nutrition policy and related standard operating procedures on-line. p. 230	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
74	Publish a plan for a Child Nutrition staff development program. p. 230	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
75	Expand the employee recognition program. p. 231	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
76	Develop a Child Nutrition program budget each year. p. 234	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Totals-Chapter 8		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Chapter 9 Transportation								
77	Implement procedures for using the email system for scheduling and approving extracurricular trips and field trips. p. 248	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
78	Conduct a transportation service analysis. p. 250	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
79	Review all routes within the two-mile limit and designate them as hazardous where appropriate. p. 251	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

80	Fully implement the computerized school bus maintenance system. p. 252	(\$650)	(\$350)	(\$350)	(\$350)	(\$350)	(\$2,050)	\$0
81	Develop a formal school bus expansion and replacement cycle. p. 256	\$176,000	\$176,000	\$176,000	\$176,000	\$176,000	\$880,000	\$0
Totals-Chapter 9		\$175,350	\$175,650	\$175,650	\$175,650	\$175,650	\$877,950	\$0
Chapter 10 School Safety and Security								
82	Develop a long-range safety and security plan. p. 265	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
83	Develop an annual report of violent and criminal incidents occurring within DVISD schools and share the information with teachers, parents, administrators and the community. p. 267	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
84	Standardize and update the visitor procedures in the DVISD Parent-Student Handbooks. p. 268	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0
85	Install security cameras and monitor "blind spots" to reduce potential for	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$4,620)

	criminal activity on campus. p. 269							
86	Conduct an audit of the In School Suspension (ISS) program. p. 274	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Totals-Chapter 10		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$4,620)
Chapter 11 Computers and Technology								
87	Fill the vacant technology director position. p. 282	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
88	Hire an instructional technology coordinator and fund the position using the budget for the network coordinator. p. 284	\$7,062	\$7,062	\$7,062	\$7,062	\$7,062	\$35,310	\$0
89	Establish departmental procedures for the responsibilities of the Technology Department. p. 285	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
90	Design and develop standard service management reports to communicate department service activity, analyze service request data and develop performance standards and	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	measures. p. 287							
91	Evaluate service requests to locate and address frequently occurring problems. p. 288	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
92	Develop a training plan for DVISD technology staff. p. 291	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
93	Activate the technology-user committees and ensure that they meet on a regular basis. p. 293	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
94	Revise the existing Technology Plan to include specific activities and assignments, funding sources, timelines and measurable objectives. p. 297	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
95	Develop a comprehensive disaster recovery plan and test it regularly. p. 300	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Totals-Chapter 11		\$7,062	\$7,062	\$7,062	\$7,062	\$7,062	\$35,310	\$0
	Gross Savings	\$479,619	\$605,068	\$605,068	\$1,135,443	\$1,135,443	\$3,960,641	\$0
	Gross Costs	(\$193,584)	(\$193,284)	(\$193,284)	(\$193,284)	(\$193,284)	(\$971,695)	(\$36,595)
	Total	\$286,035	\$411,784	\$411,784	\$942,159	\$942,159	\$2,988,946	(\$36,595)
			Total Gross Savings		\$3,960,641			

			Total Gross Costs	(\$1,003,315)		
			Net	\$2,957,326		

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) organization and management and community involvement in four sections:

- A. Board and Governance
- B. District Management
- C. Planning and Evaluation
- D. Community Involvement

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

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

BACKGROUND

DVISD's mission "as the community's educational leader" is to "promote... and provide... quality education through innovative programs for all children and community members." Del Valle is an unincorporated community and spans 174 square miles.

The community is an Austin suburb with no mayor, city council or chamber of commerce. The school district is the hub for the communities of Garfield, Creedmoor, Mustang Ridge, Elroy, Pilot Knob, Webberville and Hornsby Bend. These areas were once called the Colorado Common School Districts and were consolidated into the Del Valle Independent School District in 1954.

The district consists of five elementary schools (PK-6), one junior high school (7-8), one high school and an alternative campus, both housing 9th to 12th grades. The district has two nationally recognized Blue Ribbon

Schools, and in the 1999-2000 Texas Education Agency ratings, DVISD rated Academically Acceptable. The district is served by Regional Education Service Center 13 (Region 13), which is located in Austin.

Between the end of the 1999-2000 school year and August of the 2000-01 school year the student population increased by 9.9 percent to 6,694 students. The DVISD student population is most diverse: 62.6 percent Hispanic, 20.1 percent Anglo, 15.6 percent African American and 1.6 percent Asian or Native American.

The majority of the district's local funding comes from property taxes on a few major commercial properties. In addition, the district includes thousands of acres of working farms, ranches, county parks, a wastewater plant, a county incarceration facility and the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport.

A new era started in the district with the closing of Bergstrom Air Force Base in 1994 and the subsequent creation of the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport. For safety reasons the City of Austin purchased and relocated three of the district's elementary schools and the high school for \$45.7 million. A bond proposal passed September 6, 1997, provided an additional \$38.1 million to construct the three replacement elementary schools, a new state of the art high school, new secondary athletic facilities, additions, and renovations to the two remaining elementary schools and the junior high. This project was finished with the opening of the elementary schools on August 31, 1999 and the opening of the new DVISD high school on August 14, 2000.

For this review, DVISD selected peer districts for comparative purposes based on certain similarities in student enrollments, student performance and community and student demographics. Those districts are Bastrop, Eanes, Georgetown, Hays, Lockhart, Manor, and San Marcos.

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) organization and management and community involvement in four sections:

A. BOARD AND GOVERNANCE

An elected Board of Trustees governs each Texas school district, which oversees the management of the schools. School board members are elected by district residents either at-large, districtwide or from single-member districts.

Each board derives its legal status from the Texas Constitution and the Texas Legislature. The board must function in accordance with applicable state and federal statutes and regulations and controlling court decisions. Under Section 11.151 of the Texas Education Code, each board has specific statutory powers and duties, including:

- govern and oversee the management of the public schools of the district;
- adopt such rules, regulations and bylaws as the board may deem proper;
- approve a district-developed plan for site-based decision-making and provide for its implementation;
- levy and collect taxes and issue bonds;
- select tax officials, as appropriate to the district's need;
- prepare, adopt and file a budget for the next fiscal year and file a report of disbursements and receipts for the preceding fiscal year;
- have district fiscal accounts audited at the district's expense by a Texas certified public accountant holding a permit from the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy following the close of each fiscal year;
- publish an annual report describing the district's educational performance, including campus performance objectives and the progress of each campus toward these objectives;
- receive bequests and donations or other money coming legally into its hands in the name of the district;
- select a depository for district funds;
- order elections, canvass the returns, declare results and issue certificates of election as required by law;
- dispose of property no longer necessary for the operation of the school district;

- acquire and hold real and personal property in the name of the district; and
- hold all powers and duties not specifically delegated by statute to the Texas Education Agency or the State Board of Education.

The DVISD board consists of nine members elected for three-year terms (**Exhibit 1-1**), rather than the more typical seven members, as the result of a December 1993 Travis County judge's court order. Citizens seeking better minority representation on the Del Valle Board of Trustees sued the district. As a result of this litigation, DVISD became a single-member election district with a special election on March 8, 1994.

Exhibit 1-1
Del Valle ISD Board of Trustees
May 2001

Board Member	Board Position	Term Expires	Occupation
Richard Vasquez	President	May 2002	Banker
Stephen Hart	Vice President	May 2002	Supervisor
Gustavo Guerrero	Secretary	May 2003	City Auditor
Charles Diggs, Jr.	Member	May 2004	Transportation Coordinator
Joe Vela	Member	May 2004	Executive Assistant
David Mellenbruch	Member	May 2004	Banker
Tim Reinhardt	Member	May 2002	Electrical Parts Sales
Paul Gonzalez	Member	May 2003	Deputy Sheriff
Lee Machen	Member	May 2003	Business Owner

Source: DVISD Superintendent's Office.

Regular board meetings are held in the District Administration Building on the third Tuesday of each month beginning at 6:15PM. Special meetings are held when called by the board.

Exhibit 1-2 presents an overview of the minimum annual continuing education requirements prescribed by the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) for new and experienced board members.

Exhibit 1-2
Overview of Continuing Education Requirements
for School Board Members

Type of Continuing Education	First Year Board Member	Experienced Board Member
Local District Orientation	Required within 60 days of election or appointment	Not required
Orientation to the Texas Education Code	3 hours	Not required
Update to the Texas Education Code	Incorporated into Orientation to the Texas Education Code	After legislative session
Team-building Session/Assessment of Continuing Education Needs of the Board-Superintendent Team	At least 3 hours	At least 3 hours
Additional continuing education, based on assessed need and Framework for School Board Development	At least 10 hours	At least 5 hours
Total Minimum Number of Hours	16 hours, plus local district orientation	8 hours, plus update

Source: Texas Association of School Boards.

Board members attended Texas Association of School Board programs at the following rate (**Exhibit 1-3**).

Exhibit 1-3
Del Valle Trustee In-Service Attendance
Texas Association of School Board Hours Earned

Board Member	May 2000 to January 2001	May 1999 to April 2000
Richard Vasquez	0	28.25
Steven Hart	11	19.5
Julia Diggs	0	27.5
David Perez	0	11
David Mellenbruch	0	16.25
Tim Reinhardt	0	14

Paul Gonzalez	13.5	*
Gustavo Guerrero	10.75	*
Lee Machen	0	*

**Three-year term began May 2000.
Source: DVISD Superintendent's Office.*

The board uses the services of multiple law firms to aid them in their decision-making. **Exhibit 1-4** reviews DVISD's legal cost since 1999-2000.

**Exhibit 1-4
Legal Expenses
Del Valle Independent School Districts**

Firm	Area of Law	1999-2000	2000-01*
Saegert, Angenend & Augustine	Construction and Real estate	\$9,435	\$5,260
Hilgers & Watkins	Personnel matters	\$12,033	\$34,872
Walsh, Anderson, Brown	Special Education and Personnel matters	\$108,064	\$51,459
Morrison and Associates	Personnel matters	\$0	\$1,067
McCall, Parkhurst	Bond matters	\$12,592	-
Total		\$142,124	\$92,658

*Source: DVISD Business Office. *Through December 31, 2000.*

Exhibit 1-5 compares the legal fees of DVISD to its peer districts.

**Exhibit 1-5
Peer District Legal Expenses**

District	1999-2000	2000-2001*
Bastrop	\$38,239	\$13,707
Del Valle	\$142,124	\$92,658
Eanes	\$152,160	\$58,728

Georgetown	\$36,589	\$9,659
Hays	\$72,753	\$27,517
Lockhart	\$5,956	\$2,366
Manor	\$34,358	\$11,550
San Marcos	\$141,861	\$6,838

**Through December 31, 2000.
Source: Business Offices Peer Districts.*

FINDING

School board members and some administrators have unregulated use of district credit cards. DIVISD has not done a reconciliation of these accounts, and in the past, the community has made allegations of improper use of credit cards by both board members and the former superintendent.

School board members and superintendents in the course of their service to the district and community will incur expenses not limited to conference fees, travel, books and periodicals and usual and customary expenses permitted by law. In many Texas school districts, board members submit receipts for reimbursement by the district. Issuing credit cards to board members is however, not unusual. But, a strong system of internal controls is needed to ensure that cards are used appropriately.

Of the 255 statements requested for the period of July 1998 through December 2000, covering nine board members, the former superintendent and the current superintendent, the district was able to produce 125 statements. These 125 statements showed expenditures of \$46,317 and incurred finance charges for late payments in the amount of \$737, bringing the total expended to \$47,054.

Prior to August 2000, a secretary in the superintendent's office reviewed board members' credit card statements and, in some instances, made anecdotal comments regarding the charges to show they were district-related. The secretary then approved the charge card bills and submitted them to the business office for payment. The district does not require copies of receipts for purchases, therefore it is difficult to tell from the statements whether the actual expenditures are appropriate. The approval signature of the former deputy superintendent for Business, required for all other district purchases, does not appear on any of the 125 statements analyzed.

Some questionable purchases found on these 125 statements included airfare for spouses and children on trips to Albuquerque, New Mexico in November 1998, Orlando, Florida in February 2000 and Tucson, Arizona in October 1998. Additionally, some board members charged the district for meals and cab fares in and around the Austin area. Periodically there was a notation by the secretary that the travel was to a TASB training session or that a board member intended to reimburse the district for a charge, but district staff could provide no proof of reimbursement.

The former superintendent charged airfare for himself and his spouse for trips to New Orleans, Orlando, Florida, Denver, and Salt Lake City and stayed in hotels such as the Wyndham in New Orleans, the Westin in Houston, and the Hilton at Walt Disney World. The former superintendent also charged airline tickets for a board member, his wife, mother, daughter, and son for a trip to Orlando, Florida in March 2000. In addition, the former superintendent made \$338 purchases at retail stores for such things as supplies and books. These purchases failed to comply with the district's purchase order process. Additionally, the former superintendent charged \$1,206 in meals in and around the Austin area, with many of the meals costing between \$40 and \$80 each. No documentation is available at the district that shows any of these charges were related to district business or that any reimbursements were made to the district. Seven credit card statements of the former superintendent were unavailable for review and could not be accounted for by the district.

At TSPR's request, the superintendent requested copies of all credit card statements from the bank. TSPR sent each board member, the former superintendent and the former deputy superintendent a copy of their statements asking them to provide explanations for the expenditures and/or copies of canceled checks proving that the district was reimbursed for non-district expenditures. Some, but not all, board members and key staff have returned their statements with notations and copies of canceled checks indicating that no improprieties occurred on their accounts. A few years ago, an external audit of the Corpus Christ ISD was done of *all* travel and related expenses for as far back as 10 years. There are some interesting parallels. Some Corpus Christi board members traveled with spouses and had not reimbursed the district. A former assistant superintendent for business and financial affairs charged thousands of dollars at local bars and later reimbursed the district for the expenditures. The former superintendent and board members made excessive meal charges between 1994 and 1999 to the district's credit cards that included purchases of alcoholic beverages and they failed to properly document the business nature of travel expenses paid for by the district. After a protracted legal battle, the firing of the former superintendent and some criminal charges, the Corpus Christi ISD has instituted a strict system of reimbursement to eliminate any suggestion of impropriety. Whether or not

improprieties have occurred in DVISD, the current system of verification and payment leaves the district open to the possibility of abuse, public allegations of misconduct and legal battles.

Recommendation 1:

Establish a system to reimburse board members and administrators for district-related expenses and discontinue the practice of issuing personal credit cards.

TSPR will continue to work with the district to ensure that responses are received from the remaining board members and the former superintendent and/or that appropriate action is taken to account for prior purchases.

Policies and procedures should be written to clarify authorized expenses and reimbursement processes. When board members are approved for travel on school district business, the administration should make the necessary reservations. Forty-eight hours before travel is to begin, board members should be permitted to take a cash advance or sign-out a district credit card for use for approved travel expenses. Within forty-eight hours upon return to the district, board members should be required to return their credit cards to the business office with copies of all receipts for expenses. Expense statements should then be submitted to the full board for approval.

Board members who do not elect to participate in the above procedures, are required to spend personal funds and submit expenses for approval and reimbursement by the board.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business meets with the local auditing firm to develop proper accounting procedures for the use of district credit cards.	July 2001
2.	The deputy superintendent seeks reimbursement for any outstanding monies owed the district.	July 2001
3.	The deputy superintendent for Business, superintendent and board treasurer present new credit card policy and procedures to the board for approval.	August 2001
4.	The board adopts new policy, which specifies proper use and procedures for district-owned credit cards.	September 2001
5.	The deputy superintendent for Business cancels all credit cards issued in board members' names.	September 2001

6.	The deputy superintendent for Business orders new credit cards without board member names and secures cards in the business office safe.	September 2001
7.	The district institutes a new system for expenses that requires invoice copies to prove expenditures are district related prior to reimbursement or payment.	October 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

The recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

DVISD does not review board policy on a regular, cyclic basis. Policies are reviewed and updated when a problem occurs or as a specific need develops. The district participates in the TASB Online Policy Manual. This online service permits immediate access to policy for board members and administration and to anyone with Internet access. TASB provides updates to policies as new laws are passed or as regulations are changed. Every two years the policies titled as "Legal" are updated by TASB to reflect the current changes made by the state legislature. The policies titled as "Local" are also brought into line by TASB to reflect any legal legislative changes. However, this editorial work by TASB does not take into account any changes that a local board wishes to make in their policy book. The district has not updated its policy manual since 1997.

Examples of policies not updated include Purchasing CH(L), Investments CDA(L), Student Activity Fund Management CFD(L)A, Facilities Construction CV(E), Use of School Facilities GKD(L), Recreational Facilities Bonds CCD(H), Compensatory/Accelerated Services EHBC(L), Personnel Management Relations DGB(L), Board Policies BF(L) and Ethics BBF(L).

The Texas Association of School Boards recommends that its members review their total policy books at least every five years.

Recommendation 2:

Establish a policy and procedure to comprehensively review board policy every five years.

Since the policies were last reviewed in 1997, the next review should be conducted in 2002 and every five years thereafter.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent drafts a revision to policy BF Board Policies under section "Localized updates" recommending the board or its designee review the complete district policy book every five years.	July 2001
2.	The board approves the policy amendment.	August 2001
3.	The superintendent works with TASB, district administrators and legal counsel to determine the best method for review and initiates review of district policies.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) organization and management and community involvement in four sections:

B. DISTRICT MANAGEMENT

The superintendent who reports to the board of trustees manages the DVISD. Section 11.201 of the Texas Education Code specifies that the superintendent is primarily responsible for:

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

Section 11.202 of the School Code defines the roll of a campus principal and the job requirements.

The principal of a school is the instructional leader of the school and shall:

- Approve teacher and staff appointments;
- Set specific education objectives for his building;
- Develop campus budgets;
- Assume the administrative responsibility and instructional leadership and be responsible for discipline at the assigned campus;
- Assign, evaluate and promote personnel; and
- Recommend the termination or suspension of employees to the superintendent.

The district employs five elementary school principals and three secondary school principals.

The board, superintendent and the administrative team were interviewed. The following areas of concern that affect district administration were discussed:

- Lack of district level procedural guidelines that reflect board policy;
- Large administrative change over the last year;
- The board's desire for more information concerning educational programs; and
- The lack of vendor names on the bill list set for adoption at board meetings.

FINDING

DVISD does not have a comprehensive procedures manual linked to board policies. No policy in the DVISD Policy Manual has a set of written procedures accompanying the policy. Standard operating procedures detail the steps necessary for administration and staff to carry out policy. Without a set of procedures for how to apply a policy, confusion and individual interpretation of the board's intent becomes the mainstay of policy implementation.

DVISD does possess handbooks for its students and procedural guides for its teaching staff. The district does not have procedural guides for other positions. A set of materials that the district considers a procedural guide is actually a manual of suggested district official correspondences to be used so that official contacts are written in a uniform manner.

Recommendation 3:

Develop standard operating procedures to implement board policy.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board directs superintendent to review policies and procedures manuals.	July 2001
2.	The superintendent, cabinet members and building administrators review district procedural material to verify policy/procedure relationships. Assess areas of needed procedure manual creation.	July 2001
3.	The administrators create new materials and handbooks as assessment dictated.	October 2001

4.	The superintendent presents new material and procedural handbooks to the board for review and approval.	January 2002
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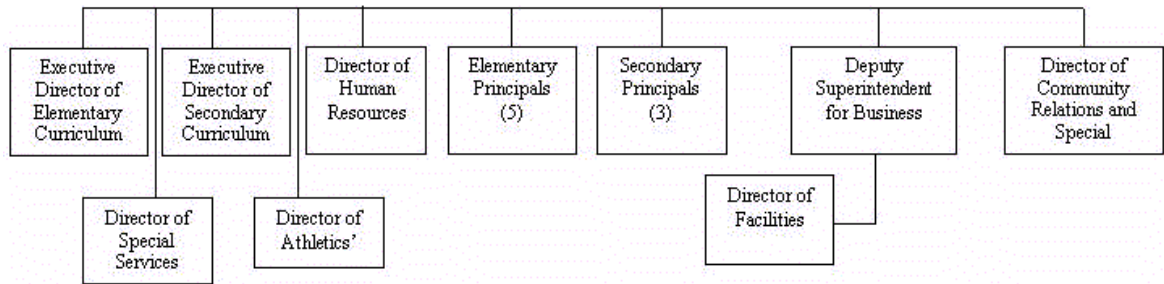
FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district's current organizational structure does not position the district for growth. The district's student population is growing almost 10 percent per year. The superintendent has 16 staff members who report to him directly, more than directly report to superintendents in other districts. **Exhibit 1-8** details the DVISD organizational structure.

**Exhibit 1-8
DVISD Organization Chart
January 2001**



Source: DVISD Superintendent.

The executive director of Elementary Instruction oversees the PK through 6 curricula. The executive director of Secondary Instruction oversees curricula for grades 7 through 12. The superintendent is responsible for evaluating principals.

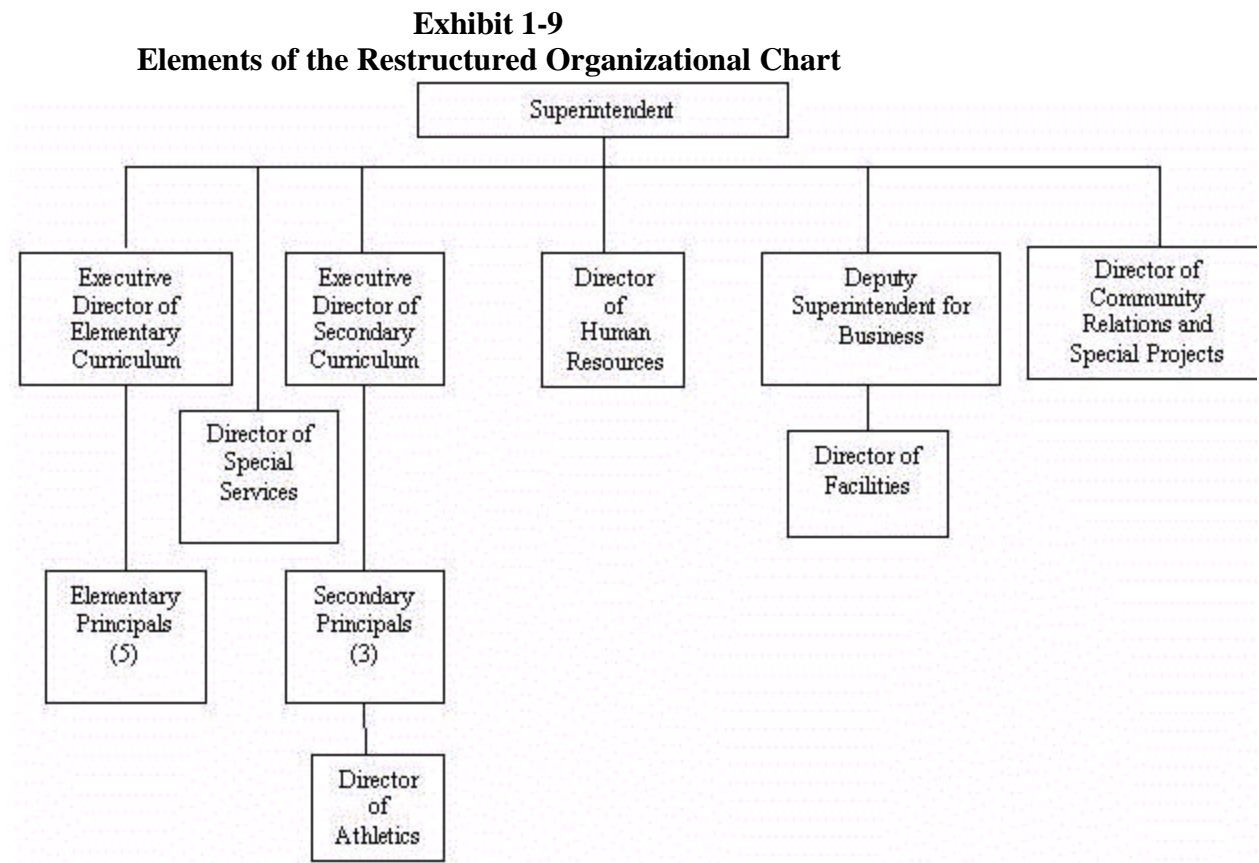
The athletic director reports to the superintendent. The position for food service manager, director of facilities, and the transportation director report to the deputy superintendent for Business.

Bastrop ISD, a slightly smaller district than Del Valle with a student population growth rate of five percent, is reorganizing and reducing the number of positions that directly report to the superintendent to four assistant superintendents and a secretary. In Killeen ISD, a district five times the size of DVISD, six positions directly report to the superintendent.

Recommendation 4:

Restructure the district organization to position the district for growth.

Exhibit 1-9 summarizes the elements of the proposed restructured organization chart.



Source: Organizational Structure in Schools, Hoy and Miskel, 1991.

Under the new organization, principals would report to their respective executive directors. Each director is presently assigned responsibility in a curriculum area.

The positions reporting to the superintendent would be limited to: executive director of Elementary Instruction, executive director of Secondary Instruction, director of Human Resources, director of Community Relations and Special Projects and deputy superintendent for Business.

This organization would streamline the number of people who must interact with the superintendent on a daily basis from 15 to five.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board directs the superintendent to create a new organization chart and job description.	July 2001
2.	The superintendent creates a new chart and job descriptions.	July 2001
3.	The board reviews and accepts superintendent's new suggested organization chart and job descriptions.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Several board members said they would like more information about DVISD in the board information packets. One board member, for example, said: "The district site-based teams inform the board of their needs but do not have an opportunity to report back to the board concerning completion of those goals."

Also, a few board members said they want more educational information included in the Friday Communications the district office sends them.

Campus-level administration consists of eight principals and twelve assistant principals. Based upon interviews and focus groups, site-based decision-making (SBDM) is well received in the DVISD. The building-level administrators and faculty participate in the shared decision-making that is now Texas law. The administration interviewed was very excited by the opportunities presented by SBDM. They feel the board is receptive to their needs and requests. The board wants closure on the budget process by hearing the end results of the educational programs it funded at the end of each school year.

Recommendation 5:

Provide more of the information the board desires in the board packets.

The inclusion of weekly news articles from the beginning of the week, constitutes history that board members may already be aware of. More educational information may be desirable, but the administration needs to work directly with the board to determine what information they feel they need to better perform their duties.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent and the board meet to discuss what types of information, both educational and financial, that they would like to see in board packets.	July 2001
2.	The superintendent works with administrative staff to develop a series of reports that will appear in all board packets.	September 2001
3.	The superintendent produces a prototype of the requested information and requests feedback from the board.	October 2001
4.	The administration begins producing the requested information for each board packet.	November 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) organization and management and community involvement in four sections:

C. PLANNING AND EVALUATION

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

- A comprehensive needs assessment addressing student performance on the Academic Excellence Indicators (AEIS);
- Measurable district performance objectives for all appropriate AEIS for all student populations;
- Strategies for improving student performance;
- Resources to implement identified strategies;
- Staff responsible for ensuring each strategy is accomplished;
- Timelines for monitoring implementation; and
- Formative evaluation criteria for determining whether the strategies are improving student performance.

Section 11.253 of the Texas Education Code provides the requirement for campus-level planning and site-based decision-making. Each school building must have a Campus Improvement Plan (CIP) that is developed, evaluated and revised annually. The plan must:

- Assess the academic achievement for each student using the academic excellence indicators;
- Set the campus performance objectives based on the academic excellence indicator system;
- Identify how the campus goals will be met for each student;
- Determine the resources needed to implement the plan;
- Identify staff needed;
- Set timelines for goal achievement;
- Periodically measure progress toward goal completion;
- Include goals for the prevention and intervention of violence on campus;
- Provide programs to encourage parental involvement in school.

Planning is critical to effective management. Planning enables a district to define goals and objectives, establish priorities, select appropriate

implementation strategies and determine critical measures of performance in achieving the goals and objectives.

School districts with effective planning systems divide the process into a series of key components that provide information used to develop and update the plan or implement plan priorities. These key components include annual district priorities, campus improvement plans, regular program evaluation cycles, work plans, ongoing evaluations of the personnel implementing the plan, a budget tied to the priorities in the plan and a management information system. Annual priorities adopted by the board outline what the district will do in a given year to achieve the district's goals and objectives. The plan must set priorities and clear measurable objectives, assign responsibility for implementation at each level and define a mechanism by which the accomplishment of the priorities is measured.

A districtwide committee made up of district staff, principals, teachers and citizens must develop the DIP. In DVISD, district improvement planning and site-based decision-making are closely aligned. The district committee prepares the DIP and serves as the district site-based decision-making committee.

In DVISD, site-based decision-making committees (SBDM) develop each school's Campus Improvement Plan (CIP) and identify what each school will do in a given year to help achieve district and school objectives.

Section 21 of the Texas Education Code describes certain requirements associated with implementing site-based decision-making (SBDM) in Texas school districts. The major theme of SBDM is the empowerment of students, parents, teachers, principals and the school. The code describes requirements for annual district and campus improvement plans, composition of district and campus decision-making councils, election of representatives to each council, term of office, meetings and general responsibilities. By conducting a comprehensive strategic approach, the district will be better positioned for growth.

FINDING

While the district has a District Improvement Plan and Campus Improvement Plans, it does not have a comprehensive strategic plan linking these individual plans or connecting these plans to the annual budget. No comprehensive plan exists for managing the district's finances, nor does the district have a facilities master plan.

Evidence that additional planning is discussed in greater detail throughout this report. Some examples of the problems that have been identified as a result of inadequate planning are as follows:

- No regular policy review cycle. Included as a part of every strategic plan is a policy review and updating cycle. As administrative practices and laws change over time, policies must be updated to ensure district compliance with applicable laws and regulations. DVISD has outdated policies and no standard operating procedures to accompany district policies. Without a policy review cycle and accompanying guidelines, linkages among district programs are weak to non-existent.
- Poor student enrollment planning. Strategic plans include recognized models for forecasting student enrollment. In the past five years, DVISD enrollments have increased beyond the district's expectations requiring increased services and additional programs. Including better estimates of student enrollments allows the district to allocate resources to areas of particular need and not to be caught off-guard in educational planning.
- Lack of regular education program review. Part of the overall strategic planning process is reviewing educational offerings. For instance, DVISD may plan to add or delete a specific foreign language course. By planning and making assumptions based on the entire strategic plan, more courses and services can be offered to students at lower planned costs.
- Inconsistent facilities planning. School districts are driven by providing educational services to meet the student population. DVISD has opened three new schools in the last three years and was forced to deploy portable classrooms at the elementaries on opening day. Strategic planning links enrollments, programs and facilities ensuring that the district plans appropriately for new schools.
- No preventive maintenance planning. DVISD does not have a districtwide plan for upgrading existing facilities. Strategic plans include planned roof replacements, boiler upgrades, window replacements, asbestos removal and communication upgrades.
- Lack of effective financial management strategies. DVISD was forced to transfer funds from capital projects accounts to erase deficits in health insurance and food service accounts. Strategic planning using evaluation tools designed to prevent financial shortfalls may have prevented these deficits. A key component of a strategic plan is the action strategy component. In the area of business management, this includes community oversight and advisory committees.

Recommendation 6:

Develop a comprehensive strategic plan that links the various existing plans and ties them to the budget.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board approves the creation of a strategic plan.	September 2001
2.	The superintendent assigns an individual to the leadership position of the strategic planning committee.	September 2001
3.	The strategic plan chairperson convenes a meeting of CIP and DIP committees to seek volunteers to serve on a district strategic plan committee.	September 2001
4.	The chairperson forms committee.	November 2001
5.	The chairperson begins needs assessment with the state planning committee.	January 2002
6.	The committee converts needs assessment to long-range goals including implementation timelines and costs.	April 2002
7.	The chairperson creates strategic plan report and shares it with various district groups to finalize analysis.	September 2002
8.	The chairperson and committee present strategic plan to the board for approval	September 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) organization and management and community involvement in four sections:

D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

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.

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

FINDING

The Adopt-a-School program's success is the result of a concerted effort on the part of the administrative team and, in particular, the office of Community Relations.

The DVISD is a full participant in the Adopt-a-School program exemplified by the following number of partners shown in **Exhibit 1-10**.

Exhibit 1-10
Number of Adopters
By School
For the 2000-01 School Year

School	Number of Sponsors
--------	--------------------------

Baty Elementary School	5
Hillcrest Elementary	5
Hornsby-Dunlap Elementary School	4
Popham Elementary School	17
Smith Elementary School	14
Opportunity Center	4
Junior High School	4
High School	9
TLC/Even Start	2
District	16

Source: DVISD Superintendent's Office.

The Adopt-A-School partners contribute significantly to DVISD. In 1999-2000, the partners' contributions were \$1,215,022. Through November 20, 2000, the contributions were \$720,364.

COMMENDATION

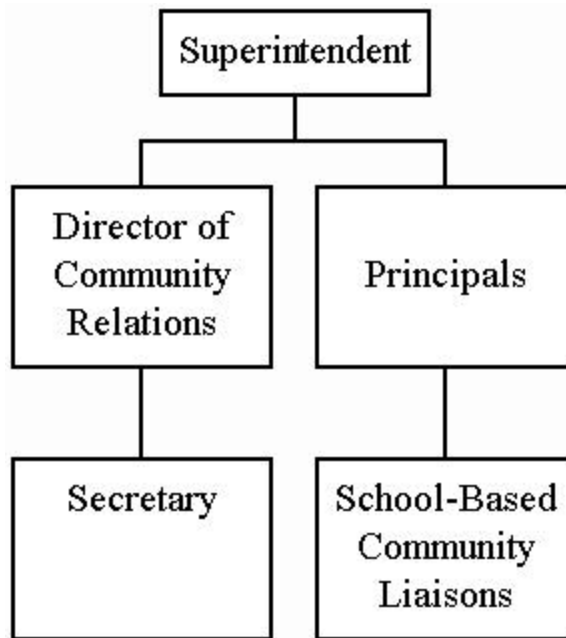
The Adopt-A-School program is a vital and successful part of the Del Valle Independent School District.

FINDING

Community involvement is not coordinated centrally in DVISD. To promote community involvement, DVISD has two people in the Office of Community Relations and six school-community liaisons. These six liaisons report to the school principal where they are located.

Exhibit 1-11 displays the reporting structure of the Office of Community Relations and school-based community liaisons.

**Exhibit 1-11
Office of Community Relations
Organizational Chart
January 2001**



Source: *Office of Community Relations, January 2001.*
Exhibit 1-12 details the number of liaisons at each campus.

**Exhibit 1-12
 Community Liaisons per School**

School	Number of Liaisons
Baty Elementary School	1
Hillcrest Elementary School	1
Hornsby-Dunlap Elementary School	1
Popham Elementary School	1
Smith Elementary School	1
Del Valle Junior High School	1
Del Valle High School	0

Source: *DVISD Staff Directory.*

The Office of Community Relations is generally responsible for coordination of the Adopt-A-School (AAS), the AAS board, media relations, central office publications, assisting schools with their publicity

efforts, handling communications with major companies and providing Open Records assistance. The office is also involved in districtwide efforts such as bond issuance. The Office of Community Relations has one director and one secretary.

The community liaisons are responsible for assisting the community relations efforts of the school to which they are assigned. The liaisons are generally responsible for providing assistance to their principal in involving the community directly related to their school. They provide assistance in the areas particular to each school and to stakeholders of the school campus. For example, Popham Elementary School has a neighborhood housing association that interacts with that school. The high school has a project with Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL). In addition, the liaisons provide assistance in activities that are common in all schools, such as translating school-produced documents and arranging meetings between parents and teachers.

At the high school, community relations responsibilities are divided among other persons: the principal, assistant principals, coaches and counselors.

The Office of Community Relations performs many functions including managing the Adopt-A-School Program and assisting the bond committee with operational support etc. There is no annual review to see if these functions overlap. In addition, the school-based community liaisons perform some of these same functions. The director of Community Relations and the school-based community liaisons both interact with Adopt-A-School participants. The principals, superintendent, director of Community Relations and the community liaisons are all involved in Open Records requests, speaking to the media and interacting with various community representatives. In some cases several DVISD staff interact with the same person about a district function.

The director of Community Relations does not have a formal evaluation plan to measure the effectiveness of each activity performed by the office or the programs that can be grouped under community relations. Partners-in-Education and Adopt-A-School are examples.

The Office of Community Relations does not have an audit trail of expenditures to determine the cost effectiveness of activities. The office is called upon to complete many tasks, some vital to the operational effectiveness of the school district (e.g., facilitating the bond program, handling Open Records requests and handling the media during crisis situations). Other activities involve addressing public perceptions of the district (e.g., engaging the media in telling "good" stories of activities of the district and writing public information articles).

Recommendation 7:

Identify, evaluate and determine the cost effectiveness of all major activities and programs in the Office of Community Relations.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Community Relations identifies all activities performed by the office, separates them into categories and determines at which administrative level the activities are to be performed.	June 2001
2.	The director of Community Relations meets with the superintendent to secure approval of the activity list and which staff member has major responsibility for each activity.	July 2001
3.	The director of Community Relations develops a plan to perform the activities assigned to the office. The plan should include districtwide goals, an operations section, strategies and assignment of staff to perform each activity. It should include benchmarks and documentation (including cost) necessary to evaluate the each activity.	August 2001
4.	The director of Community Relations meets with the superintendent to review the plan and timelines for the evaluation of each activity.	September 2001
5.	The director of Community Relations implements the plan.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district does not provide coordinated training and performance benchmarks for the school-based community liaison staff. The list of training sessions submitted by six community liaisons contain 55 training opportunities. In addition, no performance benchmarks exist, making evaluation of the program difficult and subjective.

Community liaisons said they learn their job on-the-job and deal with many issues. Examples of issues that might require training are: resolving conflicts between the rules of the schools and the students/parents (conflict resolution); explaining school laws to students/parents (dress codes, attendance laws, laws on discipline; student safety laws); explaining federal, state and local programs (Migrant, Bilingual, Title I, English as a

Second Language); visiting homes (do's and don'ts while visiting a home); recruiting volunteers for various programs (successful recruiting techniques); assisting in transporting students to Reading Recovery training (insurance liability if the community liaisons drive their personal cars); and information on Reading Recovery.

The district does not have a comprehensive plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the community liaison program. School-based community liaisons strive to meet the needs of the school community to which they are assigned. Most of the community-liaison activities are the same at all schools, such as translating at various teacher/parent/administrator conferences, working with volunteers, assisting with registration, helping identify migrant families, making home visits, and facilitating/scheduling of conferences between parents and school staff. Other activities are distinctly different among buildings but are not evaluated for success. For example, at Baty Elementary the community liaison has a parent room and meets parents every morning, and on certain occasions.

Recommendation 8:

Train community liaisons and establish performance benchmarks.

The measure of the program's success should be determined by the success of the individual activities implemented. The district should assess four to six activities that are coordinated with and help major districtwide programs, such as Adopt-A-School, and 10 to 12 activities that are identified as major activities in each school. DVISD should establish performance benchmarks of success and should assess activities based on that benchmark, within the reorganized community relations plan.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Community Relations meets with the school-based community liaison staff to identify, prioritize training needs and develop a system of performance benchmarks.	July 2001
2.	The director of Community Relations submits a system of performance benchmarks to the superintendent for approval.	September 2001
3.	The director of Community Relations submits the multi-year plan for training to the superintendent for approval.	October 2001
4.	The director of Community Relations assesses the mid-year performance assessment based on newly established performance benchmarks.	February 2002
5.	The director of Community Relations evaluates the effectiveness of the training plan and makes adjustments where necessary.	June 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

DVISD does not have a specific plan to involve small and minority-owned businesses in the district. A partial list of businesses that have adopted Hillcrest and Popham schools shows few small businesses.

Hillcrest Elementary Callaghan's General Store, Colliers/Oxford Commercial Realty, La Pena, National Association of Women in Construction, College Bound Program/UT, Saint Edward's University Women's Volleyball Team

Popham Elementary Vic's Bar-B-Que; Southwest Airlines; Double "OO" Eagle DJ Services; Austin Lyric Opera; Texas Industries; Butch Edwards, Engineer; Carla Marshall and the Green Classroom; Parson's Lodge #222; Vreeland Graphics; DVHS Pals; DVJH Pals; HEB #219; BFI Waste Services; Hill Country Middle School Reading Buddies

Around the intersection of Highway 71 and the entrance to the airport terminal, there are several small Mexican food cafes. A survey of local minority-owned businesses found no evidence of any school involvement. One owner/manager knew of the school district but had no knowledge of any particular activity- "I guess they do what they do" (conversation conducted in Spanish). Del Valle has no chamber of commerce, and no telephone directory. The Internet lists 111 businesses at Del Valle addresses.

Recommendation 9:

Communicate with and involve small and minority-owned businesses in school district strategic planning.

DVISD would benefit greatly from the involvement of small and minority-owned/managed businesses in the district, including the area of Montopolis in the DVISD attendance area. Del Valle as a "town" does not exist. DVISD should develop a plan to communicate with/involve these persons in the district and in local school activities. Since many of these businesses are owned/managed by persons with limited English-speaking ability, the activities should include Spanish-speaking DVISD staff.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Community Relations, with the approval of the superintendent, establishes a committee including school-based community liaisons, minority board members, other minority community members and small business owners to identify small and minority-owned/managed businesses and to develop a plan to involve them in DVISD activities.	June 2001
2.	The director of Community Relations submits the committee's recommendations to the superintendent for his review and approval.	August 2001
3.	The superintendent submits the recommendations to the board for its approval.	August 2001
4.	The director of Community Relations implements the recommendations.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

This chapter examines the educational service delivery and academic performance measures of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in eight sections:

- A. Curriculum and Instruction
- B. Student Performance
- C. Special Education
- D. Bilingual Education and English as a Second Language
- E. Gifted and Talented Education
- F. Compensatory Education - Guidance and Counseling
- G. Career and Technology Education
- H. Health Services and Physical Education

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

BACKGROUND

Since 1993, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has rated and accredited school districts and campuses based on specific student performance measures including the reading, writing and mathematics portions of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), dropout rates and attendance rates. Districts are evaluated each year. The state rating system is presented in **Exhibit 2-1**. DVISD was rated Academically Acceptable in 1999-2000.

Exhibit 2-1
TEA Accountability Ratings
1999-2000

Rating	Applicability/Ex planation
Exemplary	District and Campus
Recognized	District and Campus

Academically Acceptable	District
Acceptable	Campus
Academically Unacceptable	District
Low-Performing	Campus
Alternative Education (AE): Commended, Acceptable, AE: Needs Peer Review, or AE: Not Rated	Campuses that applied and were identified as eligible to be evaluated under alternative education procedures.
Charter schools	At the district level, open-enrollment charter schools receive the label Charter School. At the school level, they are given one of the four campus ratings listed above, based on the regular accountability system.
Not Rated	These campuses include those that do not serve students within the 1 st through 12 th grade span, such as pre-kindergarten centers and early education through kindergarten schools.
Unacceptable: Special Accreditation Investigation	Districts have undergone an investigation as mandated in Chapter 39 of the Texas Education Code.
Unacceptable: Data Quality	District: serious errors in data reporting that affected one or more of the base indicators used for determining accountability ratings. The errors are of such magnitude that the results are deemed to be unsuitable for ratings purposes.
Unacceptable: Data Issues	Campus: serious errors in data reporting that affected one or more of the base indicators used for determining accountability ratings. The errors are of such magnitude that the results are deemed to be unsuitable for rating purposes.

Source: 1999-2000 TEA, AEIS Reports.

DVISD has seven schools and one alternative education program (AEP) campus (Opportunity Center) for secondary students. The district offers Early Childhood Education (ECE) and pre-kindergarten (Pre-K) classes in addition to instruction in grades kindergarten through 12. The district includes elementary (Pre-K to grade 6), middle (junior high) and secondary (senior high) schools.

DVISD participates with other Travis County school districts in the Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP). The JJAEP is a state-mandated educational disciplinary program for adjudicated youth. The district has a memorandum of understanding with the Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Cooperative of Travis County, the regional education service center (Region 13), Travis County and 13 school districts to provide educational services. The JJAEP contracts for educational service delivery with Southwest Keys. Southwest Keys provides educational services on request to DVISD.

Exhibit 2-2 shows the grade levels served and student enrollment by school for 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 as of November 1, 2000.

Exhibit 2-2
DVISD Campuses, Grade Levels Served and Enrollment
1999-2000 and 2000-01

Campus	Grade Levels	1999-2000 Enrollment	2000-2001 Enrollment*	Percent Change
Baty Elementary	ECE-6	798	876	10%
Hillcrest Elementary	Pre-K-6	744	926	24%
Hornsby-Dunlap Elementary	Pre-K-6	660	733	11%
Popham Elementary	ECE-6	878	788	(10%)
Smith Elementary	Pre-K-6	656	797	21%
Del Valle Junior High	7-8	919	993	8%
Del Valle High	9-12	1,294	1,465	13%
Opportunity Center (AEP)	9-12	138	105	(24%)
Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program	6-12	4	4	0%
Total		6,091	6,687	10%

Source: DVISD and 1999-2000 TEA, AEIS Reports
**November 1, 2000 enrollment figures from DVISD.*

Percent change is calculated by subtracting the 1999-2000 enrollment from the 2000-01 enrollment and dividing by the 1999-2000 enrollment.

The 1999-2000 accountability rating and ethnic distribution for each DVISD campus are presented in **Exhibit 2-3**. The district's student population is predominantly Hispanic (64 percent). Anglo students represent about a fourth (20 percent) of the total student population. African American students represent 16 percent of the total student population.

DVISD campuses received the following state accountability ratings in 1999-2000: no campus was rated Exemplary (E); three elementary campuses were rated Recognized (R); four campuses (the junior high school, the high school and two elementary schools) were rated Acceptable (A); and one campus (Opportunity Center) was rated Alternative Education: Acceptable (AE: A).

**Exhibit 2-3
DVISD Demographics and Accountability Ratings by Campus
2000-01**

Campus	Grades Served	Enrollment	African American	Hispanic	Anglo	Other	Econ. Disad.	Rating 1999-2000
Baty Elementary	ECE-6	878	19.9%	71.8%	7.1%	1.3%	83.1%	R
Hillcrest Elementary	Pre-K-6	921	6.5%	74.2%	19.0%	0.3%	71.0%	R
Hornsby-Dunlap Elementary	Pre-K-6	736	28.4%	49.0%	20.7%	1.9%	62.8%	A
Popham Elementary	ECE-6	785	9.8%	57.6%	29.6%	3.1%	62.3%	A
Smith Elementary	Pre-K-6	806	12.0%	66.6%	20.1%	1.2%	71.0%	R
Del Valle Junior High	7-8	971	15.1%	61.5%	22.0%	1.3%	61.8%	A
Del Valle High	9-12	1,470	18.2%	58.0%	21.6%	2.3%	46.5%	A
Opportunity Center	9-12	126	11.9%	62.7%	25.4%	0.0%	51.6%	AE:A

(AEP)								
JJAEP	6-12	1	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100%	Not Rated
District Profile*		6,694	16%	63%	20%	2%	64%	AA

Source: 2000-01 PEIMS and 1999-2000 TEA, AEIS Reports.

*Figures may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

The following school districts were used as peer districts for comparison purposes in this review: Bastrop, Eanes, Georgetown, Hays, Lockhart, Manor and San Marcos. As **Exhibit 2-4** indicates, DVISD experienced an increase of 24.9 percent in its student enrollment from 1996-97 to 1999-2000, the highest growth rate of any district examined. During the same time period, both the districts served by Region 13 and the state increased in student enrollment by 9.8 percent and 4.3 percent, respectively.

Exhibit 2-4
DVISD, Peer District, Region and State Student Enrollment Growth Rates
1996-1997 to 1999-2000

District	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	Percent Change
Manor	2,096	2,248	2,376	2,484	18.5%
Lockhart	4,111	4,148	4,275	4,405	7.2%
Del Valle	4,876	5,230	5,625	6,091	24.9%
Bastrop	5,524	5,765	5,844	6,122	10.8%
Hays	5,748	6,040	6,307	6,707	16.7%
Georgetown	6,697	6,945	7,321	7,578	13.2%
San Marcos	6,863	6,939	6,967	6,962	1.4%
Eanes	6,956	7,184	7,418	7,443	7.0%
Region 13	240,713	247,989	258,660	264,328	9.8%
State	3,828,975	3,891,877	3,945,367	3,991,783	4.3%

*Source: 1996-97 through 1999-2000 TEA, AEIS Reports.
Percent change is calculated by subtracting the 1996-97 value from the 1999-2000 value and dividing by the 1996-97 value.*

Sixteen percent of DVISD students are of limited English proficiency (LEP) and 64 percent are classified as economically disadvantaged, which is defined as eligible for the federal free or reduced-price lunch program. Compared to its peerdistricts, DVISD has the highest percentage of both economically disadvantaged and LEP students. DVISD has a significantly greater percentage of economically disadvantaged students than the region or the state. DVISD also has a greater percentage of LEP students than the region or the state (**Exhibit 2-5**).

**Exhibit 2-5
DVISD, Peer District, Region and State Economically Disadvantaged
and
LEP Students as a Percent of Total Student Population
2000-01**

District	Economically Disadvantaged Students	LEP Students
Eanes	3.0%	1.6%
Georgetown	26.0%	5.6%
Hays	35.0%	7.4%
Bastrop	40.0%	6.8%
San Marcos	54.0%	6.5%
Lockhart	50.0%	3.3%
Manor	58.0%	13.8%
Del Valle	64.0%	16.0%
Region 13	36.0%	9.0%
State	49.0%	14.0%

Source: 2000-01 TEA, PEIMS Reports.

DVISD's student attendance rate has improved slightly (0.3 percent) since the 1995-96 school year (**Exhibit 2-6**). DVISD's attendance rate fell below the state and region between 1995-96 and 1998-99. Compared to its peer

districts, DVISD had the lowest attendance rate in 1995-96, 1996-97 and 1998-99 and the second lowest attendance rate in 1997-98.

Exhibit 2-6
Attendance Rate of DVISD Students Compared to
Peer Districts, Region and State
1995-96 to 1998-99

District	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Del Valle	93.7%	93.0%	94.0%	94.0%
San Marcos	93.8%	93.9%	93.9%	94.3%
Bastrop	94.3%	94.9%	95.0%	94.9%
Lockhart	95.2%	95.3%	95.6%	95.1%
Manor	95.5%	95.2%	95.3%	94.8%
Hays	95.6%	95.6%	95.1%	95.0%
Georgetown	96.0%	96.0%	95.9%	96.0%
Eanes	96.4%	96.6%	96.3%	96.1%
Region 13	94.9%	95.1%	95.2%	95.1%
State	95.1%	95.2%	95.3%	95.4%

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

Exhibit 2-7 shows that DVISD's annual dropout rate has decreased from 1.9 percent to 1.2 percent since 1995-1996. San Marcos ISD and Bastrop ISD experienced similar declines in their dropout rates during this period.

Exhibit 2-7
Dropout Rate for DVISD, Peer Districts, Region and State
1995-96 to 1998-99

District	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	Percent Change
Eanes	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.00%
Lockhart	0.2%	1.5%	0.9%	1.4%	1.20%
Hays	0.5%	0.8%	1.6%	0.3%	(0.20%)
Georgetown	0.6%	0.9%	1.3%	0.5%	(0.10%)
Manor	1.7%	1.8%	1.0%	1.2%	(0.50%)

Del Valle	1.9%	1.3%	1.6%	1.2%	(0.70%)
San Marcos	2.7%	1.1%	2.5%	2.0%	(0.70%)
Bastrop	2.7%	1.6%	2.1%	2.0%	(0.70%)
Region 13	1.4%	1.3%	1.4%	1.9%	0.50%
State	1.8%	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%	(0.20%)

*Source: 1995-96 through 1998-99 TEA, AEIS Reports.
AEIS dropout rates are calculated for the prior school year.*

Exhibit 2-8 compares the DVISD dropout rate by ethnicity from 1995-96 through 1998-99. Hispanic students had the highest dropout rate from 1995-96 to 1998-99. In 1998-99, the Hispanic dropout rate (1.5 percent) was almost double the dropout rate for African American students. The dropout rate for each ethnic group was lower in 1998-99 than in the period from 1996-97 to 1997-98. Overall, dropout rates increased for African American students, remained the same for Anglo students and decreased for Hispanic students in the period from 1995-96 to 1998-99.

**Exhibit 2-8
Dropout Rates for DVISD by Ethnicity
1995-96 to 1998-99**

Ethnic Group	1995-96	1996-97	1997-1998	1998-99	Percent Change
African American	0.7%	0.9%	1.8%	0.8%	0.10%
Anglo	1.0%	1.0%	1.2%	1.0%	0.00%
Hispanic	2.7%	1.7%	1.9%	1.5%	(1.2%)

*Source: 1995-96 through 1998-99 TEA, AEIS Reports.
AEIS dropout rates are calculated for the prior school year.*

Exhibit 2-9 compares the 1995-96 to 1998-99 student-teacher ratios in DVISD, Region 13 and the state. The DVISD student-teacher ratio was lower in 1998-99 than both Region 13 and the state. Both the region and the state have experienced decreased student-teacher ratios during this four year period, while DVISD's student-teacher ratio has increased.

**Exhibit 2-9
Student-Teacher Ratio in DVISD, Region and State
1997-98 to 2000-01**

District	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change
Del Valle	13.1:1	13.6:1	13.9:1	13.8:1	6.2%
Region 13	14.9:1	14.8:1	14.3:1	14.3:1	(4.7%)
State	15.3:1	15.2:1	14.9:1	14.9:1	(3.9%)

Source: 1997-98 through 1999-2000 TEA, AEIS Reports and PEIMS 2000-01.

Exhibit 2-10 shows the 1999-2000 student-teacher ratios in DVISD, the peer districts, Region 13 and the state. DVISD ranks fifth lowest when compared to its peer districts.

Exhibit 2-10
Student-Teacher Ratio in DVISD, Peer Districts, Region and State
2000-01

District	Student Teacher Ratio
Manor	13.9:1
Georgetown	13.1:1
Eanes	13.2:1
Bastrop	13.5:1
Del Valle	13.8:1
San Marcos	14.7:1
Lockhart	14.7:1
Hays	15.6:1
Region 13	14.3:1
State	14.9:1

Source: 2000-01 TEA, PEIMS Reports.

Of its total 1999-2000 total budgeted expenditures, DVISD spent 50.7 percent for direct classroom instruction and other activities related to teaching students. Compared to its peer districts, DVISD has the third highest percentage of total expenditures on classroom instruction (**Exhibit 2-11**).

Two of the peer districts, Georgetown and San Marcos, dedicate a greater percentage of their budgets to classroom expenditures than DVISD, which also dedicates a smaller percentage than the region and the state.

Exhibit 2-11
DVISD, Peer District, Region and State Classroom Instruction
Expenditures
as a Percent of Total Budgeted Expenditures
2000-2001

District	Total Expenditures	Classroom Instruction Expenditures	Classroom Instruction Expenditures as a Percent of Total Budgeted Expenditures
Manor	\$22,579,282	\$9,751,001	43.2%
Lockhart	\$26,932,816	\$13,380,518	49.7%
Del Valle	\$42,815,072	\$20,782,324	48.5%
Bastrop	\$42,862,026	\$21,150,991	49.3%
San Marcos	\$44,832,297	\$23,541,796	52.5%
Hays	\$50,169,641	\$22,044,764	43.9%
Georgetown	\$54,772,098	\$28,311,720	51.7%
Eanes	\$61,880,735	\$30,203,163	48.8%
Region 13	\$1,936,958,605	\$938,709,205	48.5%
State	\$27,056,013,935	\$13,871,475,883	51.3%

Source: 2000-01 TEA, PEIMS.

DVISD's expenditures by program area reflect an increase in regular education spending as a percentage of the total instructional budget between 1995-96 and 1999-2000. All other DVISD programs declined as a percentage of the district's total budget during this period. (**Exhibit 2-12**). These trends vary from statewide percentages, which decreased in regular education and increased in all special program areas except for compensatory education during the same time period.

Exhibit 2-12
DVISD Instructional Program Expenditures
as a Percent of Total Budgeted Instructional Operating Expenditures
1996-97 to 2000-01

Program	1996-1997	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change
Regular education	74.7%	76.1%	76.5%	81.6%	79.7%	6.7%
Special education	9.9%	8.7%	8.6%	9.5%	8.1%	(18.2%)
Compensatory education	10.2%	10.2%	10.0%	5.4%	9.5%	(6.9%)
Career and Technology education	3.5%	3.3%	3.3%	2.3%	2.4%	(31.4%)
Bilingual/ESL education	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%	0.9%	0.3%	(70.0%)
Gifted and Talented education	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.3%	0.0%	(100.0%)

Source: 1996-97 through 1999-2000 TEA, AEIS Reports and PEIMS 2000-01.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

This chapter examines the educational service delivery and academic performance measures of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in eight sections:

A. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

The DVISD Curriculum and Instruction Department develops and modifies curriculum, delivers educational services and evaluates instructional programs. Two executive directors of curriculum and instruction head this department. One curriculum director is responsible for elementary curriculum and the other is responsible for middle and secondary curriculum. Both curriculum directors report to the district superintendent. Elementary principals and secondary principals report jointly to the superintendent and the curriculum directors. The director of Special Services (special education) reports to both curriculum directors.

FINDING

The district's curriculum is in alignment with the state-mandated curriculum, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and state-mandated assessment, the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). Teachers work on curriculum development and revision within their departments in addition to attending curriculum workshops.

DVISD teachers assume leadership roles in curriculum revision. Principals reported that teachers understand the curriculum requirements at their grade level as well as within the subject matter they teach. Both the elementary and secondary curriculum directors cited district efforts to engage teachers in curriculum alignment activities.

A districtwide process is in place to help teachers understand and communicate student performance issues. Faculty members work to analyze test results. Curriculum directors organize meetings and workshops on student performance. Teachers work outside of the regular school day, attending workshops on instructional strategies, testing information, benchmarking (establishing goals for student achievement at a specific level) and revising curriculum.

Elementary campus committees composed of teachers from each grade level go through an annual curriculum review and revision in collaboration with their principals. These committees develop learning objectives and

skills to be introduced and mastered at each grade level. The committees also highlight areas that will be tested by TAAS for each grade level. Additionally, sample problems for beginning teachers are developed in order to demonstrate exactly what "test-taking tools" must be taught.

At the secondary level, individual department members review and revise curriculum documents with the assistance of the secondary curriculum director. There is also a district schedule for revising secondary curriculum.

COMMENDATION

Curriculum is aligned at the elementary and secondary level with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS).

FINDING

DVISD has created a team approach to the development and implementation of curriculum and instruction. The elementary and secondary curriculum directors coordinate all efforts to update and improve curriculum and instruction with active support from the campus principals. Leadership in curriculum and instruction includes the principals having a clear understanding of academic content areas. Principals monitor the implementation of curriculum in each classroom and student academic performance.

Elementary principals regularly visit classrooms to ensure that the district's curriculum is being taught. This observation is a standard part of the teacher appraisal process. The senior high school principal also observes instruction and makes comments on curriculum. Principals at all grade levels commend classroom teachers who are teaching the district curriculum. Principals also recommend ways to expand and improve instruction, if needed.

COMMENDATION

Principals continuously monitor classrooms to ensure the district's curriculum is being taught.

FINDING

DVISD teachers coordinate curriculum within and across all levels of instruction. However, both elementary and secondary curriculum directors are aware of the need for greater cross-grade coordination. The decline in student TAAS scores from the elementary to the middle and secondary

level indicates a need for the district to bridge the student performance gap between the elementary and middle/secondary grades. Although sixth grade students achieve above the state average in TAAS reading and mathematics, seventh grade students perform below the state average.

The middle school employs an English language arts and mathematics coordinator. Both coordinators analyze student test results. These coordinators expressed concern about the districtwide level of student achievement. The coordinators have indicated a willingness to work toward improving student achievement and support the need to collaborate with teachers. The mathematics coordinator said that ninth grade teachers are working with seventh grade teachers to vertically align mathematics curriculum. Sixth grade teachers will soon meet with seventh grade teachers to begin the curriculum alignment process at that grade level.

The Socorro school district in El Paso, Texas serves a student population that is 91 percent Hispanic. The district has received a number of awards for improving student achievement, including status as a recognized school district. One of Socorro's strategies for improving student achievement is through easing student transitions from elementary to middle and high school by vertical alignment and vertical teaming. In vertical alignment and vertical teaming, staff and students at one grade level are teamed with staff and students at the next grade level. For example, elementary students and teachers are teamed with their feeder middle schools to ensure that curriculum and instruction are consistent, not only within elementary grades but across elementary and middle school grade levels.

Recommendation 10:

Develop and implement strategies to ensure the vertical alignment of curriculum and instruction across grades levels and the vertical teaming of elementary, middle and secondary teachers.

DVISD recently reviewed its mathematics curriculum to identify areas that need to be revised. The curriculum directors plan to similarly review the district's English language arts curriculum in the future. There remains a need to review and revise the district's science and social studies curriculum. The elementary and secondary curriculum directors should analyze TAAS test scores, develop ways in which departments could respond to identified needs, encourage a problem-solving effort and set goals for the faculty to achieve.

Grade level leaders should present a summary of the goals at each grade level. Particular emphasis should be placed on the transition points between grades six and seven and grades eight and nine. At the conclusion

of the process, teachers would understand what students should have learned in the prior grade and what the next grade level expects students to know. Teachers would learn students' strengths and weaknesses. Faculty would have a better understanding of the curriculum paths that students follow. Faculty would be better able to plan for classroom activities. All staff members would benefit from the opportunity to work together on the development, coordination and articulation of curriculum within and across grade levels. This process should be built into school schedules on a continuing basis so that the district can respond to curriculum changes at the state level.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The elementary and secondary curriculum directors research ways to address the need for elementary and secondary faculty to form vertical teams and vertically align the district's curriculum; e.g., reviewing best practices from other school districts.	June 2001
2.	The curriculum directors develop strategies to incorporate the best practices available for vertical curriculum alignment and vertical teaming.	July 2001
3.	The curriculum directors present the strategies to the superintendent and the school faculty.	July 2001
4.	The curriculum directors implement the strategies.	August 2001
5.	The curriculum directors monitor the implementation of the strategies and make any needed adjustments.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Educational technology instruction varies significantly across DVISD schools. Students in one school learn computer curriculum objectives based on the classroom experience and knowledge of their teacher. Students in another school learn a completely different set of objectives, based on the knowledge and expertise of that teacher. There is a wide variety of instructional activities in educational technology across the district's campuses.

Students are taught keyboarding skills in junior high. At the junior high level, the high school TEKS requirements for educational technology are incorporated into the computer keyboarding class so that students may

receive high school academic credit. A course in basic computer literacy is also available to DVISD students who do not wish to receive academic credit.

At this point, students who receive academic credit are ready for computer applications, business computer information systems or computer science. Technology training is incorporated into academic content areas at the high school. These students have access to technology throughout the school day.

Students in any given grade within the district may be required to learn keyboarding skills at one school but not at another school. DVISD faculty reported confusion about at what grade level it was necessary to teach keyboarding. The development of keyboarding skills should begin in Grades K-2, with continued skill development in grades 3-8. Secondary level teachers also expressed concern about districtwide variations in educational technology curriculum and instruction.

The Hamilton school district in Hamilton County, Texas uses long-term planning to meet state recommendations for educational technology as contained in the Texas Education Agency's *Long-Range Plan for Technology* (www.tea.state.tx.us/technology/). The district has included a mission statement, curriculum goals and evaluation/assessment procedures in its technology plan. It has engaged faculty and technology staff in the process of developing this plan. The district's technology plan makes recommendations in four key areas: teaching and learning, educator preparation and development, administration and support services and infrastructure for technology. The district's technology coordinator and technology committee update the plan on a regular basis.

Recommendation 11:

Develop strategies that provide consistent addresses educational technology curriculum and instruction on every campus.

There is a need to provide consistent curriculum and instruction in educational technology, as outlined in the state-mandated curriculum, the TEKS, so that all students can be proficient. The district should develop strategies to develop, implement and evaluate consistent educational technology curriculum and instruction on every campus.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The curriculum directors organize a committee of representatives of elementary and secondary faculty and the technology department.	June 2001
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2.	The committee develops strategies which follow the TEKS for educational technology and the TEA <i>Long-Range Plan for Educational Technology</i> .	June-July 2001
3.	The staff implement the strategies in all classrooms.	August 2001
4.	The curriculum directors evaluate the implementation of the strategies and make any needed adjustments.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The position of deputy assistant superintendent for Curriculum has been vacant since the fall of 2000-01. When this deputy superintendent resigned, the position was not filled. The current staff have assumed the responsibilities of the vacant deputy superintendent position.

There are currently two executive directors of curriculum, the executive director of Elementary Curriculum and the executive director of Secondary Curriculum. Each director develops curriculum and coordinates instructional activities at her level. The elementary curriculum director manages all disciplinary referrals for the elementary level, oversees the district's bilingual education program, supervises the director of Special Services and elementary attendance officer and manages all programs relating to the elementary instruction department.

The secondary curriculum director manages all disciplinary referrals for the middle and secondary level and the Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program. The director also supervises the career and technology education director, the TLC/Even Start coordinator, director of Special Services and secondary attendance/drop-out coordinator.

Both curriculum directors are adequately performing the duties formerly assigned to the deputy superintendent for Curriculum position.

Recommendation 12:

Eliminate the position of deputy assistant superintendent for curriculum.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent eliminates the position of deputy assistant superintendent for Curriculum in budget planning for 2001-2002.	June 2001
2.	The superintendent monitors whether the position should be restored to address growth in student enrollment.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Eliminate the position of deputy assistant superintendent for curriculum.	\$78,000	\$78,000	\$78,000	\$78,000	\$78,000

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

This chapter examines the educational service delivery and academic performance measures of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in eight sections:

B. STUDENT PERFORMANCE

DVISD focuses curriculum and instruction on the core academic subject areas as defined by the Texas Education Code (TEC), Section 4.002: reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies. The percentage of time allocated to elementary education subject areas is based on the needs of the students by class and grade level. These allocations are revised annually depending on testing data. The majority of the school day is spent in language arts and mathematics blocks, especially in the elementary grades. The district integrates science with mathematics and social studies through language arts when appropriate and teaches it as a separate subject when appropriate. Students having difficulty learning to read spend more time during the school day in English language arts, which is provided through regular classroom instruction, tutoring and special classes until progress is made. The same approach is used for students struggling with mathematics.

In grades 9-12, students must complete the requirements for the minimum high school program as outlined in State Board of Education (SBOE) rule, Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapter 19, Section 74.11. Students may take additional coursework in order to graduate under the recommended (TAC Section 74.12) or advanced (TAC Section 74.13) high school program.

FINDING

DVISD has received numerous types of grants, awards and recognition at the elementary, junior high and high school levels. All of the district's elementary schools have received the Texas Successful Schools Award, some more than once. The Texas Successful Schools Award is awarded by TEA to schools that have demonstrated high levels of sustained academic success.

The district's campuses have been the recipients of the following grants, awards and recognition during the past five years.

DEL VALLE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

- Texas Successful Schools Award
- Ninth Grade Initiative Grant
- Resources from Texas Restaurant Association for its Culinary Arts and Hospitality Program
- San Marcos Civic Foundation Grants to improve the Dyslexia Program

DEL VALLE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

- University of Texas Grant to fund a computer class for web mastering
- TEA Middle School Grant for Texas After School Initiative Program (MARS)
- San Marcos Civic Foundation Grants to improve the Dyslexia Program

SMITH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- 4-Star Rating by Texas Monthly magazine
- Recognized and Exemplary Ratings
- Texas Successful Schools Award
- TEXAS BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL
- NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL
- Level I Greater Austin Quality Award for two years
- Level II Greater Austin Quality Award
- Title I Commended, Honored and Distinguished Campus
- Site for Governor Bush's Kickoff for the State Reading Initiative
- Recognized by the Austin American Statesman as one of the top rated schools in Region 13
- Adopt-A-School's Excellent Partnership Award
- Campus principal was named as a finalist for National Distinguished Principal Award
- Numerous grants from businesses and TEA for technology

POPHAM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- Recognized Rating
- Model Discipline Program: Popham Pride
- Level I Greater Austin Quality Award
- Level II Greater Austin Quality Award
- Keep Austin Beautiful Award - citation for outstanding achievement
- National Award for Environmental Stewardship
- Blackland Prairie Restoration Project from Texas Parks and Wildlife
- International Inclusion for Children with Disabilities Award

- Governor's Community Achievement-Best in the State Award
- Super Mentor Award
- Top Volunteer Awards
- Excellent Partnership Award
- Texas Successful Schools Award

HILLCREST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- Recognized Ratings for four years
- Texas A&M University recognition for significant progress with African American students
- Title I Commended and Honored Campus
- Level I Greater Austin Quality Award for two years
- Level II Greater Austin Quality Award
- Model School of Reading Renaissance, Institute for Academic Excellence
- 3-Star Rating by Texas Monthly magazine
- Presidential Award for Math Teacher for the State of Texas
- Terrell H. Bell National Principal Award. One of only six elementary principals in the nation
- TEXAS BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL
- NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL
- Excellent Partnership Award
- Numerous grants for technology
- Recognized by Austin American Statesman as an Outstanding Community Leader
- Recognized by the Austin American Statesman as one of the top rated schools in Region 13
- Site for the announcement of Governor Bush's Plan to End Social Promotion

BATY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- 3-Star Rating by Texas Monthly
- Recognized and Exemplary Ratings by TEA for four years
- Texas Successful Schools Award
- TEXAS BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL
- Nominee for NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL (Winners will be announced in May 2001)
- Level I Greater Austin Quality Award
- Level II Greater Austin Quality Award
- Title I Commended Campus
- District Parent Volunteer of Year Award
- District Mentor of the Year Award
- Numerous grants for reading and technology

HORNSBY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- Recognized Ratings
- Level I Greater Austin Quality Award
- Level II Greater Austin Quality Award
- 3-Star Rating by Texas Monthly
- Texas Successful Schools Award
- Recognized by the Austin American Statesman as one of the top rated schools in Region 13
- Title I Commended Campus
- Partnership for Environmental Studies with the University of Texas

Other Awards Received by DVISD Elementary Schools

- Optional Extended Year Grant for \$100,000 per year for 5+ years
- At-Risk Counselor's Grant for \$165,000+ per year for 5+ years
- Academics 2000 Grant for \$200,000 + per year for 3 years
- Mathematics and Science Educational Consortium Grant for five years
- San Marcos Civic Foundation Grants for the improvement of reading (Dyslexia Program)

COMMENDATION

DVISD's campuses, particularly its elementary schools, have received numerous grants, awards and recognition.

FINDING

DVISD student scores on the TAAS have steadily improved during the past five years, but dropped from 1998-99 to 1999-2000. An examination of the district's five-year TAAS performance trends is shown in **Exhibit 2-13**. This exhibit shows that the percentage of all DVISD students passing the reading, writing and mathematics TAAS (all grade levels) steadily improved from 1995-96 to 1998-1999. Between 1999-2000 and 1999-2000, overall DVISD student performance increased by 11 percentage points in reading, 12 percentage points in mathematics and 8.7 percentage points in writing. However, student performance on the TAAS dropped from 1998-99 to 1999-2000 in most subjects tested, particularly among minority students.

DVISD Anglo students' scores in TAAS reading, mathematics and writing improved significantly between 1995-96 and 1999-2000, an improvement trend not found for low income or ethnic minority students. During this five year period, overall Anglo student performance increased by 16.7

percentage points in reading, 18.9 percentage points in mathematics and 17.3 percentage points in writing.

DVISD Hispanic student test scores improved between 1995-96 and 1998-99 and declined in 1999-2000. Between 1995-96 and 1999-2000, overall Hispanic student performance increased by 13.5 percentage points in reading, 14.8 percentage points in mathematics and 14.2 percentage points in writing.

The percentage of DVISD African American students passing TAAS improved from 1995-96 through 1998-1999, then declined in 1999-2000. Between 1995-96 and 1999-2000, overall African American student performance increased by 12.6 percentage points in reading, 23.2 percentage points in mathematics and 10.6 percentage points in writing. African American student scores declined in reading and writing between 1998-99 and 1999-2000.

The TAAS scores of DVISD economically disadvantaged students improved in reading, mathematics and writing until 1998-99, then declined in 1999-2000, similar to performance trends for the district's ethnic minority students. During the five year period from 1995-96 to 1999-2000, economically disadvantaged student performance increased by 13.5 percentage points in reading, 12.5 percentage points in mathematics and 10.4 percentage points in writing. Economically disadvantaged student scores declined in reading, mathematics and writing between 1998-99 and 1999-2000.

Exhibit 2-13
Percent of DVISD Students Passing TAAS, All Grade Levels
1995-96 to 1999-2000

All Students					
Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Reading	76.8%	84.1%	87.5%	88.2%	87.3%
Math	73.7%	80.2%	85.3%	86.1%	85.7%
Writing	75.4%	82.7%	84.9%	85.2%	84.1%
Anglo Students					
Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Reading	85.0%	90.4%	92.7%	92.3%	93.5%
Math	83.6%	89.0%	91.9%	90.6%	92.6%
Writing	86.8%	90.8%	91.6%	89.2%	92.7%

Hispanic Students					
Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Reading	72.1%	81.8%	85.0%	86.8%	85.6%
Math	69.6%	76.4%	83.5%	84.2%	84.4%
Writing	67.4%	79.9%	82.0%	82.6%	81.6%
Reading	71.1%	76.8%	85.3%	85.5%	83.7%
Math	61.2%	72.1%	76.7%	84.2%	79.3%
Writing	74.7%	73.4%	82.6%	85.3%	80.1%
Economically Disadvantaged Students					
Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Reading	70.9%	80.1%	85.7%	85.6%	84.4%
Math	70.4%	76.0%	83.7%	84.2%	82.9%
Writing	70.7%	75.7%	83.5%	82.0%	81.1%

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

DVISD TAAS scores vary not only by ethnicity and income level, but also across grade levels. **Exhibit 2-14** shows that DVISD elementary students improved in all TAAS categories between 1995-96 and 1999-2000, with some areas dropping in 1999-2000. Reading scores increased more than mathematics scores during this period.

Exhibit 2-14
Percent of DVISD Elementary Students Passing TAAS
1995-96 to 1999-2000

Grade/Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
3 rd Reading	77.2%	83.6%	89.7%	94.9%	90.6%
3 rd Math	77.7%	81.7%	84.0%	91.6%	80.5%
4 th Reading	76.0%	87.4%	93.8%	92.6%	90.6%
4 th Writing	85.6%	87.0%	92.0%	91.0%	90.5%
4 th Math	83.8%	89.1%	90.0%	91.5%	85.9%
5 th Reading	86.3%	90.0%	94.6%	91.7%	93.7%
5 th Math	87.8%	95.7%	94.3%	94.5%	92.5%

6 th Reading	78.9%	89.2%	91.4%	90.9%	92.8%
6 th Math	88.4%	85.7%	97.2%	92.8%	93.0%

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

DVISD middle (grades 7 and 8) and high school (grades 9 to 12) TAAS scores fell below the state average in all categories in 1999-2000. DVISD fell significantly below the state average in 8th grade TAAS social studies, reading, writing, mathematics and 10th grade TAAS mathematics. Eighth grade social studies performance also fell below the state average (**Exhibit 2-15**).

Exhibit 2-15
Percent of DVISD and State
Middle and High School Students Passing TAAS
1999-2000

Grade/Subject	Del Valle	State Average	Difference*
7 th Reading	78.5%	83.5%	(5.0%)
7 th Math	85.8%	88.1%	(2.3%)
8 th Reading	78.4%	89.6%	(11.2%)
8 th Writing	72.6%	84.3%	(11.7%)
8 th Math	81.3%	90.2%	(8.9%)
8 th Science	82.9%	88.2%	(5.3%)
8 th Social Studies	51.6%	71.8%	(20.2%)
10 th Reading	86.3%	90.3%	(4.0%)
10 th Writing	87.9%	90.7%	(2.8%)
10 th Math	80.3%	86.8%	(6.5%)

Source: 1999-2000 TEA, AEIS Reports.

*Difference between DVISD score and the state average.

Statewide, a variety of school districts have developed targeted strategies to improve student test scores. In Hamilton ISD in Hamilton County, increased offerings of advanced placement (AP) courses and increased student enrollment in extra- and co-curricular activities as well as strategies to improve student attendance have resulted in improved TAAS performance. Comal ISD in Comal County has used several strategies to

improve student performance, including allocating a majority of its federal funding to remedial reading and benchmark testing to determine what a student or group of students has or has not mastered. Socorro ISD in El Paso, Texas uses year-round schools and site-based management to increase student achievement. This district also forms cooperative partnerships to improve its grant funding possibilities, in order to receive additional funds to boost student achievement.

Recommendation 13:

Develop targeted strategies to improve TAAS scores at the middle and secondary grade levels.

The elementary and secondary curriculum director should assemble all DVISD teachers to identify strategies for improving middle and secondary TAAS scores. The curriculum directors may decide to expand the process that is currently being used in the district to include teachers of grade eight in revising curriculum and establishing goals at individual grade levels. DVISD staff could review successful practices from other districts.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The curriculum directors develop targeted strategies for improving middle and secondary TAAS scores.	June 2001
2.	The curriculum directors present the targeted strategies for improving TAAS scores to the superintendent.	July 2001
3.	The curriculum directors implement the strategies.	August 2001
4.	The curriculum directors monitor implementation of the strategies.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

DVISD ranks below regional, state and peer district averages in terms of TAAS participation.

Exhibit 2-16 details TAAS participation for DVISD, the peer districts, the region and the state between 1997-98 and 1999-2000. DVISD ranks lowest when compared to the state, the region and the peer districts in terms of TAAS participation in each of the three school years examined.

DVISD also had a lower rate of TAAS participation in 1999-2000 (82 percent) than in 1997-98 (84.3 percent). This percentage is significantly lower than the state participation rate of 91.1 percent in 1997-98 and 90.2 percent in 1999-2000.

**Exhibit 2-16
DVISD, Peer Districts, Region and State TAAS Participation
1997-98 to 1999-2000**

District	Percent Tested		
	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Del Valle	84.3%	77.4%	82.0%
Manor	90.0%	88.6%	89.2%
Bastrop	92.0%	91.6%	91.2%
San Marcos	92.0%	89.5%	91.2%
Hays	92.5%	91.4%	92.4%
Lockhart	95.0%	92.6%	88.6%
Georgetown	95.8%	95.7%	95.3%
Eanes	97.4%	97.5%	97.2%
Region 13	93.2%	91.6%	91.4%
State	91.1%	89.4%	90.2%

Source: 1997-98 through 1999-2000 TEA, AEIS Reports.

Exhibit 2-17 details TAAS participation by ethnicity for DVISD, its peer districts, the region and the state. DVISD had the lowest percentage of African American, Hispanic, Anglo and Native American student participation in TAAS of the districts examined. DVISD ranked second in the percentage of Asian/Pacific Islander participation in TAAS.

**Exhibit 2-17
DVISD, Peer District, Region and State TAAS Participation by
Ethnicity
1999-2000**

District	African American	Hispanic	Anglo	Native American	Asian/Pacific Islanders
Del Valle	81.0%	82.1%	81.8%	81.3%	97.1%

Georgetown	81.6%	91.5%	97.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Bastrop	82.1%	88.1%	94.0%	94.1%	93.5%
Lockhart	83.2%	86.4%	92.0%	X*	100.0%
San Marcos	84.5%	89.4%	95.6%	X*	96.3%
Manor	87.1%	89.5%	90.1%	X*	X*
Hays	93.1%	88.7%	95.6%	100.0%	90.9%
Eanes	93.8%	94.4%	97.6%	100.0%	92.3%
Region 13	85.1%	86.7%	95.1%	92.7%	92.6%
State	86.6%	87.8%	93.4%	89.5%	92.4%

Source: 1999-2000 TEA, AEIS Reports.

*Small or nonexistent student group.

Exhibit 2-18 compares DVISD economically disadvantaged student participation in TAAS with that of the state, the region and the peer districts. DVISD's participation rate for these students is significantly lower than all of the entities listed.

Exhibit 2-18
TAAS Participation by Economically Disadvantaged Students
DVISD, Peer Districts, Region and State
1999-2000

District	Percent
Del Valle	79.4%
Lockhart	84.3%
Manor	85.1%
Bastrop	85.4%
Hays	86.9%
San Marcos	88.0%
Georgetown	89.2%
Eanes	93.3%
Region 13	84.5%
State	84.1%

Source: 1999-2000 TEA, AEIS Reports.

Admission, Review and Dismissal(ARD) committee exemptions from TAAS are granted to special education students in a process controlled by the ARD committee on each campus. Each special education student receives a progress evaluation by the ARD committee, which includes the regular education teacher, the special education teacher, an assessment staff person and an administrator who is empowered to commit the school district to provide the services determined necessary by the ARD committee.

The Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) on each campus grants individual bilingual/ESL students who are recent, unschooled immigrants a one-time LEP exemption from the TAAS. This committee is comprised of the same types of positions as the ARD committee but instead of a special education teacher, the LPAC committee includes a bilingual or ESL teacher.

Exhibit 2-19 shows that DVISD has the highest number of TAAS exemptions for special education students and LEP students among the school districts reviewed. ARD and LEP exemptions from TAAS in DVISD are significantly larger than in the peer districts, region and state.

Exhibit 2-19
Limited English Proficient and Special Education Exemptions from TAAS
DVISD, Peer Districts, Region and State
1999-2000

District	Special Education (ARD) Exemptions	Limited English Proficient (LPAC) Exemptions
Eanes	1.4%	0.4%
Georgetown	3.1%	0.2%
Hays	5.5%	0.4%
Bastrop	6.5%	0.4%
San Marcos	7.1%	0.2%
Manor	9.0%	0.4%
Del Valle	13.0%	2.6%
Region 13	6.0%	1.0%
State	7.1%	1.3%

Source: 1999-2000 TEA, AEIS Reports.

Exhibit 2-20 illustrates that ARD exemptions from TAAS for DVISD special education students have increased in the district's Hispanic, Anglo and Native American/Pacific Islander populations over the two-year time period examined. LEP exemptions from TAAS have decreased in the Hispanic student population and in the Native American and Asian/Pacific Islander student populations during this same time period.

Exhibit 2-20
DVISD ARD and LEP Exemptions from TAAS by Demographic Subgroup
1998-99 to 1999-2000

Category	African American		Hispanic		Anglo		Native American Asian/Pacific Islander	
	1998-99	1999-2000	1998-99	1999-2000	1998-99	1999-2000	1998-99	1999-2000
ARD Exempted	15.5%	15.4%	10.4%	11.9%	12.8%	15.2%	5.9%	12.5%
LEP Exempted	0.2%	0.0%	13.9%	4.0%	0.3%	0.3%	14.7%	2.9%

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

Exhibit 2-21 shows ARD exemptions for economically disadvantaged students increased in the one year period between 1998-99 and 1999-2000. LEP exemptions for economically disadvantaged students decreased during this same time period.

Exhibit 2-21
Percent of DVISD Economically Disadvantaged Students Exempted from TAAS
1998-99 to 1999-2000

Category	1998-99	1999-2000	Percent Change
ARD Exempted	14.8%	15.8%	7%
LEP Exempted	11.5%	2.6%	(77%)

Source: 1998-99 through 1999-2000 TEA, AEIS Reports. Percent change is calculated by subtracting the 1998-99 value from the 1999-2000 value and dividing by the 1998-99 value.

State law, TEC Section 39.027, outlines the conditions under which students of limited English proficiency or who are enrolled in special education may be exempted from the TAAS tests. The law also provides for review by the Texas Education Agency of districts whose TAAS exemptions equal more than five percent of the students in special education, if the total Average Daily Attendance (ADA) is at least 1,600. Districts with an ADA of 190-1599 are subject to TEA review if more than 10 percent of the number of students enrolled in special education are exempted from TAAS. Districts with an ADA of less than 189 whose TAAS exemptions equal more than ten percent of the students in the special education program, or which serve at least five students in special education, are also subject to TEA review.

Several school districts across Texas have developed initiatives to include more students in the TAAS tests. Spring ISD in Houston, Texas is a district that has reduced its TAAS exemptions by focusing on the achievement of all students. The district exempts from TAAS only those students who are not being prepared on grade-level objectives. By testing all students, including those of limited English proficiency or who are enrolled in special education, the district has an exemption rate that is below the state average.

Recommendation 14:

Increase the district's emphasis on testing all students.

DVISD should regularly and continuously review its TAAS exemption process. Members of the elementary, junior and senior high school faculty should participate in this process. The staff should collaborate on a regular and continuing basis to review and restructure the process of exempting students from TAAS. Outside experts, such as the Region 13 Education Service Center should be asked to work with the district on examination and revision of its TAAS exemption process.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The elementary and secondary curriculum directors and director of Special Services examine methods used by other districts to reduce TAAS exemptions and request assistance from Region 13 to review and revise the district's TAAS exemption process.	June 2001
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2.	The curriculum directors and director of Special Services develop strategies at each campus to reduce TAAS exemptions.	June-July 2001
3.	The curriculum directors and director of Special Services present the strategies for including more students in the TAAS to the superintendent.	July 2001
4.	The superintendent approves the strategies.	August 2001
5.	The curriculum directors and director of Special Services implement the strategies.	August 2001
6.	The curriculum directors and director of Special Services review the district's exemption process and data on student exemptions from TAAS.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Over the last five years, DVISD had a significantly lower percentage of students taking advanced academic courses than the region and the state. **Exhibit 2-22** shows a slight increase in the percentage of DVISD students taking advanced academic courses since 1995.

Exhibit 2-22
DVISD, Region and State Enrollment in Advanced Placement Courses
1994-95 to 1998-99

	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Del Valle	8.9%	7.4%	21.1%	9.0%	10.8%
Region 13	17.2%	18.6%	19.6%	19.8%	19.3%
State	15.1%	17.3%	21.0%	18.9%	17.5%

Source: 1994-95 through 1999-2000 TEA, AEIS Reports.

Exhibit 2-23 shows an increase in the number of DVISD students taking advanced academic courses over the five-year period among minority and economically disadvantage students. However, all of these percentages are no more than one fifth of the total student population in each demographic group. Asian and Pacific Islander students had the highest percentage (20

percent) of enrollment in advanced academic courses in 1998-99, followed by Anglo students (16.1 percent). African American students took only half as many advanced academic courses as Asian American students (10.3 percent). Hispanic students took the lowest percentage (8 percent) of advanced academic courses of any demographic group.

Exhibit 2-23
DVISD Students Taking Advanced Academic Courses by Ethnicity
and Economic Disadvantage Status
1994-95 to 1998-99

	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Hispanic Students	5.7%	4.2%	19.7%	6.0%	8.0%
Economically Disadvantaged Students	6.0%	3.8%	19.8%	4.4%	9.1%
African American Students	7.1%	11.9%	22.9%	6.2%	10.3%
Anglo Students	13.6%	9.7%	22.5%	14.3%	16.1%
Asian/Pacific Islander Students	16.7%	15.8%	29.4%	26.3%	20.0%

Source: 1994-95 through 1999-2000 TEA, AEIS Reports

Students take college entrance examinations such as the SAT as part of the college admissions process. **Exhibit 2-24** shows that the DVISD Mean (average) SAT I score consistently ranks below the state and regional scores for all years examined. The DVISD class of 1995 and 1998 ranked seventh; the class of 1996 ranked sixth; and the class of 1997 and 1999 ranked last when compared to the peer districts.

Exhibit 2-24
Mean* SAT I Score for DVISD, Peer Districts, Region and State
Classes of 1995 to 1999

District	Class of 1995	Class of 1996	Class of 1997	Class of 1998	Class of 1999
Manor	814	886	949	913	908
Del Valle	854	934	919	916	902
Lockhart	856	921	945	946	941
Hays	904	1,027	1,030	1,020	1,032
San Marcos	916	1,008	1,001	979	954

Bastrop	953	985	976	977	1,036
Georgetown	988	1,099	1,068	1,044	1,055
Eanes	1,064	1,131	1,145	1,147	1,177
Region 13	935	1,037	1,038	1,037	1,041
State	891	993	992	992	989

Source: 1996-97 through 1999-2000 TEA, AEIS Reports.

**Average.*

The College Board, the national organization responsible for administering the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) that is part of the college admissions process, reports that there is a strong relationship between the number of advanced academic courses a student takes and their performance on college entrance examinations. On its web site (www.collegeboard.org), the College Board states that "The best ways to get ready for the SAT I are to take challenging academic courses and to read widely outside school throughout your school years. Taking the PSAT is another excellent way to get ready." Low DVISD student performance on college entrance examinations may be related to the small percentage of students taking advanced academic courses.

Recommendation 15:

Encourage students to take and pass advanced academic courses and college entrance examinations.

To increase the number of students taking advanced academic courses and college entrance examinations, DVISD should develop strategies that ensure increased educational opportunities are available for all student groups.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The secondary teachers and secondary curriculum director meet to study current student patterns of participation in advanced academic courses and college entrance examinations.	June 2001
2.	The secondary teachers and secondary curriculum director study strategies to increase student patterns of participation in advanced academic courses and college entrance examinations; e.g., best practices in other districts.	July 2001
3.	The secondary teachers and secondary curriculum director	August

	develop strategies to increase DVISD student participation in advanced academic courses and college entrance examinations.	2001
4.	The secondary teachers and secondary curriculum director implement strategies to increase DVISD student participation in advanced academic courses and college entrance examinations.	September 2001
5.	The secondary curriculum director monitors the implementation of strategies to increase DVISD student participation in advanced academic courses and college entrance examinations and makes any needed adjustments.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

This chapter examines the educational service delivery and academic performance measures of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in eight sections:

C. SPECIAL EDUCATION

The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) mandates a free and appropriate public education for children with disabilities. Accommodations must be made to provide equal learning opportunities to students in special education classes and those with dyslexia, attention deficit disorder and/or hyperactivity.

IDEA was passed to protect the rights of children with disabilities and their parents in educational decision-making. The law requires schools to develop an individual education plan (IEP) for every child who is served in a special education program. The law also requires students to be served in the least restrictive environment and their educational program to be closely aligned to those of children not in special education. The law additionally requires the inclusion of students with disabilities in state and district assessment programs.

An effective special education program should include:

- pre-referral intervention in regular education;
- referral to special education for evaluation;
- comprehensive, nondiscriminatory evaluation;
- initial placement through an Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee meeting;
- educational services and support according to a written Individual Education Plan;
- annual program review;
- three year re-evaluation; and
- provisions for dismissal from the special education program.

DVISD's special education population is composed of 980 students, which represents 14.6 percent of the total student population. The DVISD Special Services Department includes a director of Special Services, an assistant director, 7 licensed specialists in school psychology and 2 educational diagnosticians. The staff also includes one full time and one halftime occupational therapist, one teacher of the visually handicapped,

one teacher of students who are deaf or hard of hearing, one transition coordinator, seven speech pathologists and eight Section 504 coordinators.

All special education teachers are appropriately certified.

DVISD has procedures in place to identify students who need special education services. The special education program provides aides, diagnosticians, therapists, transportation, materials and supplies, adaptive and assistive equipment, contract services and workshops.

Exhibit 2-25 lists the DVISD services provided to special education students.

Exhibit 2-25
List of Programs/Services Offered by DVISD Special Services
2000-01

Current Programs/Services	DVISD Site
Assessment Services	All campuses
Assistive Technology	All campuses
Bilingual Pre-School Program for Children with Disabilities	1 program
Bilingual Resource	2 campuses
Bilingual Speech	2 campuses
Class within a Class	Junior and senior high schools
Community Based Instruction	Senior high school
Content Mastery Focus	All campuses
Homebound	All campuses
Itinerant/Consultative Inclusion	All campuses
Life Skills	3 campuses
Occupational Therapy	All campuses
Orientation and Mobility	All campuses
Physical Therapy	All campuses
Pre-School Program for Children with Disabilities	2 campuses 5 programs
Regional Day School Program for the Deaf	All campuses

Resource Room	All campuses
School Psychology/Counseling	All campuses
Special Transportation	All campuses
Speech Therapy	All campuses
STEP (Social Training and Educational Program)	1 program
Teacher for the Visually Impaired	All campuses
Travis County Correctional Facility Program	1 program
Vocational Adjustment Class	Senior high school

Source: DVISD Special Services Director.

Exhibit 2-26 shows the number and percentage of special education students and teachers in DVISD in comparison to its peer districts. DVISD is tied with Hays CISD and Bastrop ISD for the third highest percentage of students served in special education. It ranks 7 out of the 8 districts examined in percentage of special education teachers.

Exhibit 2-26
Special Education Students and Teachers
DVISD, Peer Districts, Region and State
2000-01

District	Student Enrollment		Teachers (FTEs)	
	Number of Special Education Students	Percent of Total Student Enrollment	Number of Special Education Teachers	Percent of Total Number of Teachers
Manor	393	14.5%	21.3	10.9%
Lockhart	781	17.6%	44.3	14.7%
Georgetown	765	9.5%	60.5	9.9%
Eanes	802	10.8%	75.7	13.5%
Del Valle	980	14.6%	61.9	12.8%
Bastrop	886	13.7%	73.7	15.3%
Hays	1,009	13.6%	43.5	9.1%
San Marcos	1,063	14.9%	54.9	11.3%
Region 13	35,770	12.8%	2,255.7	11.6%

State	492,045	12.1%	25,410.2	10.0%
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Source: Texas Education Agency, 2000-01 PEIMS.

Expenditures for the DVISD special education program are outlined in **Exhibit 2-27**. From 1996-97 to 2000-01, special education expenditures in DVISD increased 40.6 percent, from \$1.4 million to \$1.6 million. The number of students served increased by 15.2 percent. The district's expenditures per special education student served decreased by 18.1 percent during this time period.

Exhibit 2-27
DVISD Budgeted Expenditures for the Special Education Program
1996-97 to 2000-01

Category	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change
Special education expenditures	\$1,466,514	\$1,336,672	\$1,338,255	\$1,823,305	\$1,689,232	15.2%
Special education students served	697	743	852	857	980	40.6%
Expenditures per student	\$2,104	\$1,799	\$1,571	\$2,127	\$1,724	(18.1%)

Source: TEA 1996-97 through 1999-2000 AEIS Reports and 2000-01 PEIMS.

FINDING

DVISD does not evaluate or measure the effectiveness of its special education programs and services. Parents and members of the community have expressed concerns about the district's special education program. These concerns include a lack of resources, inconsistency within the special education program, a decrease in inclusion classes and programmatic changes that occur without parental notice. Without adequate program data and no program evaluation, the special education program director has no way to determine if the program is in compliance with state and federal law and no clear strategies for future improvement.

The director of Special Services reported that she has begun collecting more special education data to improve her decision-making.

Recommendation 16:

Conduct a special education program review and implement internal performance measures to evaluate performance.

The district should consult with Region 13 to determine model special education program evaluations that might prove effective in DVISD. This evaluation should provide accurate information about the effectiveness of DVISD's local programs and suggest where improvements are needed.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Special Services contacts Region 13 to request a list of model program evaluations.	June 2001
2.	The director of Special Services determines a model program evaluation that will work for the district's special education program.	June 2001
3.	The director of Special Services, with assistance from special education staff, conducts the evaluation of DVISD's special education program.	August - December 2001
4.	The director of Special Services informs the school community of the results of the evaluation.	January 2002
5.	The results of the evaluation are used to make changes in the district's special education program.	January 2002
6.	The director of Special Services continually monitors the effects of the changes to the special education program based upon the established performance measures.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

This chapter examines the educational service delivery and academic performance measures of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in eight sections:

D. BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Both Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 89, Subchapter BB (commissioner's rules concerning the state plan for educating LEP students) and DVISD school board policy on bilingual education appear in the district's English as a Second Language (ESL) manual.

A bilingual education program is provided for DIVSD students in pre-kindergarten through grade six. The district's bilingual program is conducted in two of its five elementary schools. Baty Elementary and Hillcrest Elementary currently house the district's bilingual education classes for all elementary students. Pre-kindergarten students determined to need bilingual services may be placed in a half-day program conducted by a bilingual teacher. Kindergarten through grade six students are placed in a self-contained classroom and instructed by a bilingual teacher.

Students in pre-kindergarten and first grade are identified for bilingual education after the administration of an oral language proficiency test. Students in grades two through six are administered two different assessments. First, they are given an oral language proficiency test, which is followed by a reading and writing test. The Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) determines the appropriate placement for the student based on the test results. Students may be placed in a bilingual classroom or receive ESL instruction.

Instruction in Spanish is provided for students in pre-kindergarten through the first semester of the second grade. At the beginning of the second semester of the second grade, the teacher begins the transition of students from Spanish to English for the major part of the day. This process is repeated through grade six.

Students are placed in the ESL program immediately upon exiting the bilingual education program. The ESL program is designed to enable students to transition from the district's language support programs to English-speaking classrooms. Services are available as long as the student needs them.

The ESL program also is available to identified students in pre-kindergarten through grade six. Pre-kindergarten and grade one students are identified by the administration of an oral language proficiency test. Students in grade one through six are identified by the administration of two tests. First they are given an oral language proficiency test, followed by a reading and writing test. Test results are reviewed by the LPAC, and services are provided to those who need them. Pre-kindergarten through sixth grade students are served by an ESL teacher at each campus in a half-day self-contained classroom program. Classroom instruction is provided in English. Students leave the ESL program when they have achieved mastery of the TAAS.

Students at the middle and secondary level are identified for ESL instruction through the Home Language Survey and the IDEA Language Proficiency Test. The district LPAC reviews the results of these instruments and recommends the student's placement. The district follows state guidelines for determining when a student may leave the ESL program. After students leave the ESL program, they are monitored for two years.

Students who qualify for ESL services at the middle school level receive instruction from two bilingual certified teachers. Students in ESL I receive daily instruction for two periods a day. ESL II students receive instruction for one period a day and spend an additional period in TAAS tutoring.

Students who qualify for ESL instruction at the senior high school receive instruction from a certified ESL teacher. ESL I and ESL II students receive daily instruction for one 90 minute block every day for a year. ESL III and ESL Survival Skills are taught for one block per semester.

Students of limited English proficiency in DVISD are predominantly Spanish-speaking. There are a few students at the elementary level who speak other languages, including Russian, German and Lao. These students are served in the district's ESL program provided for grades Pre-K-6, which is a pull-out program. The amount of time an individual student spends in the program depends upon his or her level of English proficiency.

Exhibit 2-28 shows the growth in the district's LEP student population from 1995-96 to 1999-2000, in terms of total number of students and percentage of the entire student population. The number of LEP students in the district increased by 450 students, or 14.8 percent, during this period.

Exhibit 2-28
DVISD Bilingual/ESL Students
1995-96 to 1999-2000

Category	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Number of Bilingual/ESL students	449	586	730	830	899
Percent of student population	9.5%	12.0%	14.0%	14.8%	14.8%

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

Exhibit 2-29 shows that DVISD has a significantly higher percentage of LEP students (16.2 percent) when compared to its peer districts, the region and the state. Of the peer districts, only Manor ISD (14 percent) has a similar percentage of LEP students.

Exhibit 2-29
Percent of LEP Students in DVISD, Peer Districts, Region and State
1999-2000

District	LEP Students
Eanes	1.2%
Lockhart	3.4%
Georgetown	5.0%
Bastrop	5.2%
Hays	6.7%
San Marcos	7.2%
Manor	14.0%
Del Valle	16.2%
Region 13	8.7%
State	13.9%

Source: 1999-2000 TEA, AEIS Reports.

Exhibit 2-30 shows the increase in the number of bilingual/ESL teachers in DVISD from 1995-96 to 1999-2000. The percentage of bilingual/ESL teachers has increased from less than 1 percent to approximately 7 percent of the district teaching force.

Exhibit 2-30
DVISD Bilingual/ESL Certified Teachers
1995-96 to 1999-2000

Category	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Number of Bilingual/ESL certified teachers	2.8	15.7	17.3	27.5	32.5
Percent of total number of teachers	0.8%	4.2%	4.3%	6.6%	7.4%

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

Exhibit 2-31 indicates that DVISD had the highest percentage of bilingual/ESL teachers in 1999-2000 (7.4 percent) when compared to the peer districts, region 13 and the state. This percentage of bilingual/ESL teachers is comparable to the statewide percentage of 7 percent.

Exhibit 2-31
Bilingual/ESL Teachers in DVISD, Peer Districts, Region and State
1999-2000

District	Number of Bilingual/ESL Teachers	Percent of Total Teachers
Eanes	3.0	0.5%
Lockhart	6.5	2.3%
Bastrop	12.8	2.8%
Manor	14.8	7.0%
Georgetown	19.1	3.3%
Hays	19.5	4.6%
San Marcos	20.4	4.1%
Del Valle	32.5	7.4%
Region 13	1,083.0	5.9%
State	18,734.7	7.0%

Source: 1999-2000 TEA, AEIS Reports.

Exhibit 2-32 shows that although the actual budget expenditures for bilingual education increased from 1995-96 to 1999-2000, the percentage

of the district budget dedicated to bilingual/ESL programs decreased, from 1.2 percent to 0.9 percent.

Exhibit 2-32
Actual Budget Expenditures for Bilingual/ESL Program
1995-96 to 1999-2000

Category	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Actual Budget Expenditures for Bilingual/ESL program	\$126,601	\$143,450	\$160,024	\$142,625	\$180,062
Percent of budget	1.2%	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%	0.9%

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

FINDING

Although the academic performance of LEP students has improved over the last five years, there is clearly a need to expand the services currently available in order to address achievement gaps in TAAS reading, mathematics and writing. DVISD has the highest percentage (16 percent) of LEP students of the districts reviewed for this report (**Exhibit 2-5**). It also has the highest percentage (2.6 percent) of LEP exemptions from the TAAS (**Exhibit 2-19**), an exemption rate which is double the state average. Bilingual/ESL programs in the district should be structured to include a focus on increased participation in and improved performance on the TAAS tests.

The district's Study Survival class is provided for secondary students of limited English proficiency who need help with their homework. The district does not necessarily place students in the Study Survival class to learn the English language. Students are served in 90-minute block ESL classes, have access to tutoring before and after school and may receive tutoring in the ESL Survival class.

Recommendation 17:

Restructure Bilingual/ESL services to include a focus on student participation and continuous improvement in TAAS reading, mathematics and writing.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive directors for Elementary and Secondary Curriculum develop strategies for restructuring bilingual education services to include LEP students in the state assessment and improve LEP student performance in reading, writing and mathematics.	June 2001
2.	The executive directors for Elementary and Secondary Curriculum implement strategies for restructuring of bilingual education services is implemented.	August 2001
3.	The executive directors for Elementary and Secondary Curriculum monitor implementation of the strategies and make adjustments as needed.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Due to a lack of bilingual certified teachers, bilingual students at numerous proficiency levels are taught in a single classroom. In a Parent Focus group, parents said the district needs more bilingual teachers in the district's academic content areas. Principals and the human resources director agreed there is a need to employ more certified bilingual teachers, but reported that it was difficult to find qualified individuals.

1999-2000 AEIS data indicate that 32.5 full time equivalents (FTEs), or 7.4 percent of DVISD's teachers serve in the bilingual education program, which is comparable to the state average of 7 percent. However, the district's relatively high percentage of LEP students in comparison to its peer districts and the state (16 percent, compared to 8.7 percent in the region and 13.9 percent in the state) indicates that continuing efforts will be required to ensure an adequate supply of certified bilingual/ESL teachers.

The Tyler Independent School District in Tyler, Texas in collaboration with nearby Tyler Junior College, offers a class for the Texas Oral Proficiency Test in Spanish to teachers in need of improving their communication skills. Additionally, a stipend for teachers and paraprofessionals working toward bilingual certification is provided for coursework at the University of Texas at Tyler and Stephen F. Austin University. This district is one example of how partnerships with institutions of higher education can help increase a school district's pool of certified bilingual teachers.

Region 13 provides a bilingual certification program for teachers in grades Pre-K through 6. Applicants must have 24 semester hours in a

combination of English, mathematics, natural science, and social studies. A minimum of 3 semester hours in each subject area is required, as is an overall 2.5 Grade Point Average.

Recommendation 18:

Develop and implement innovative strategies to expand the number of bilingual/ESL teachers employed by the district.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The principals and Human Resource staff develop strategies for expanding the district's pool of certified bilingual/ESL teachers.	June 2001
2.	The superintendent implements strategies for expanding the district's pool of certified bilingual/ESL teachers.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

This chapter examines the educational service delivery and academic performance measures of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in eight sections:

E. GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION

State law, TEC Section 29.121, defines gifted and talented students as those who perform at or show the potential for performing at a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared to others of the same age, experience or environment and who exhibit high performance capability in an intellectual, creative or artistic area, possess an unusual capacity for leadership or excel in a specific academic field.

The SBOE has developed a state plan for the education of gifted and talented students, available in English and Spanish, that outlines "acceptable," "recognized" and "exemplary" practices in the areas of assessment, program design, curriculum and instruction, professional development and family-community involvement. This plan, available in English and Spanish on the TEA web site was most recently updated in May 2000.

DVISD students identified as gifted are served through its Horizon program. DVISD has placed the school board's policy for gifted and talented education on its web site and in its Horizon program manual. The board approved this manual on March 24, 1998.

Clearly stated procedures prescribe how DVISD gifted students are identified and assessed. A committee of three well-trained staff members assesses the work of students nominated for gifted education. Students present a portfolio of work for consideration by the committee. The School Ability Index score is used in the evaluation process. Auditions, performances and interviews supplement the identification process. Approximately 2 percent of the district's student population is identified as gifted and served in the Horizon program.

Elementary students are identified for the district's gifted education program based on their interests and exhibited talents. Students who participate in the elementary gifted education program may be declared ineligible at the middle or secondary level. The elementary staff keeps informal education plans, while the secondary education staff develops more formal Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for identified students.

Students in kindergarten through grade three are provided with enrichment opportunities in regular education classes. Students in grades four through 12 are served in specific subject areas and in the visual and performing arts. Kindergarten students who qualify for gifted services meet once a week with the Horizon teacher. Students in grades one through six are clustered in one classroom and receive regularly scheduled enrichment opportunities.

The elementary gifted education program focuses on creative and productive thinking as well as critical thinking skills. There is also an opportunity for enrichment in the area of the student's academic strengths. Mentors, visiting professionals, Horizon teachers and technology specialists support students in the elementary gifted education program.

Students identified as gifted in grades seven through 12 are served in the four core academic areas and in the visual and performing arts through the district's gifted education program. These students receive daily instruction from Horizon teachers.

The junior high gifted education program serves students in the four core academic subject areas and the fine arts. Students may study technology, choir, band, drama, speech, film studies and various media. Opportunities for enrichment in science, mathematics, language arts and social studies are also available. At the senior high school, students can attend numerous Advanced Placement classes in English language arts, social studies, mathematics and fine arts as part of the gifted education program.

FINDING

DVISD's percentage of the total population identified as gifted has decreased from 1995-96 to 1999-2000, from 3.1 percent to 2.3 percent of the total student population. **Exhibit 2-33** shows the number of DVISD students enrolled in the gifted and talented program and the percentage of the total student population represented. Statewide, 8.4 percent of the total student population was identified for gifted education services in 1999-2000. The DVISD identified gifted student percentage is only one-fourth as large as the state percentage.

Exhibit 2-33
DVISD Gifted and Talented Students
1995-96 to 1999-2000

Category	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Number of gifted and talented	149	127	105	160	139

students					
Percent of total student population	3.1%	2.6%	2.0%	2.8%	2.3%

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

Exhibit 2-34 shows the number of students in each demographic subgroup served by the district's gifted and talented education program in 1999-2000. Anglo students are over-represented in the DVISD gifted education program relative to their percentage in the total student population, while Hispanic and African American students are under-represented. Hispanic students are the most severely under-represented group in the DVISD population identified as gifted (30 percent of the gifted education program versus 60 percent of total district population).

**Exhibit
DVISD Subpopulations served in Gifted Education Programs K-6
1999-2000**

Student Group	Percent of Gifted Program	Percent of DVISD*
Other	3.8%	1.8%
African American	16%	14.5%
Hispanic	30%	60.9%
Anglo	49%	22.9%

Source: Elementary Curriculum Director, DVISD.

**Numbers may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.*

Exhibit 2-35 shows the actual budget expenditures for students in the gifted and talented program between 1995-1996 and 1999-2000. The amount spent has also decreased, from 0.9 percent of the district's budget to 0.3 percent of the budget. Statewide, 1.9 percent of all school districts' instructional budgets was spent on gifted education in 1999-2000.

**Exhibit 2-35
Actual Budgeted Expenditures for Gifted and Talented Program
1995-96 to 1999-2000**

Category	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
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Actual budgeted expenditures for gifted and talented program	\$101,362	\$105,178	\$100,407	\$104,543	\$50,655
Percent of budget	0.9%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.3%

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

The *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students* contains examples of acceptable, recognized and exemplary practices in student assessment, program design, curriculum and instruction, professional development and family-community involvement. For example, in the area of assessment, the plan identifies an acceptable practice for gifted student identification as: "data and procedures assure that all populations of the district have access to assessment and, if identified, services offered as part of the program for gifted students."

A recognized practice for gifted student identification is described as: "gains have been made over the last two (2) years toward having the population of the gifted program reflect the population of the district." An exemplary practice for gifted student identification is described as: "The population of the gifted/talented program reflects the population of the total district or has for the past two of the past three years."

The Socorro school district in El Paso Texas serves a student population that is 89 percent Hispanic and 52 percent limited English proficient. This district has developed innovative strategies to identify gifted and talented students from ethnically and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The district percentage of Hispanic students served in its gifted education program has increased to levels approaching their overall district representation. Socorro ISD uses a reasoning ability instrument which is language-free (Raven), combined with an achievement measure in Spanish (Spanish Assessment of Basic Education) as well as developing staff expertise in assessing gifted LEP students. Teacher, counselor, administrator and parent recommendations are also used to identify gifted students.

Recommendation 19:

Develop strategies to improve the gifted education program.

DVISD does not consistently have gifted and talented coordinators at its elementary schools.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The curriculum directors meet with administrative staff to review the state plan for gifted education and best practices in other districts.	June 2001
2.	The curriculum directors compare current practices in DVISD with the practices recommended in the state plan for gifted education and best practices in other districts.	June 2001
3.	The curriculum directors develop strategies for improving the district's gifted education program.	July 2001
4.	The curriculum directors implement the strategies.	August 2001
5.	The curriculum directors monitor the implementation of the strategies and make any needed adjustments.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Exhibit 2-36 shows the number of teachers assigned to the gifted and talented program between 1995-1996 and 1999-2000. This percentage has consistently declined in the five years under review. Statewide, 2.2 percent of the total teaching force served in gifted education programs in 1999-2000.

Exhibit 2-36
DVISD Gifted and Talented Teachers
1995-96 to 1999-2000

Category	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Number of teachers of gifted and talented	4.1	1.5	0.6	2.7	0.3
Percent of teacher population	1.2%	0.4%	0.1%	0.6%	0.1%

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

Three of the district's five elementary schools have a staff member who is responsible for the gifted and talented education programs and activities on those campuses. Two of the five elementary schools do not have a staff member responsible for the gifted and talented education program.

Recommendation 20:

Appoint gifted and talented education coordinators at all elementary schools.

Gifted coordinators should be appointed for the two campuses that currently do not have this designated personnel. The placement of gifted education coordinators at all campuses will help to improve the districtwide focus on gifted education.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Human Resources internally advertises the two elementary gifted education coordinator positions.	June 2001
2.	The director of Elementary Curriculum interviews prospective candidates and submits names of proposed coordinators to the director of Human Resources for processing.	July 2001
3.	The newly-appointed coordinators assume their duties in the elementary schools.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

The average educational stipend is \$1,500 per position. Two gifted education coordinators could be appointed (\$1,500 per stipend x 2 coordinators) at a cost of \$3,000 per year.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Appoint gifted and talented education coordinators at all elementary schools.	(\$3,000)	(\$3,000)	(\$3,000)	(\$3,000)	(\$3,000)

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

This chapter examines the educational service delivery and academic performance measures of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in eight sections:

F. COMPENSATORY EDUCATION-GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

Accelerated or compensatory education, as defined in Section 42.152 (c) of the Texas Education Code, is a program designed to improve the regular education program for students in at-risk situations. The purpose is to raise student achievement levels and reduce the dropout rate. To determine the appropriate accelerated or compensatory education program, districts must use student performance data from the state assessment instruments and any other achievement tests administered by the district.

Based on this needs assessment, district and campus staff must design appropriate strategies and include them in the campus and/or district improvement plan. The improvement plan must include a comprehensive needs assessment, measurable performance objectives, strategies for student improvement, resources and staff, specified timelines for monitoring each strategy and evaluation criteria. Each district is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of its locally-designed program.

The criteria used to identify students in at-risk situations are defined in state law, TEC Section 29.081. The definition includes each student in grades 7-12 who is under 21 years of the age and who: 1) was not advanced from one grade level to the next for two or more school years; 2) has mathematics or reading skills that are two or more years below grade level; 3) did not maintain an average equivalent to 70 on a scale of 100 in two or more courses during a semester, or is not maintaining such an average in two or more courses in the current semester, and is not expected to graduate within four years of the date the student begins ninth grade; 4) did not perform satisfactorily on an assessment instrument administered under Subchapter B, Chapter 39; or 5) is pregnant or a parent.

The definition also includes each student in pre-kindergarten through grade 6 who: 1) did not perform satisfactorily on a readiness test or assessment instrument administered at the beginning of the school year; 2) did not perform satisfactorily on assessment instrument administered

under TEC Subchapter B, Chapter 39; 3) is a student of limited English proficiency, as defined by TEC Section 29.052; 4) is sexually, physically, or psychologically abused; or 5) engages in conduct described by Section 51.03(a), Texas Family Code.

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

Funding allocated under state compensatory education is based on the number of economically disadvantaged (eligible for the federal free or reduced-price lunch program) students in the district. Compensatory education funds must supplement regular education program funds, not replace those funds. The number of economically disadvantaged students is determined by averaging the best six months' enrollment in the national school lunch program of free or reduced-price lunches for the preceding school year. Sixty-three percent of all DVISD students have been identified as eligible for the free and reduced-price lunch program.

As demonstrated in **Exhibit 2-37**, DVISD compensatory education program expenditures have decreased from \$1,506,695 in 1996-97 to \$1,976,719 in 2000-01. The total number of compensatory education teachers has increased during this period, from no teachers to 11.1 teachers.

Exhibit 2-37
DVISD Budgeted Expenditures and Staffing for the
Compensatory Education Program
1996-97 to 2000-01

Type	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change
Expenditures	\$1,506,695	\$1,557,484	\$1,547,155	\$1,046,098	\$1,976,719	31.2%
Teachers	5	1	12.9	8.5	11.1	122%

Source: 1996-97 through 1999-2000 TEA, AEIS Reports and 2000-01 PEIMS. Figures represent state compensatory education funds only

Exhibit 2-38 shows the 1999-2000 budgeted expenditures for compensatory education programs in DVISD, the region and the state. DVISD spends a comparable amount to the region, but less than the state, on compensatory education programs and services.

Exhibit 2-38
Budgeted Expenditures for Compensatory Education
DVISD, Region 13 and the State
2000-01

Category	DVISD	Region 13	State
Budget Expenditures	\$1,976,719	\$51,177,204	\$909,308,662
Percent of Budget	4.6%	2.6%	3.4%

Source: Texas Education Agency, 2000-01 PEIMS. Figures represent state compensatory education funds only.

FINDING

DVISD provides a Family Literacy Program with the support of Title I, Part B of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended (Even Start) funds. DVISD is responsible for 50 percent of the total cost of funding the program or \$167,390. The purpose of this program is to help break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy by improving the educational opportunities of low-income families.

DVISD integrates early childhood education, parenting education and adult education into a unified family-centered program. Program objectives include: help parents become full partners in their children's education; help children reach their full potential as learners; provide literacy training for parents; assist families with parenting strategies for children from birth through 7 years of age; and coordinate efforts that build on existing community resources.

During the 2000-2001 school year, program administrators anticipate serving an annual total of 75 families with 80 parents on eight campuses. A staff of 14 will work with approximately 85 students and their families. As of October 31, 2000 the Even Start/Project L.I.F.E. program already had 50 students enrolled for the fall semester. Ten students were working on GED/ABE (General Educational Development/Adult Basic Education); 23 were working on ESL and 17 were teen parents. Nineteen participants received childcare at the Early Childhood Development Center; two students received Pre-K services; 16 students received bus transportation services; 23 home visits were conducted and four new families were registered.

The DVISD Project L.I.F.E. (Learning Involving Family Education) Literacy Program is the only program in the area that offers comprehensive family literacy services, including transportation and

childcare. This program focuses on GED, ESL and other academic skills, and building self esteem, self-reliance, self-motivation and pre-employment skills.

DVISD provides a Pregnancy, Education and Parenting (PEP) Program with a \$50,000 grant, which requires matching funds from the district. Additional support for this program is provided through federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Funds. The district received \$25,362 for 2000-01 from this source.

The PEP Program operates for 12 months, including summer school, on three campuses. The program was designed to serve 53 students enrolled in grades seven through 12. Services are provided by CEDEN (Center for Education, Development and Nutrition) Family Resource Center, Communities in Schools, the Texas Attorney General's Office, the Texas Department of Health, Texas Department of Human Services, University of Texas School of Nursing, University Affiliated Programs and Austin/Travis Community Advocates for Teen Parents. Counseling is provided each week. Career-oriented classes, job readiness and career counseling are provided to students. Field trips and job shadowing opportunities are also provided to participants. Several program adopters offer career training and scholarships for TLC/Even Start participants. As of October 31, 2000 there were 48 students enrolled in the program. Twenty-five students were at the high school, one student was at the junior high school and 22 students were at the Opportunity Center (alternative education program).

The district operates a program for migrant workers, supported in part by federal Title I, Part C of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended (migrant education) funds. The district received \$10,262 for the 1999-2000 school year. As of October 31, 2000 ten students were receiving migrant education program services. These students were located at two elementary campuses and the junior and senior high school.

The district supports a tutoring program at all grade levels in which students work with teachers to improve their performance in mathematics and reading. Tutoring takes place during and after school. All campuses conduct Dyslexia programs for students in need.

DVISD has provided services to at-risk students as part of the Communities in Schools program (a national dropout reduction initiative) at its junior high and high school since 1998. During the 1999-2000 school year, 109 at-risk students received services to help them stay in school and graduate. These students were provided with guidance and counseling services; parent and family involvement was encouraged; enrichment

activities such as daily lunch groups were provided; and students were tutored in academic skills.

The district also provides a QUEST/Transition program for students who have been retained in the seventh or eighth grades. Seventh graders are referred to as QUEST students; eighth graders are referred to as transition students. The program objectives are for students to master the appropriate basic seventh or eighth grade academic concepts in the first semester, develop effective study skills, improve self-concept and self-esteem, display appropriate behavior and involvement in school activities and improve attendance.

The junior high principal, assistant principals, counselors, community liaison, teachers, Communities in Schools staff and parents or guardians work together to plan, implement and organize the QUEST/Transition program. Students who successfully complete the program are promoted to the next grade level.

The Children's Wellness Center is a University of Texas School of Nursing, nurse-managed school-based health center, which operates in collaboration with DVISD and in affiliation with the People's Community Clinic. The Wellness Center provides primary health care services for children; offers mental health services for children and their families; collaborates with the community; demonstrates a clinical teaching model for undergraduate and graduate University of Texas nursing students; improves faculty's clinical practice and adds to the body of nursing knowledge. Both English and Spanish are spoken. No one is denied assistance because of an inability to pay.

COMMENDATION

DVISD provides targeted programs for students at risk of academic failure or dropping out of school.

FINDING

DVISD's childcare program provides an important and needed service to the surrounding community. There is only one other licensed childcare provider in the community, so the district-sponsored program enables parents to work and/or attend classes without worrying about their children. The program enables teenage parents to finish high school while their child is in the childcare center. The program provides opportunities for adult parents and school-age parents to learn about current child-rearing methods and health and safety issues for young children. Parents and children learn how to express themselves in English and through the creative arts.

The childcare program serves 18 children between the ages of six weeks and four years who belong to school-age parents. There are also 24 children between the ages of one and four years whose parents are school district staff members. There is a total of 21 high school-age parents (mothers and fathers) participating in this program.

Children are provided with a safe, supportive and nurturing environment. Parents profit through educational and work opportunities. Teenage parents in the district can attend school and learn how to be responsible parents. The community gains from the interaction between schools and citizens.

DVISD staff indicated that the childcare program encourages input from local agencies that provide services to young children. University personnel, social service agencies and community groups all contribute to the success of this program.

COMMENDATION

The childcare program sponsored by the DVISD benefits young children, school age students who would not otherwise be able to attend school because of parenting responsibilities and school district parents.

FINDING

While DVISD provides counseling services to all students, counseling is lacking for students in the freshman year of high school. At the elementary level, guidance counselors work with teachers, students and parents. Students may be referred to guidance counselors, for example by their classroom teachers, for individual counseling, group counseling or consideration for placement in special education, including speech therapy classes.

Exhibit 2-39 shows the number of counselors and students on each campus in DVISD.

**Exhibit 2-39
Number of Students and Counselors in DVISD
2000-01**

Campus	Number of Students	Number of Counselors
Baty Elementary	878	2.67
Hillcrest Elementary	921	2.50

Hornsby-Dunlap Elementary	736	2.00
Popham Elementary	785	2.00
Smith Elementary	806	2.00
Del Valle Junior High School	971	3.00
Del Valle High School	1,470	4.00
Opportunity Center (AEP)	126	1.00

Source: DVISD Handbook and 2000-01 PEIMS.

Exhibit 2-40 shows the activities and the number of contacts a counselor at DVISD makes during a typical month.

Exhibit 2-40
Sample of DVISD Counselor's Monthly Duties
1999-2000

Type of Duty	Number of Contacts
Number of student counseling services	240
Individual counseling	4
Small group counseling	8
Teacher/administrator consultations regarding students	8
Parent contact	
Telephone calls	20
At school conferences	121
Home visits	0
Other	0
ARD meetings	3
Test administrations	
Individual students	0
Schoolwide (approximate number of hours)	6
Outside agency contacts	
Calls-outgoing	30
Calls-incoming	20

Meetings	4
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Source: *DVISD Counseling Department.*

Exhibit 2-41 shows the number of secondary students for whom each counselor is responsible at Del Valle High School.

Exhibit 2-41
Number of DVISD High School Students and Counselors by Grade Level, 2000-01

Number of Students at Grade Level	Number of Counselors
200-300 seniors	1
200-300 juniors	1
400 sophomores	1
600 freshmen	1

Source: *DVISD High School Principal.*

DVISD senior high school counselors said that increased access to counseling services would help prevent student dropouts between their freshman and sophomore years. Although this is the point at which students are old enough to legally drop out of school, the counselors and the principal reported that more counseling services are needed to engage students in school activities and encourage them to stay in school, thereby reducing the district's dropout rate. The senior high school counselors also said there was insufficient staffing for a career-counseling center in the high school.

Recommendation 21:

Employ an additional freshman counselor at Del Valle High School to prevent school dropouts, provide vocational counseling and meet the needs of the growing student population.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business budgets for an additional freshman counselor at the high school.	June 2001
2.	The director for Human Resources advertises for an additional	July 2001

	counselor.	
3.	A committee comprised of teachers, and the director of secondary instruction interview prospective candidates.	July 2001
4.	The board approves selected candidate.	August 2001
5.	The approved candidate begins work.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact was calculated using the average salary for a counselor at DVISD of \$41,279 with benefits of \$6,357 or 15.4 percent of salary, for a total of \$47,636.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Employ an additional counselor at Del Valle High School to prevent dropouts, provide vocational counseling and meet the needs of the growing student population.	(\$47,636)	(\$47,636)	(\$47,636)	(\$47,636)	(\$47,636)

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

This chapter examines the educational service delivery and academic performance measures of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in eight sections:

G. CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

FINDING

The DVISD career and technology education (CATE) program is broad in scope. Current funding (2000-2001 school year) for the district's career and technology education program includes \$712,417 in local and \$77,839 in federal funds. One member of the community stated, "While others disregard the importance of agricultural programs, Del Valle teaches our students to do an outstanding job in agriculture. Outstanding." At the same focus group, an engineer from a local industry discussed his interactions with the leadership and teachers in the career and technology education program. He spoke enthusiastically about the cooperation that the district's career and technology education program staff gave to him and his company.

Exhibit 2-42 shows the 1999-2000 actual budgeted expenditures for DVISD's career and technology education program in contrast to the region and the state. DVISD spends a smaller portion of its budget for CATE programs than the region or the state.

Exhibit 2-42
CATE Budgeted Expenditures
DVISD, Region 13 and State
2000-01

Category	DVISD	Region 13	State
Budgeted expenditures for CATE	\$490,168	\$33,314,601	\$564,377,617
Percent of budget	1.1%	1.7%	2.1%

Source: 2000-01 TEA, PEIMS.

Exhibit 2-43 shows the number and percentage of students and teachers in the DVISD CATE program in contrast to the region and the state.

Although DVISD has a comparable percentage of students to the region and the state, it has a smaller percentage of teachers in the CATE program.

Exhibit 2-43
Number and Percent of CATE Students and Teachers
DVISD, Region 13 and State
2000-01

Category	DVISD	Region 13	State
Number of students in CATE program	1,207	48,766	768,370
CATE students as percent of total	18.0%	17.5%	18.9%
Number of teachers in CATE program	6.4	687.0	11,786.1
CATE teachers as percent of total	1.3%	3.5%	4.3%

Source: 2000-01 TEA, PEIMS.

Career and technology education at DVISD includes four types of training:

- pre-employment laboratory (training for a specific occupation or group of occupations);
- cooperative education (instruction provided in cooperation with related employment);
- exploratory program (broad overview of a group of occupations); and
- skill development (training in the skills needed for a particular occupation).

The pre-employment laboratory offers activities and simulations designed to prepare students for entry-level positions in the world of work. These classes also prepare students to enter the district's cooperative education program better prepared. Classes include:

- Automotive Technology I and II;
- Industrial Electronics;
- Hospitality Services;
- Business Information Computer Systems;
- Word Processing Applications;
- Health Science Occupations;
- Network Technician (CISCO System); and
- Food Science and Nutrition (Culinary Arts).

The cooperative education program consists of two phases, the classroom portion and on-the-job training. The classroom phase is for improving job-

related skills and knowledge. The on-the-job training phase consists of actual skills training at a local business or industry. DVISD also offers a cooperative education program in Diversified Career Preparation for students who do not wish to focus on a single occupational area.

The district's exploratory career and technology education programs are offered to students to provide an opportunity to gain information in specific career areas. These courses provide overviews of specific occupations. There are twenty-three classes designed for career exploration in the district's course catalog.

DVISD's skill development classes offer occupational information, knowledge and skills in several specific employment areas, including:

- Agriculture Resources;
- Agriculture Mechanics;
- Computer Maintenance Technician;
- Transportation Service Technology;
- Apparel and Textiles;
- Health Science Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA);
- Accounting; and
- Horticulture.

COMMENDATION

The district career and technology education program offers a wide range of courses to prepare students for the world of work.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

This chapter examines the educational service delivery and academic performance measures of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in eight sections:

H. HEALTH SERVICES AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

FINDING

DVISD's health services include: emergency care, preventive care, first aid, referrals, immunizations and screenings for vision, hearing and scoliosis. The health services staff locate health resources for families in need. School nurses administer prescription medicine. The health services department also notifies community members in the event of an outbreak of a communicable disease. School nurses prepare a list of students with recurring health concerns. They also regularly check students for lice.

The district school nurse said her goal was to have one nurse for each school and one nurse assistant for every two schools. The National Association of School Nurses recommends that school districts employ one nurse for every 750 students. Nurse assistants are also used to substitute for nurses when they are absent. The current student to nurse ratio in DVISD is 761:1, which is near the National Association of School Nurses guidelines. There is currently no nurse or nurse assistant on site at the alternative education campus (Opportunity Center).

Exhibit 2-44 shows the present number of nurses/nurse assistants and the number of students located at each facility.

Exhibit 2-44
Distribution of Nursing Services to Campuses in DVISD
2000-01

Campus/ Location	Student Population	Nurse/Nurse Assistant
Baty Elementary	798	1
Hillcrest Elementary	744	1(A)
Hornsby-Dunlap Elementary	660	1
Popham Elementary	878	1(B)

Smith Elementary	656	1
Del Valle Junior High School	919	1(B)
Del Valle High School	1,294	1(B)
Opportunity Center	138	0
District Office	N/A	1
Total	6087(C)	8

Source: DVISD School Health Service Director

(A) There is a nurse at Hillcrest Elementary who takes care of a medically fragile student in the classroom and is not available to assist the school nurse.

(B) Nurse Assistants at Popham, Del Valle Junior High School and Del Valle High School.

(C) excludes 4 students enrolled in the JJAEP.

COMMENDATION

DVISD maintains a student to nurse ratio that is near national guidelines.

FINDING

There are large class sizes in the DVISD elementary and junior high physical education programs. For example, there are instances where 63 students are scheduled for a single physical education class at the middle school level. Classes of 44 students were observed at the elementary level.

During the 1999-2000 school year, a junior high classroom teacher, who is a coach but who is not certified as a physical education teacher, instructed two physical education classes during fourth and eighth periods. There were 43 students in the fourth period class. There were 47 students in the eighth period class. This enrollment varied weekly due to schedule changes.

These two physical education classes parallel two athletic periods of boys and girls. When one combines the number of students in the athletic

classes and the physical education classes, there are 249 students being served during fourth period and 172 students served during eighth period.

The district's athletic facility space is limited to two gyms, two weight rooms and one field. Weather conditions may sometimes prohibit the use of outside facilities. Currently, there is no state standard for the size of physical education classes but from an instructional and student safety standpoint, large class sizes increase the chance that students will be inadequately supervised or injured.

Hamilton ISD in Hamilton County has reduced staffing costs while addressing student needs by sharing staff among campuses. For example, the district assigned an elementary physical education teacher, music/fine arts teacher, and fifth grade teacher to instruct one or more sections at the junior high school level. The district also employs one librarian, one nurse and one technology aide across an elementary, middle and high school campus.

Recommendation 22:

Develop strategies to lower class sizes in physical education classes.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent appoints a committee to examine current physical education class sizes and strategies, such as sharing of staff across campuses, to reduce class size.	June 2001
2.	The superintendent presents the recommendations of the committee for reducing class size in physical education to the Board of Trustees.	July 2001
3.	The recommendations approved by the Board of Trustees are carried out in the 2001-2002 school year.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The athletic director does not evaluate the physical education staff. The athletic director reported that the principal does the evaluations for the physical education staff. The athletic director has completed these evaluations in the past and is qualified to assist in the evaluation process. The principal agreed that the athletic director should complete the evaluations of the physical education staff.

Recommendation 23:

Require the athletic director to evaluate the physical education staff in collaboration with the principal for that campus.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The secondary principal and the athletic director meet to outline and schedule staff evaluations.	June 2001
2.	The secondary principal and the athletic director meet to evaluate the physical education staff.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The deputy superintendent for Business does not report athletic event revenues to the athletic director in a timely manner. The athletic director reported she has no knowledge of the amount of funds earned and the disposition of such money.

The athletic director does not know which school district sports activities provide the most return on investment. In addition, since the athletic director does not know what athletic revenues are, program expansion-to serve more students-is very difficult to plan.

Recommendation 24:

Report revenues earned from athletic events to all interested parties each month.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business office provides revenue information to the athletic director.	July 2001
2.	The athletic director makes the revenue information available to all interested parties.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 3

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines the personnel department of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in three sections:

- A. Organization and Management
- B. Recruitment, Hiring and Retention
- C. Staff Development

Personnel and human resources management is a critical function of a school district. Successful management of personnel includes efficient recruiting, hiring, classification and compensation, benefit administration, training and development, and performance evaluation. Compliance with equal employment opportunity statutes and other applicable federal and state laws, and the establishment of fair and workable policies, procedures and training are important for the recruitment and retention of competent staff.

Chapter 3

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

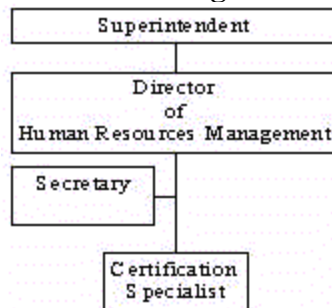
This chapter examines the personnel department of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in three sections:

A. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

During the 1970's the superintendent's office conducted personnel management. In 1975, DVISD established the position of director of Personnel, Transportation and Maintenance. Between 1970 and 1999 the position of director of Personnel was renamed the director of Human Resources and was held by four different directors. Their term of office ranged from three to fifteen years. When the current superintendent was selected he was serving as human resource director.

Exhibit 3-1 shows the organizational chart for the human resources department.

Exhibit 3-1
Human Resources Organization Chart



Source: DVISD Office of Human Resources Management.

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

- Development of wage and salary schedules;
- Administration of salary systems, including placement of positions on salary schedules and periodic review of schedules to ensure competitiveness with other employers;
- Classification of all positions;
- Development of job descriptions for all positions and the periodic update/modification of job descriptions to reflect changes in responsibilities;
- Development of personnel staffing tables and review of staff allocation formulas;

- Administration of an employee grievance process;
- Recruitment of personnel to fill vacant positions;
- Maintenance of required employees records;
- Administration of certification and permit processes;
- Issuance of contracts and non-renewal or dismissal notices;
- Placement of substitutes;
- Recruitment and placement of student teachers;
- Development of board policies regarding personnel issues;
- Development and administration of an employee benefits program;
- and
- Preparation of periodic report to address local board and state reporting requirements.

In the DVISD the director of Human Resources is responsible for:

- Preparing all reports required by the teacher retirement system, Texas Employment Commission and the Texas Education agency;
- Preparation of application for funds from available sources other than those delegated to the Assistant superintendent or the Business office;
- Preparation of regular and special reports as requested by the Board of Trustees or superintendent;
- Work with principals and staff to define personnel needs regarding instruction management;
- Interviewing and screening all job applicants;
- The administration of the personnel operations, both certified and support;
- Performance of exit interview;
- Preparation of all applications for funds required within the framework of the Minimum Foundation Salary Program;
- Recommending salary and benefit changes to superintendent and Board;
- Determining salaries and calculating payroll changes when applicable of all personnel within the district;
- Informing the business office of all payroll information necessary to the issuance of payroll checks;
- Preparation of all reports and records necessary for the fullest utilization of Public Law 814 and 874 funds;
- Hearing appeals from parents regarding bus drivers and discipline;
- Student teacher orientation for cooperating teacher inservice;
- Preparation of personnel statistical reports for superintendent and Board;
- Representing superintendent at various functions;
- Work with secondary attendance secretaries and attendance office to identify school dropouts; and

- Approval of calendars of personnel who work over 185 days per year.

Other positions in the department include a certification specialist and a secretary. The certification specialist is responsible for certification/permits, salaries, incoming/exiting staff and records maintenance. The secretary is responsible for application processing, bus drivers, substitutes/tutors, and job descriptions/evaluations. There are two substitute secretaries available to the office.

Exhibit 3-2 shows the personnel management responsibilities within DVISD.

Exhibit 3-2
DVISD Personnel Management Responsibilities
2000-01

Responsibility	Department or Position Involved
Recruiting staff	Human Resources, all departments participate
Hiring staff	Human Resources, all departments participate
Background checks	Human Resources
Reference checks	Human Resources
Initial salary determinations	Human Resources
Salary adjustment calculations	Human Resources
Compensation studies	Human Resources
Attendance monitoring	Human Resources
Benefits administration	Human Resources, Business Office
Employee grievances	Human Resources
Training/staff development	Human Resources, Curriculum and Instruction
Termination	Human Resources
Planning for staffing levels	Human Resources, all departments participate

Source: DVISD Human Resources Office 2000-01.

In addition to the management responsibilities outlined above, the personnel department must also comply with federal laws governing human resources management, including the Fair Labor Standards Act, which governs wages and hourly payments; the American with Disabilities Act, which requires employers to provide reasonable

accommodation to any employee or job applicant who has a disability; and the Equal Employment Opportunity Act, which prevents employers from making hiring and firing decisions based on age, race, religion, gender or other factors not related to performance. The district must also abide by state laws governing school district personnel administration in employee grievance, due process, termination and contract renewal (Section 21, Texas Education Code).

Exhibit 3-3 details the department of Human Resources actual expenditures for the period of 1997 through 2000, and the budget for 2000-01.

Exhibit 3-3
DVISD Department of Human Resources Expenditures
1997-98 Actual to 2000-01 Budget

Budget Category	1997-98 Expenditures	1998-99 Expenditures	1999-2000 Expenditures	2000-01 Budget	Percent Change
Payroll	\$164,214.65	\$187,685.86	\$170,792.22	\$147,618.00	-10.11%
Contracted Services	\$69,730.00	\$92,897.07	\$85,538.56	\$99,000.00	41.98%
Supplies & Materials	\$12,719.31	\$15,076.89	\$8,324.84	\$12,000.00	-5.66%
Misc. Operating	\$14,805.06	\$6,177.47	\$10,085.40	\$12,000.00	-18.95%
Capital Outlay	\$1,990.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	- 100.00%
Total	\$263,459.02	\$301,837.29	\$274,741.02	\$270,618.00	2.72%

Source: DVISD Business Office, 1997-01.

DVISD's payroll represents over \$29.2 million of the \$43.9 million total budget for 2000-01 as shown in **Exhibit 3-4**.

Exhibit 3-4
DVISD Expenditures by Category
Actual 1999-2000 through Budgeted 2000-01

Category	Total Expenditures	
	1999-2000 Actual	2000-01 Budgeted

Payroll Costs	\$28,952,434	\$29,221,007
Professional and contracted service	\$2,969,480	\$3,060,992
Supplies and materials	\$2,524,059	\$2,286,351
Other operating expenses	\$2,227,110	\$1,911,523
Debt service	\$3,098,290	\$3,716,537
Capital outlay	\$334,067	\$3,686,485
Totals	\$40,105,440	\$43,882,895

Source: DVISD Business Office, 1999-2001.

The Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) used by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) categorizes school district staff into three groups: 1) professional staff, which includes teachers, professional support staff, campus administrators and central administrators, 2) educational aides, and 3) auxiliary.

Exhibit 3-5 shows the number of full-time equivalent positions (FTEs) by staff category employed by the district from 1996-97 through 2000-01.

**Exhibit 3-5
DVISD Staff FTEs
1996-97 through 2000-01**

Staff Category	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change 1996-2001
Teachers	374	401	415	437	485	29.7%
Professional Support	49	53	58	63	69	40.8%
Campus administration	20	20	20	22	21	5.0%
Central administration	6	6	7	7	5	-16.7%
Educational aides	29	23	44	46	81	179.3%
Auxiliary staff	212	254	246	248	253	19.3%
Total staff	690	757	790	823	914	32.5%

Source: Texas Education Agency AEIS, 1996-97 through 1999-2000 and PEIMS 2000-01.

The Del Valle central administrative staff includes the superintendent, deputy superintendent, a director of human resources, two executive directors of curriculum and instruction, a director of career and technology, a community relations director, a district nurse, a child nutrition director, a special services director, an assistant special services director, a facilities director, a technology director and a director of maintenance. Campus administration includes a director of transportation, athletic director, director of maintenance, a director for the TLC/Project Life/Even Start/ Employee Childcare department, principals and assistant principals. Professional support includes therapists, counselors, librarians and nurses. Auxiliary staff includes maintenance personnel, custodians, cafeteria workers and bus drivers.

Exhibit 3-6 compares DVISD's percentage of employees in each staff category in 2000-01 with its peer districts.

**Exhibit 3-6
DVISD Staff Compared to Peer Districts
2000-01**

District	Teachers	Professional Support	Campus Administrators	Central Administrators	Educational Aides	Auxiliary Staff
Georgetown	52.1	8.2	2.1	0.8	9.6	27.2
Del Valle	53.1	7.5	2.3	0.5	8.9	27.7
Bastrop	49.7	8.6	2.5	1.0	8.1	30.2
San Marcos	54.0	9.8	2.3	1.0	10.8	22.0
Hays	48.6	7.5	2.8	1.4	6.8	32.9
Lockhart	48.2	8.1	3.0	0.8	9.7	30.0
Eanes	57.2	9.7	2.3	0.6	7.7	22.5
Manor	48.4	7.4	2.7	0.7	10.2	30.5

Source: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 2000-01.

Exhibit 3-7 shows teacher FTE's by years of experience.

Exhibit 3-7
DVISD Teachers FTEs by Years of Experience
1996-97 through 2000-01

Years of Experience	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change
First year teachers	51.5	141.6	29.1	49.2	47.3	-8.2%
1-5 years	94.7	68	125.2	129.1	165.7	75.0%
6-10 years	87	68	64.9	66.0	78.6	-9.7%
11-20 years	93	78	123.1	122.9	115.4	24.1%
More than 20 years	48	45	72.7	70	78	62.5%

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 1996-2000 and PEIMS 2000-01.

Exhibit 3-8 shows that DVISD's average years of teacher experience has stayed below that of the state and region.

Exhibit 3-8
DVISD, Region 13 and State Average Years of Teaching Experience
1995-96 through 2000-01

Entity	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01
DVISD	10.5	9.4	7.5	10.9	10.3	9.9
Region 13	11.6	11.6	11.6	11.6	11.5	9.7
State	11.7	11.7	11.8	11.8	11.9	9.5

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 1995-96 through 1999-2000 and PEIMS 2000-01.

The salaries for DVISD professional personnel are enumerated in **Exhibit 3-9**. Professional personnel includes teachers, professional positions (e.g., counselors, diagnosticians) and central and campus administrative personnel. Compared to its peer districts, DVISD ranks fifth highest in the salaries paid to teachers; third lowest in salaries paid to professional support staff; third highest in salaries paid to campus administration and third highest in salaries paid to central administration.

Exhibit 3-9
DVISD and Peer District

**Average Budgeted Salaries of Professional Personnel
2000-01**

Entity	Teachers	Professional Support	Campus Administration	Central Administration
Georgetown	\$37,260	\$41,707	\$58,708	\$78,197
Hays	\$35,212	\$41,316	54,783	83,188
Bastrop	\$37,681	\$43,458	55,894	79,643
Del Valle	\$36,189	41,809	60,598	80,927
Lockhart	\$35,717	42,644	56,241	80,521
San Marcos	\$38,715	47,151	67,506	91,896
Eanes	\$38,970	46,307	64,487	98,460
Manor	\$34,689	45,157	56,029	80,843
State	\$38,359	45,514	58,252	75,043

Source: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 2000-01.

Employees are evaluated annually by their immediate supervisor who is responsible for ensuring that these evaluations are conducted for all their employees. Written evaluations for administrator and teacher positions are completed on evaluation forms that reflect the specific job description and the performance of those tasks. Forms are then submitted to the human resource office.

Staff development activities are predominately handled by the executive directors of curriculum and instruction for elementary and secondary education and focus on curriculum training and program improvement. In addition, the technology office in collaboration with the staff of curriculum and instruction has offered training on computers and technology. The Human Resource Office plans and presents orientation materials to the new employees.

FINDING

DVISD posts job vacancies in a variety of ways and circulates the information throughout the district prior to making the information public.

The district advertises job vacancies in local and area newspapers and on its web site. The web site provides internal information to district staff in all job classifications with easy to follow instructions for applying on line. In addition, the public may apply directly online for any of the positions

advertised. DVISD also accesses applications online from the data bank maintained by the Regional Education Service Center 13 (Region 13). On average 5 percent of prospective candidates come from Region 13's data bank. The district does not have experienced vacancies that go unfilled for more than sixty days.

DVISD also advertises at local and statewide job fairs and maintains active contacts with local universities for future applicants.

Finally, the district contacts those who do student teaching within the district in order to encourage them to apply for any teaching openings that are available.

COMMENDATION

DVISD uses myriad methods to ensure job vacancies are posted throughout the community.

FINDING

The district publishes a comprehensive employee handbook for distribution to the faculty and staff. The District Improvement Committee's Human Resources Subcommittee reviews the handbook before it is published. A list of members of the board of trustees and administration appear in the handbook along with statements of state and federal law. The Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators are listed in detail and board policy is cited in each reference.

The handbook also contains a description of the school district's mission statement, goals, objectives, procedures, employee conduct requirements, welfare information and schedules of all district meeting.

Beside the district handbook all DVISD campuses also publish faculty handbooks with a detailed explanation of each school's operation.

Exhibit 3-10 demonstrates a list of the information included in a school handbook.

Exhibit 3-10
Index of Hornsby-Dunlap's Faculty Handbook
2000-01

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accident Report • Achievement Testing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dispensing Medication • Duty Hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance Responsibilities- Teachers • Make-up Work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substitute Teachers • Supplies • TAAS
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Afternoon Bus Duty • Art Schedule • Attendance Procedures • Audio-Visual Equipment • Balloons • Bus Changes • Cafeteria Rules • Calendar • Classroom Assignments and Phone Numbers • Classroom Lights and Doors • Communication to Parents • Confiscated Items • Cumulative Folders • Curriculum Guides and Teachers Editions • Custodian • Daily Schedule • Discipline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excusing Students from School • Faculty and Staff • Faculty Meetings • Field Trips • Films and Videos Approval • Finances • Fire and Tornado Drills • Grading Policy • Homework Policy • Honor Roll Guidelines • Intercom • Leave-Teacher • Leaving Class • Lesson Plans • Lunchroom Management • Lunch Schedule • Machines in Workroom 	<p style="text-align: center;">Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map of School • Map of Area • Meetings • Morning Duty Schedule • Morning Procedures • Music Schedule • Nurse • P.E. Schedule • Personal Supplies • Playground Rules • Referral to Special Education • Restroom/Drinking Fountains • Safeguarding Money and Personal Property • Sexual Harassment • Special Education • Student Referral System 	<p style="text-align: center;">Accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAAS Supplement • Teacher Responsibility • Textbooks-Teacher Responsibility • Thermostats • Visitors • Volunteers • Withdrawals
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Source: Hornsby-Dunlap Elementary School Faculty Handbook, 2000-01.

COMMENDATION

DVISD distributes comprehensive district and school specific information handbooks to the staff each year.

FINDING

Job descriptions for some positions are incomplete or vary across the district for the same positions. Some job descriptions are dated while others are not. The district only reviews and updates a job description when a new employee is hired or a job changes.

Job descriptions provide employees with information on their specific duties and responsibilities and serve as a basis for annual performance evaluations. When job descriptions for the same job are inconsistent throughout the district, the district becomes vulnerable to civil lawsuits. In addition, job descriptions are increasingly used to defend workers' compensation claims.

In the United ISD, the district is recognized for its best practice of maintaining all job descriptions in a consistent format and regularly reviewing job descriptions to ensure they are current. United ISD divides positions into three sections: administrative and professional, clerical and technical, and manual trades. All positions have job descriptions consistent in format and organization covering pertinent position information. Included were the title, administrator to whom the employee reports, qualifications, job goals, performance responsibilities, terms of employment, evaluation process and equipment used (if applicable).

Spring ISD (SISD) has a recognized best practice by maintaining current and accurate job descriptions. SISD employees have a guide for understanding their role and responsibilities. SISD maintains job descriptions on all positions that are updated to reflect changes in responsibilities. The Personnel/Support Services department conducts the process of creating and updating job descriptions after focus group sessions involving employees in each position are held. A job analysis is completed through the cooperative effort.

Recommendation 25:

Review and update all district job descriptions for each position every three years and standardize the format.

A thorough review of position classifications for the hourly, clerical and paraprofessional job levels should be conducted and job descriptions should be revised with responsibilities specific to the complexity of the job requirement. The department should then establish a procedure for reviewing and updating job descriptions on a three-year cycle, with one-third of the job descriptions reviewed each year.

Exhibit 3-11 provides an example of a job description format. The outline contains the necessary elements of a good job description.

Exhibit 3-11
Elements of an Effective Job Description

Job Description Content
<p><i>Header:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Title• Reports to• Supervisor's Superior• Supervises• Pay Grade• Job Code• Overtime Status
<p><i>Main Body:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Job Goal• Qualifications• Knowledge, Skills and Abilities• Performance Responsibilities: Essential Functions• Performance Responsibilities: Other Duties & Responsibilities• Physical Demands• Work Environment• Terms of Employment• Evaluation
<p><i>Footer:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Date (developed or revised)• Board action if any• Approved by• Prepared by• Work Location Name• Telephone Number

Source: TSPR, 1999.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of the Human Resources Management begins work on revisions to all job descriptions making sure the description contains all necessary elements, is formatted and organized clearly, and is dated.	August 2001
2.	The director of the Human Resources Management develops a plan for revising job descriptions periodically and makes sure they are maintained electronically.	September 2001
3.	The director of the Human Resources Management provides the newly revised job descriptions to the respective employees and the originals are maintained in Human Resources and updated periodically.	October 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district does not evaluate employees against their respective job descriptions in a consistent, or timely manner. An employee's supervisor has great latitude in deciding how to evaluate an employee and whether or not to base the evaluation on the job description. Employee performance evaluations are not an accurate reflection of the duties required in the job description.

In addition, director of Human Resources Management stated that evaluations are submitted to the human resource office late.

By not completing employee evaluations properly, and in a timely manner, supervisors place the district in legal jeopardy. The district is placed in a difficult legal position when:

- The district moves to terminate an employee but the director of Human Resources Management does not have accurate, complete evaluations demonstrating past employee performance and any corrective action plans taken to date.
- The district attempts to defend a termination during an unemployment compensation hearing, and cannot prove poor job performance due to a lack of, or improperly completed performance evaluations.
- The district desires to promote an employee but evidence of the employee's exemplary work cannot be substantiated through the evaluation history.
- The district is sued for sexual or age discrimination and cannot support itself through evaluation documentation.

Recommendation 26:

Develop standard operating procedures to ensure performance evaluations are completed properly and submitted to the Human Resources office in a timely manner.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Human Resources Management develops an evaluation timeline for all employee groups and distributes the timeline to all supervisors.	July 2001
2.	The director of Human Resources Management develops standard operating procedures for conducting an employee performance evaluation and submits the procedures to the superintendent for advice and consent.	August 2001
3.	The superintendent, along with the director of Human Resources Management will determine appropriate consequences for not meeting the deadline.	October 2001
4.	The superintendent notifies all supervisors of deadlines and consequences for not meeting deadlines.	November 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The position of administration office receptionist has not had the effect that it was intended to have when it was created. In October 2000, the district created the position of receptionist for the administration building with the intent of having a gatekeeper for these offices and to answer the district's main telephone line. The receptionist was to provide a focal point for visitors to get direction once they entered the administrative building. However, most visitors bypass the receptionist and go directly to the office in which they have business. Additionally, other building entrances to the administrative offices are open during the day and evening with visitors permitted to come and go without restriction.

DVISD created this position in part to have a person answer phones whenever someone called the main telephone number. This person would prevent the calling from being connected to an answering machine. The district is engaged in an ongoing process to refine the duties and responsibilities of this position.

Recommendation 27:

Eliminate the position of administration office receptionist.

Attempts should be made to relocate the incumbent as campus-level or central office clerical positions are open.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent notifies the current employee performing the duties of administration office receptionist that the position will be eliminated and works with the director of Human Resources Management to locate open positions within the district for possible reassignment.	July 2001
2.	The deputy superintendent for Business removes the position from the budget for 2001-2002.	July 2001
3.	The duties of the administration office receptionist are divided among existing staff.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

Eliminating the administrative office receptionist will save the district \$23,370 a year. The salary for this position is \$92.05 per day for 220 days plus health, life insurance and other mandated benefits or 15.4 percent benefits ($\$92.05 \text{ per day} \times 220 \text{ days} = \$20,251 \times 15.4 \text{ percent benefits} = \$23,370$).

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Eliminate the position of administration office receptionist.	\$23,370	\$23,370	\$23,370	\$23,370	\$23,370

Chapter 3

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines the personnel department of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in three sections:

B. RECRUITMENT, HIRING AND RETENTION

DVISD uses a compensation strategy to align district salaries and actively manages payroll costs by balancing the numbers of staff.

District salaries have increased over the past five years, remaining competitive with others in the job market. The board stated that it tries to raise salaries to keep up with the cost of living and uses the Texas School Board Survey as the basis for updating the compensation plan. The board has final approval on all matters pertaining to salary and compensation and determines the amount paid on stipends. Mathematics teachers and bilingual teachers receive a stipend of \$2,500.

Exhibit 3-12 shows the salary comparison among DVISD'Speer districts. Del Valle ranks higher than most peer districts in the 10, 15, and 20 year categories. However, DVISD ranks lower than most peer districts in the beginning teacher's salary and the 5-year salary category.

Exhibit 3-12
DVISD Teacher Salaries at Various Levels of Experience Compared to Peer Districts
1999-2000

District	Beginning Teacher Salary	Five Year Teacher Salary	10-Year Teacher Salary	15-Year Teacher Salary	20-Year Teacher Salary
Eanes	\$31,375	\$32,082	\$35,367	\$40,514	\$46,647
San Marcos	\$31,581	\$30,637	\$33,699	\$41,999	\$46,959
Del Valle	\$28,095	\$29,756	\$34,866	\$41,387	\$46,137
Hays	\$26,832	\$28,230	\$32,163	\$39,407	\$45,307
Georgetown	\$29,226	\$29,884	\$33,865	\$40,756	\$45,287
Bastrop	\$30,047	\$29,330	\$33,334	\$41,041	\$44,943
Manor	\$28,392	\$30,419	\$33,989	\$40,962	\$44,748
Lockhart	\$27,006	\$29,597	\$32,065	\$40,106	\$44,444

Source: Texas Education Agency AEIS, 1999-2000.

FINDING

DVISD has a significant number of staff with 20 or more years of service. During 2001-02, 79 professional and support employees will be eligible for full retirement, including 53 teachers, four professional support personnel, five campus administrators, four central office administrators, and thirteen support staff personnel.

Exhibit 3-13 represents the employees that will be eligible for retirement by position category and as a percentage of total employees in DVISD in that category, and as a percentage of total DVISD employees. The 79 employees represent 9.6 percent of DVISD total employment.

Exhibit 3-13
DVISD Employees Eligible to Retire in 2001-02 as compared
of Total DVISD Employees in 2000-01

Position Category	Total Number FTEs 2000-01	Number of Employees Eligible to Retire
Campus administration	21	5
Central administration	5	4
Professional support	69	4
Support staff	334	13
Teachers	485	53
Total	914	79

Source: DVISD deputy superintendent for Business, 2000-01; PEIMS 2000-01.

The administrative positions include four principals, one assistant principal, the superintendent and three directors. Of the teacher category, six are counselors and although the list of teachers does not include their area of certification, it is assumed that some of the teaching positions are in critical shortage areas. The exodus of nearly 10 percent of the total workforce during 2001-02, some of which are key positions, could be detrimental to the district educationally and administratively.

The total annual salary for the 79 employees eligible to retire in 2001-02 is \$3.6 million. **Exhibit 3-14** presents the salary information for each

category of employees eligible to retire in 2001-02, the average annual salary of those eligible to retire and the average annual salary of all employees in the category.

Exhibit 3-14
Total and Average Annual Salary
DVISD Employees Eligible to Retire in 2001-02

Position Category	Total Salaries of Employees Eligible to Retire	Average Salary of Employees Eligible to Retire in Position Category	Average Salary for Category Districtwide for 1999-2000 (AEIS)
Campus administration	\$325,715	\$65,143	\$58,160
Central administration*	\$298,328	\$74,582	\$68,539
Professional support	\$188,349	\$47,087	\$41,866
Support staff	\$336,645	\$25,896	N/A
Teachers	\$2,486,795	\$46,921	\$36,232
Total	\$3,635,832	\$46,023	NA

Source: DVISD deputy superintendent for Business and Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 1999-2000.

**This includes the superintendent's position at \$100,000; without this position, the average salary for this category is reduced to \$66,109. N/A = Average salaries for Support Staff are not provided in AEIS.*

The Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) administers a defined benefit pension plan for school district employees. Under this plan, the state pays retirees a retirement annuity based on a benefit formula that uses the employee's years of service, multiplied by a benefit rate of 2.2 percent for each year of service and the average of the three highest annual salaries.

TRS members are eligible for full or normal retirement with five or more years of service credit at age 65, or any combination of age and years of

service credit equal to a total of 80. Members are also given the option to retire early with reduced benefits.

Many districts carefully plan for the future by using tools like retirement incentive plans that assist in the controlled exit of experienced staff and the careful replacement of those retiring positions. Through better management of the exodus, the district has adequate time to recruit highly qualified individuals to replace key employees so that a more orderly transition can be made.

For example, one possible early retirement plan could be an offer of a one-time cash incentive of 50 percent of an employee's annual salary to be paid out over two years to any employee with more than 28 or 30 years of service. By adjusting the number of years of service needed to be eligible for the retirement incentive, the district can control the number of people who are eligible and provide an incentive for the remaining people to stay on the payroll for another year or two in anticipation of the incentive being offered again in a certain number of years. As shown in **Exhibit 3-15**, the number eligible for the retirement incentive in DVISD drops to 40 when applying the more than 27-year rule, and to 16 when applying the more than 30-year rule. Some of the others not eligible for the retirement incentive might still wish to retire, but a percentage will opt to stay on the payroll that might have otherwise retired.

Exhibit 3-15
Analysis of Years of Service for
DVISD Employees Eligible to Retire in 2001-02

Employee Category	Salaries of All Eligible Employees	Total Number of Eligible Employees	Salaries of Eligible Employees With More Than 26 Years Experience	Number Eligible With More Than 26 Years Experience	Salaries of Eligible Employees With More Than 27 Years Experience	Number Eligible With More Than 27 Years Experience	Salaries of Eligible Employees With More Than 30 Years Experience	Number Eligible With More Than 30 Years Experience
Campus Administrators	\$325,715	5	\$270,805	4	\$209,718	3	\$69,163	1
Central Administrators*	\$198,328	3	\$134,044	2	\$134,044	2	\$134,044	2
Professional Support	\$188,349	4	\$52,816	1	\$52,816	1	\$0	0
Support	\$336,645	13	\$199,684	8	\$156,211	6	\$59,351	2
Teachers	\$2,486,795	53	\$1,824,490	39	\$1,310,925	28	\$521,189	11
Total	\$3,535,832	78	\$2,481,839	54	\$1,863,714	40	\$783,747	16

Source: DVISD deputy superintendent for Business.

**Excludes superintendent's position and salary.*

In addition, the employees who take advantage of the plan need not necessarily retire from TRS or from their chosen profession. Eligible DVISD employees could be offered retirement options such as retiring from DVISD and receiving the district's retirement incentive only. This would mean that their years of experience would not be lost to the profession, but instead, the employees would have extra cash to use as a retirement nest egg as they continue to teach, support or administer in another district.

An incentive plan does not necessarily restrict the district from re-employing a retired participant to the extent permitted by the TRS rules of employment. Consequently, if a large number of experienced teachers accepted the offer, the district would be able to rehire or contract with some of them, perhaps with more flexible schedules to encourage their continued involvement in the education of children and mentoring of less experienced teachers.

Districts must carefully consider all aspects of an incentive against the possible negative impacts, and fully understand the legal and management issues surrounding a plan.

Recommendation 28:

Implement a controlled retirement incentive plan.

While the district may benefit from not replacing some retirees depending on the position and the need, a planned approach, using retirement incentives, could make the turnover rate more gradual.

The district should conduct a comprehensive analysis to fully understand the effect the retirement incentive plan would have on the district and its management structure.

When designing a plan, DVISD administrators should be mindful of legal issues surrounding retirement incentives. These issues should be clearly communicated to interested employees as well. In compliance with the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the plan must be voluntary, and apply to all classes of employees. Cash incentives received by retiring employees are considered taxable income by the Internal Revenue Service, but are not treated as income by TRS.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Human Resources Management and the superintendent review the list of district employees with creditable service in TRS eligible for the retirement plan.	July 2001
2.	The superintendent, the district's attorney, the deputy superintendent for Business and the director of Human Resources Management explore the effect of a retirement plan on overall district operations.	August - November 2001
3.	The superintendent presents findings to the board for discussion and/or approval.	December 2001
4.	The director of Human Resources Management prepares information on the plan, disseminates information on the plan to eligible employees, creates a sign-up schedule and implements the program.	January 2002
5.	Employees accepting retirement incentive leave the district at the end of the 2001-02 school year.	May 2002
6.	The director of Human Resources Management assesses the effect of employee participation and makes adjustments to recruiting plans and salary schedules and appropriate staff are hired for the coming year.	During Budget Process 2002
7.	The superintendent and director of Human Resources Management assess the impact of the retirement incentive plan and decide whether to offer the incentive cyclically in the future.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

Key assumptions in the fiscal estimate include:

- There are 78 employees eligible for retirement, excluding the superintendent;
- The district will adopt an incentive plan that will result in 60 percent of eligible employees accepting the plan, or approximately 47 employees;
- Sixty percent of the total salaries of all eligible employees will be saved when these individuals retire, or \$2,121,499 (\$3,535,832 X 60 percent)
- Although support staff will be hired at lower rates and administrators will be hired at higher rates, the salary for a teacher with five years of experience and a Masters Degree is used to determine the cost for replacements, or \$32,370 per position;
- To replace 47 positions at \$32,370, will cost the district \$1,521,390;

- Participants will receive a lump-sum payment of 50 percent of the average salary for their position category payable in two annual installments at the beginning of the 2002-03 and 2003-04 fiscal year. The district's lump sum cost for participants will be \$1,060,750 or \$530,375 in each of the first two years (\$2,121,499 X 50 percent / 2 installments);
- No benefits are accrued since the number of employees reduced and hired remains unchanged.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Employees accept plan	\$0	\$2,121,499	\$2,121,499	\$2,121,499	\$2,121,499
Lump-sum payment to employees accepting plan	\$0	(\$530,375)	(\$530,375)	\$0	\$0
Hire new employees to replace employees accepting plan	\$0	(\$1,521,390)	(\$1,521,390)	(\$1,521,390)	(\$1,521,390)
Net savings	\$0	\$69,734	\$69,734	\$600,109	\$600,109

FINDING

DVISD does not use a staffing allocation model as a baseline for assigning staff. As shown in

Exhibit 3-16, the number of employees in the district has increased over the past four years, from 690 full-time equivalents (FTEs) in 1996-97 to 914 FTEs in 2000-01, a net increase of 224 positions or 32.5 percent. The number of teachers increased by 29.7 percent from 1996-97 to 2000-01, while student enrollment increased by 37.5 percent during the same timeframe. Educational aides increased by 179.3 percent.

**Exhibit 3-16
DVISD Staff FTEs
1996-97 through 2000-01**

Staff Category	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change
Teachers	374	401	415	437	485	29.7%
Professional Support	49	53	58	63	69	40.8%

Campus Administrators	20	20	20	22	21	5.0%
Central Administration	6	6	7	7	5	-16.7%
Educational Aides	29	23	44	46	81	179.3%
Auxiliary Staff	212	254	246	248	253	19.3%
Total Staff	690	757	790	823	914	32.5%
Student Enrollment	4,876	5,230	5,625	6,091	6,694	37.5%

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 1996 through 2000 and PEIMS 2000-01.

Consistent staffing guidelines for all categories of employees enable districts to increase or reduce staff positions when student population increase or decline.

Recommendation 29:

Develop staffing guidelines for all employee categories.

By using staffing formulas that have some flexibility for the special needs of certain campuses, DVISD could ensure that all areas of district operations are treated with equity in the hiring of staff.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent of Instruction and the director of Human Resources Management reviews existing staffing levels for all staff categories and determines baseline needs for central administration and individual schools.	June 2001
2.	The assistant superintendent of Instruction and the director of Human Resources Management and the principals of each school develop minimum staffing allocations for schools and administration and consider enrollment and the unique needs of each school.	July 2001
3.	The superintendent approves staffing allocation guidelines for schools and administration, freezes hiring for any overstaffed positions and makes appropriate transfers of personnel pending full implementation in the coming school year.	August 2001
4.	The superintendent implements staffing guidelines.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

District employee turnover rates are extremely high when compared to the region and State. The Human Resource office has provided information demonstrating over 23 percent turnover rate among the teaching staff. Turnover is a measure of workforce stability, job satisfaction, and the adequacy of programs and incentives designed to retain qualified personnel.

During the 1999-2000 significant changes occurred at the administrative level, affecting the positions of superintendent, director of Human Resources Management, deputy superintendent for business and deputy superintendent for curriculum. These changes impacted the district and could have been part of the reason for a larger turnover rate from the previous year.

Significant changes in staff also occurred at the junior and senior high school levels as well. One elementary principal said that half of her staff was new this year. Some changes can be attributed to the reorganization programs being offered at the different schools.

Exhibit 3-17 shows the turnover percentage for DVISD, Region 13, State and peer districts between 1997-98 and 1999-2000.

DVISD ranked 6th in 1997-98; second in 1998-99 and second in 1999-2000.

Exhibit 3-17
Percent of Teacher Turnover
DVISD, Region 13, State, Peer Districts
1997-98 through 1999-2000

Entity	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Manor	15.3%	15.3%	27.8%
Del Valle	12.8%	17.0%	23.8%
Hays	12.0%	16.4%	18.5%
Bastrop	16.5%	19.0%	16.3%
San Marcos	17.9%	14.7%	16.1%

Georgetown	10.2%	12.3%	15.5%
Lockhart	10.6%	14.7%	14.7%
Eanes	8.7%	13.0%	12.6%
Region 13	13.8%	15.4%	15.6%
State	13.3%	15.5%	15.0%

Source: Texas Education Agency AEIS, 1997-98 through 1999-2000.

Exhibit 3-18 shows the rate of turnover in the DVISD from 1997-98 through 1999-2000.

Exhibit 3-18
Turnover Rates for all Del Valle ISD Employees
1997-98 through 1999-2000

Campus	1997-98			1998-99			1999-2000		
	Returning Staff	Exiting Staff	Percent Change	Returning Staff	Exiting Staff	Percent Change	Returning Staff	Exiting Staff	Percent Change
High School	132	15	11.0%	124	36	29.0%	115	23	14.0%
Opportunity Center	15	0	0.0%	Included in High School			19	1	5.0%
Special Programs	13	0	0.0%	13	0	0.0%	14	1	7.0%
Junior High	116	10	9.0%	117	15	13.0%	110	40	36.0%
Baty	76	9	12.0%	82	10	17.0%	110	14	13.0%
Hillcrest	73	9	12.0%	72	12	12.0%	104	16	15.0%
Hornsby	55	2	4.0%	52	4	8.0%	83	13	16.0%
Popham	77	6	8.0%	87	6	7.0%	98	13	13.0%
Smith	65	1	2.0%	66	13	20.0%	96	10	10.0%

Source: DVISD Human Resource Department, 1997-2000. These figures include resignations, retirees, non-renewals and district rezoning in 1999-2000.

Other predominant reasons given for leaving the district are:

- Teachers-Birth of child, employment closer to home, higher salary, spouse job transfer
- Administrators-Advancement in the field of education

Some school districts like Killeen ISD developed a strategy to retain teachers. The Professional Development office of Killeen ISD implements employee audits and action committees to address workplace environment. The district conducts two Gallup workplace audits per year. Among other things, the audit asks employees what the district can do to improve the workplace and what the probability is that the teacher will remain with the district. Gallup Polls and KISD worked together to design the audit. The district shared the results with every staff member of KISD. The district then held meetings with employee groups and the superintendent's council to establish goals and strategies to improve the work environment in KISD. In addition, every site supervisor met with campus employees to develop an action plan based on the Gallup workplace audit.

Recommendation 30:

Develop an employee retention plan.

The director of Human Resources Management should form a task force to assist in the research of existing employee retention plans and propose a plan based on the district's identified needs.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Human Resources Management collects data on employee retention programs.	October 2001
2.	The director of Human Resources Management forms a task force of teachers, campus administrators and support staff to create a report that makes recommendations on retention incentives.	November 2001
3.	The task force issues the report to the superintendent.	February 2002
4.	The superintendent makes recommendations on a retention plan based upon the task force's report.	March 2002
5.	The board approves recommendations and incentives contained within plan.	April 2002
6.	DVISD implements employee retention plan.	July 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district does not have a formal districtwide plan or policy for alternative employment practices such as job sharing or flextime. There are instances where job sharing has occurred successfully at individual campuses in informal arrangements. Elementary certified teachers who have recently experienced the birth of children desire to return to work, but not on a full-time basis. If offered the opportunity to share a position with another certified elementary teacher, these candidates would apply for work in DVISD. However, there is no formal policy for job sharing or flextime that permits this approach in attracting experienced candidates for employment.

DVISD has employed a job sharing program on an "as needed" basis. In one "as needed" situation, two teachers shared a *Reading Recovery* teaching position and during 1999-2000 two teachers who recently had children shared a position at Hillcrest Elementary.

DVISD has an informal flextime system. School secretaries are employed from 8:30AM-5:00PM at one elementary whereas another school will have a secretary working from 7:30AM-4:00PM based on the school's individual needs. Some flextime schedules are used with campus principal and custodial staff too.

Recommendation 31:

Develop a policy and standard operating procedure to permit job sharing and flextime.

More flexible employment options like job sharing and flextime work schedules may encourage more applicants to apply for district positions. DVISD could benefit from the use of standardized job sharing. For example, two qualified elementary teachers who currently do not work may be enticed into teaching if they both shared one position. Each teacher would earn half-pay for his/her respective work.

DVISD could also benefit from flextime scheduling. One example is to permit an employee to work 6:00AM to 2:00PM each day as opposed to the normal schedule of 8:00AM to 4:00PM. Another example is to permit employees to work four, ten hour days with one day off each week. These options may assist DVISD in continuing to recruit and retain good quality staff.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Human Resources Management forms a task force to develop policy and standard operating procedures for shared and flextime work schedules.	June 2001
2.	The task force submits a policy and procedures recommendation to the superintendent.	June 2001
3.	The superintendent submits policy and procedures to Board for approval.	August 2001
4.	The board approves job sharing and flextime plans.	September 2001
5.	The director of Human Resources Management implements the policy of shared and flextime.	October 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district does not employ adequate numbers of permanent substitutes to meet the district's need at all times. On average, 50 classes per week are unsupervised at some time for a lack of substitutes. Principals are required to find substitutes upon being notified by absent teacher often with little prior notice. Participants in teacher focus groups expressed concerns about being taken out of their planning periods and classes to perform substitute duties.

On October 17, 2000, the district increased the pay for substitutes in an effort to attract more substitutes to the school district. The district has an approved substitute list with over 200 persons willing to substitute teach in the district, however, area districts are all vying for the same substitutes in an ever dwindling pool of qualified persons willing to work as a substitute. In addition, the substitute list is not always current since approved subs often except other jobs and do not notify the district to remove their names from the current list.

Exhibit 3-19 shows the current substitute pay scale in the district.

Exhibit 3-19 DVISD Substitute Pay Scale

	High School Diploma	Degree	Fully Certified
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Full Day	\$65.00	\$75.00	\$85.00
Half Day	\$35.00	\$40.00	\$45.00

Source: *DVISD Human Resources Department.*

Recommendation 32:

Evaluate hiring permanent substitutes for teachers at each campus.

The hiring of at least three permanent or floating substitutes at each elementary would enable classes to be covered when teachers are absent. This is currently being done at the high school level and the practice needs to be extended to the primary level. The district has already budgeted for eight substitutes per day.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Human Resources Management evaluates permanent substitute usage at the high school and the junior high school.	June 2001
2.	The deputy superintendent of Business performs cost-benefit analysis for expanding permanent substitutes to each elementary school.	July 2001
3.	The director of Human Resources Management plans for permanent substitute positions for the 2001-02 budget.	July 2001
4.	The director of Human Resources Management hires three permanent substitutes.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources since the district already budgets for eight substitutes per day.

Chapter 3

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines the personnel department of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in three sections:

C. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The Texas Education Code prescribes specific criteria for staff development in a Texas school district (Subchapter J Staff Development, Section 21.451). The district staff development plan should include:

- Training in technology, conflict resolution strategies and discipline strategies;
- Instruction as to what is permissible under law;
- A campus-based experience and be related to achieving performance objectives; and
- Participation in and approval by campus site-based decision making committee.

Campus staff development may include activities that encourage the campus staff to plan together to enhance existing skills, effective strategies, reflect on curricular and instructional issues, analyze student achievement results, reflect on means of increasing student achievement, study and conduct research, develop student programs and implement site-based decision making.

The district has a school board approved policy addressing staff development on line and professional development plan references are found in the District Improvement Plan and in the Campus Improvement Plans.

DVISD conducts staff development at several different levels by various departments. The human resource office trains all new employees as they enter the district, the food service department trains workers in areas specific to their duties, while the transportation department conducts bus driver training.

The district also offers workshops on the Texas Hazard Communication Act and the Texas Public Employer Right to Know Act. Curriculum directors collaborate on the organization and provision of activities that will improve instruction.

FINDING

The district has offered numerous staff development opportunities that support the improvement of instruction and faculty members have taken advantage of the opportunities provided. A wide variety of staff development activities have been organized. Some activities are organized around the needs of a specific school or grade level. While other activities address the needs of the district as a whole.

Staff development activities have focused on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) state testing initiative. Teachers have taken the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and TAAS Reading for Science and have been updated on any changes made by TEA on TEKS and TAAS criteria.

Additionally, the district has used in-house providers, publisher representatives and recognized experts in specific fields to do staff development presentations. Courses and workshops are provided throughout the year including the summer. Activities are organized for all staff including regular and special service teachers.

There are 122 choices of staff development activities from which to choose. Classes/workshops are also conducted at the various campuses, the regional service center and other locations outside of the school district.

The district also provides staff with compensatory time when employees present the district with evidence of having attended a workshop, meeting, or class. Joint staff development activities are also planned.

Exhibit 3-20 is a list of sample activities for staff development planned for a DVISD junior high school.

Exhibit 3-20
Sample Staff Development Activities for Del Valle Junior High School
2000-01

Activity
Train all Language Arts Teachers, including special education language arts reading teachers how to properly implement and use the accelerated reading program.
Provide computer lab instruction in reading skills for the reading lab teacher and ISS teacher (Nova Net).
Conduct TAAS reading tutorials during homeroom, after school and Saturdays having team teachers, elective teachers and outside tutors work with students. Tutors will attend training sessions.

Train all new language arts teachers in TAAS reading and successful teaching strategies. Train in summer, after school and on Saturdays.
All new teachers will attend Pre-AP training.
All language arts teachers trained to use Accelerated Reader program.
All teachers will be trained in Jane Schaffer TAAS Writing Strategies.
Conduct TAAS writing tutorials during and after the school day and on selected Saturdays. Conduct this tutoring by having team teachers, elective teachers, and outside tutors work with students during homeroom and team planning time, after school and on Saturdays. All tutors will attend training sessions given by DVJH staff.
Provide staff development for math teachers by bringing in Russell to work with teachers and students during the school year.
Implement staff development in classroom management: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Harry Wong b. Teen Leadership Program
Continue to send teachers to Pre-AP training.
Provide staff development in improving science process skills.
Implement workshops for regular content teachers needing information teaching strategies and modifications for ESL students in their classes.
Continue to train teachers to use Tangent Computer.
Improve training of use of STMRPC and shared folders on the "Y" drive.
Training teachers to use Grade Speed.
Provide/facilitate training for all staff involved in identification, placement and direct instruction of gifted students.

Source: Del Valle Junior High Campus Improvement Plan 2000-01.

COMMENDATION

DVISD's staff development plan offers a wide variety of opportunities for faculty and staff to broaden their field of knowledge.

FINDING

While the district offers a variety of opportunities for staff development, the district does not plan staff development programs with sufficient input from faculty regarding the selection of specific training programs. At the technology focus group, faculty expressed a need for more staff development programs focused on technology. Faculty and staff also

indicate that little technology training has taken place even though there have been a number of technology workshops offered.

DVISD staff development offerings are based on what each campus team decides, after the teams have met. The building principal reports to the respective director the staff development needs of the campus.

At the public forum, a need for staff development on sexual harassment, crisis planning, bilingual programs and special education programs were also identified.

Recommendation 33:

Survey faculty needs for staff development to better plan for development activities.

The district needs to provide for more input from faculty and staff for the kinds of staff development programs to offer. One way to accomplish this is through a survey. Faculty said that time conflicts prevented attendance at some workshops so survey instrument should include a section that asks for time preference.

The technology committee needs to communicate to the faculty and staff the opportunities available and encourage members of the faculty and staff to participate and provide student assessments forms for feedback on instruction.

The development of on-line training modules so that all teachers could access training as their schedules permit.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The directors of Curriculum and Instruction for Elementary and Secondary Education develop a survey instrument to determine staff training needs.	June 2001
2.	The directors of Curriculum and Instruction for Elementary and Secondary Education administer the survey to all district staff.	August 2001
3.	The directors of Curriculum and Instruction for Elementary and Secondary Education make the necessary changes for staff development based on survey results.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) facilities use and management in two sections:

- A. Facilities Planning
- B. Maintenance and Custodial Operations

An effective facilities use and management function ensures that district facilities are properly designed and built to enhance the educational process and meet support needs. The function should maintain equipment in peak operating condition; provide a clean school and safe working environment; ensure that facilities comply with applicable local, state, and federal building regulations and minimize utility costs.

A facilities use and management function must operate under clearly defined policies and procedures and the activities must be monitored to identify revisions that may be needed due to changes in the district's needs and resources.

District facilities are an integral part of the academic program. If designed and maintained properly, facilities enhance a program. If poorly designed and maintained, facilities can severely hamper the best educator.

BACKGROUND

DVIDS owns and operates 12 facilities that total 968,044 square feet of building space.

According to a study done by Population and Survey Analysts (PASA), the district has grown an average of 2.5 percent annually since 1985-86 and 5.5 percent per year since 1995-96. In the last two years, the district experienced increases of 11.8 and 9.8 percent, 637 and 578 students respectively. Growth in the last two years equates to a need for about one new elementary school each year.

Overall population growth in the district reflects this student increase. The 1990 census showed 32,146 people living in the DVISD, while present estimates of district population put that number close to 38,000. **Exhibit 4-1** shows the historic student growth pattern for the district.

Exhibit 4-1
Historic Enrollment in Del Valle Independent School District
1984-85 through 2000-01

School Year	End of Year Membership	Percent Change	PEIMS Data	Percent Change
1984-85			4565	---
1985-86			4943	8.28
1986-87			5083	2.83
1987-88			5222	2.73
1988-89			5224	0.04
1989-90	5304	---	5155	(1.32)
1990-91	4833	(8.88)	5125	(0.58)
1991-92	4613	(4.55)	5099	(0.51)
1992-93	4529	(1.82)	5021	(1.53)
1993-94	4322	(4.57)	4627	(7.85)
1994-95	4292	(0.69)	4541	(1.86)
1995-96	4449	3.66	4747	4.54
1996-97	4814	8.20	4886	2.93
1997-98	5049	4.88	5241	7.27
1998-99	5409	7.13	5629	7.40
1999-00	6046	11.78	6087	8.14
2000-01	6640 (Aug.2000)	9.82	----	----

Source: DVISD, Facilities Office.

Continued growth is projected as shown in **Exhibit 4-2**. The PASA study suggests three scenarios. The most moderate projects a district with 12,239 students by the year 2009. The most extreme projection sees DVISD at 15,668 students by the same year. In either case the PASA study has the district doubling in the next nine years. The study uses a survival ratio technique based on student population history to produce the three possible student outcomes.

Exhibit 4-2
Enrollment Projections
2001-02 through 2009-10

Year	Low	Most-Likely	High
------	-----	-------------	------

2001-02	7,021	7,104	7,173
2002-03	7,549	7,692	7,898
2003-04	8,144	8,337	8,733
2004-05	8,800	9,054	9,669
2005-06	9,445	9,774	10,660
2006-07	10,137	10,557	11,753
2007-08	10,850	11,379	12,929
2008-09	11,527	12,183	14,183
2009-10	12,239	13,033	15,668
Projected Growth	+5,599	+6,393	+9,028

Source: PASA study done for DVISD.

The PASA study said that, "Del Valle I.S.D. is a part of the technology corridor." That "for the past four years, both single-family housing and apartment construction in DVISD have exceeded the projected increases over the past 10 years..." Based on the recent construction history of the district, PASA suggests the district could have an additional 470 multi-family dwellings in the next five years, followed by an additional 1,050 dwellings during the second five-year period. Add to that the projection of a suggested increase of 8,703 single-family homes during that same decade.

What the PASA study and past history show is that growth in the Del Valle area is inevitable.

Exhibit 4-3 details the district's facilities, the age of facilities, square feet, student capacity and the utilization of permanent and portable classrooms.

Exhibit 4-3
Del Valle Independent School District Facilities
2000-01

Facility	Year Built	Square Footage	Number of Students	Permanent Classrooms	Portable Classrooms
Del Valle High School	2000	310,000	2000	93	0
Athletic Facilities		8,505			

Del Valle Jr. High School	1985	102,682	1088	57	
Jr. High School Addition	1999	23,530			
Jr. High Mechanical Bldg.	1999	1,200			
Jr. High Portables		4,608			5
Opportunity Center	1939	7,066	114	5	
Opportunity Center Portables		7,680			10
Child Care	94/95/00	5,280			*3
Wellness Center	1999	3,072			*2
Popham Elementary School	1999	85,403	800	43	
Popham Portables		16,896			22
Portable Restroom Building		540			
Smith Elementary School	1971	58,107	800	40	
Smith Elementary Addition	1999	11,780			
Smith Portables		15,360			20
Hillcrest Elementary School	1999	83,500	800	43	
Hillcrest Portables		12,288			16
Portable Restroom Building		540			
Baty Elementary School	1999	83,572	800	42	
Baty Portables		10,752			14
Portable Restroom Building		540			
Hornsby-Dunlap Elementary School	66/83/94	31,943	800	35	

Hornsby-Dunlap Elem. Addition	1999	34,739			
Hornsby-Dunlap Portables		13,087			17
Portable Restroom Building		540			
Administration Building	2000	21,342	0	0	0
Facilities Office		1,536	0	0	0
Maintenance		3,700	0	0	0
Transportation		7,256			
McKenzie Bus Yard	29/67	1,000	0	0	0
Total		968,044	7,202	358	104

Source: DVISD, Facilities Office.

*These are not K-12 classroom spaces and are not included in the 104 classrooms.

Exhibit 4-3 shows the high number (104) of portable classrooms now in use in DVISD. The district's 5 elementary buildings contain 200 permanent classrooms or an average of 40 classrooms. The portable classrooms translate to the equivalent of almost three elementary schools presently housed in temporary space. As shown in **Exhibit 4-4**, DVISD is only 166 students below total district capacity, and the three elementary schools as of November 2000 are 65 students over capacity.

Exhibit 4-4
Del Valle Independent School District
Enrollment versus Capacity
January 2001

Campus	Capacity	Enrollment
Del Valle High School	1,600	1,455
Del Valle Jr. High School	1,088	982
Opportunity Center	114	114
Popham Elementary School	800	784

Smith Elementary School	800	809
Hillcrest Elementary School	800	887
Baty Elementary School	800	873
Hornsby-Dunlap Elementary School	800	732
Total	6,802	6,636

Source: DVISD Facilities Office.

Exhibit 4-5 shows the additional number of classrooms and square feet provided by the district's use of portable classrooms. A standard portable classroom building used by DVISD contributes 768 square feet of space.

**Exhibit 4-5
Portable Classrooms
Used in 2000-01**

Building	Portable Classrooms	Additional Square Feet
Baty	14	10,752
Hillcrest	16	12,288
Hornsby-Dunlap	17	13,056
Popham	22	16,896
Smith	20	15,360
Junior High	5	4,608
Senior High	0	0
Opportunity Center	10	7,680
Total	104	80,640

Source: DVISD Facilities Office.

Clearly, DVISD has been in a state of student growth for a number of years. Projections show that this growth will continue and will lead to stress of existing facilities. The district recently completed a new high school, built three new elementary buildings, renovated the remaining two elementary buildings but still use 80,640 square feet of space in 104 portable classrooms.

Exhibit 4-6 shows recent building construction projects funded from bonds authorized in 1997 and funds from the city of Austin for relocating schools.

**Exhibit 4-6
Del Valle Independent School District
Recent Building Construction Projects
January 2001**

Project	Budget	Cost to Date	Variance
New Del Valle High School	\$39,825,000	\$36,561,972	\$3,263,028
New Baty Elementary School	\$9,375,000	\$10,002,726	(\$627,726)
New Hillcrest Elementary School	\$9,375,000	\$10,384,292	(\$1,009,292)
New Popham Elementary School	\$9,375,000	\$8,818,423	\$556,577
Relocate Athletic Facilities	\$4,500,000	\$4,000,297	\$499,703
Additions to Del Valle Junior High School	\$4,125,000	\$3,544,976	\$580,024
Additions and Renovations to Hornsby-Dunlap Elementary School	\$4,700,000	\$4,704,319	(\$4,319)
Additions and Renovations to Smith Elementary School	\$2,025,000	\$2,794,872	(\$769,872)
Total	\$83,300,000	\$80,811,877	\$2,488,123

Source: DVISD Facilities Office.

To date DVISD has completed over \$80.8 million of its recent building program and as of January 2001 is under the original project budget by \$2,488,123.

Despite this construction, the new facilities still fall short of meeting district needs as evidenced by the need to house students in portable classrooms and will be further stressed given projected increases of student enrollment. Even the most conservative estimates, as shown in **Exhibit 4-2**, project almost a doubling of the present enrollment by 2009-10.

According to the PASA study, DVISD would need 51 new classrooms by 2004-05 and 219 classrooms by 2009. To also accommodate students in the "temporary" portable structures the district would need 161 new classrooms by 2005 and 329 classrooms by 2009, according to PASA.

The district is aware of the potential for growth and the need to replace the "temporary" portable classrooms. DVISD placed a bond package totaling \$71 million on the March 3, 2001 ballot. The citizens of DVISD responded and approved all three propositions that are outlined in **Exhibit 4-7**.

**Exhibit 4-7
2001 Bond Election
Proposed Capitol Improvement Project**

Proposition Number 1	Year	Cost
New Elementary School #6	2002-2003	\$12,000,000
New Junior High School #2	2003-2004	\$24,200,000
New Elementary School #7	2003-2004	\$14,200,000
Land Acquisition		\$5,000,000
Proposition Number 1 Total Cost		\$55,400,000
Proposition Number 2		
Hornsby Elementary additions and renovations	2002-2003	\$5,000,000
Existing Junior High additions and renovations	2002-2003	\$3,000,000
Smith Elementary additions and renovations	2002-2003	\$3,000,000
High School Multi-Purpose Classroom		\$700,000
Parking and site improvement to Baty, Popham and Hillcrest		\$120,000
Proposition Number 2 Total Cost		\$11,820,000
Proposition Number 3		
New Transportation and Maintenance Facility	2003-2004	\$3,780,000
Proposition Number 3 Total Cost		\$3,780,000
Total Cost for the 2001 Bond Proposal		\$71,000,000

Source: DVISD Business Office.

Chapter 4

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) facilities use and management in two sections:

A. FACILITIES PLANNING

FINDING

Although DVISD is completing projects totaling more than \$80 million and recently passed a \$71 million bond package, the district still lacks a comprehensive facilities master plan. Essential features of a facilities master plan include the identification of current and future needs of district facilities, analysis of the condition of existing buildings, student growth projections, cost analysis of capital requirements, and facilities management guidelines.

The district has been involved in the construction of three new elementary facilities, the renovation of two remaining elementary buildings and the construction of a state of the art high school. This over \$80 million project was initiated as a result of the new Austin-Bergstrom International Airport. For safety reasons the buildings had to be replaced because the facilities were found to be in the flight path of the new airport.

When DVISD sold its 4 buildings to the City of Austin, it also sold 38 portable buildings. In September 2000 almost 600 students came into DVISD. DVISD repurchased 20 of the portable buildings including 2 portable restrooms. DVISD also owned 15 portable classrooms that it had not sold to the City. During the 1999-2000 school year the district moved 33 portables. Presently, there are two portables remaining to be moved. One belongs to DVISD and had not been sold to the City of Austin. The other was repurchased from the city and cannot be moved until the Old Popham Elementary School is demolished. DVISD plans to move the remaining 2 portable buildings during the spring of 2001.

The history of growth in DVISD and the projection for further growth makes it understandable why DVISD must once again plan for facilities. The district has a potential need of 51 new classrooms in the next five years. It should also study the replacement of the present portable classrooms.

Exhibit 4-8 provides an overview of the program elements of the Texas Education Agency's planning process which aids school districts in their long-range facilities management.

Exhibit 4-8
TEA Recommended Facilities Planning Process

Program Element	Mission	Responsibilities	Deliverables
Planning	Needs Assessment	Identify current and future needs	Demographics, enrollment projections, facilities survey, boundary, funding, education program, market, staff capability, transportation analysis
	Scope	Outline required building areas, develop schedules and costs	Programming, cost estimating, scheduling, cost analysis
	Strategy	Identify structures	Facilities project list, master schedule Budget plan, organization plan, marketing plan
	Public Approval	Implement public relations campaign	Public and media relations
Approach	Management Plan	Detail roles, responsibilities, and procedures	Program management plan and systems
	Program Strategy	Review and refine details	Detailed delivery strategy
	Program Guidelines		Educational specifications, design guidelines, CAD standards

Source: Texas Education Agency.

Following **Exhibit 4-8** as suggested by the Texas Education Agency would aid in moving DVISD towards its goal. Districts that include citizens throughout the planning process have a better chance of voter approval when additional funding is needed.

Recommendation 34:

Develop a long -range facilities master plan.

The district should establish a facilities use and management committee, similar to the citizens committee created for the bond election, to work with the superintendent, review demographic projections and review time schedules and priorities associated with the planning for new facilities. The committee should be composed of 25-30 members, including district administration, teachers, non-certified staff, and members of the community. This process could be led by the director of Facilities, a trained architect.

The first objective of the committee should be the design and development of a long-range facilities master plan. Each year the master facilities plan should be reviewed and updated as district priorities and needs change and submitted to the superintendent and Board of Trustees for review.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board establishes a committee and nominates citizens to participate.	July 2001
2.	The superintendent seeks DVISD staff to participate on the committee.	July 2001
3.	The superintendent prepares a meeting schedule, reviews the needs assessment and demographic study with the committee and conducts a building tour.	August 2001
4.	The director of Facilities and the committee prepares a priority list of facilities needs and holds meetings at each school to gather feedback from parents and citizens.	September 2001
5.	The committee includes community input in recommendations and combines the priorities into a recommended five-year plan.	October - November 2001
6.	The director of Facilities and deputy superintendent for Business provides cost analysis of each proposal and a fiscal plan for the five years.	December 2001
7.	The superintendent reviews the plan and makes recommendations to the board for approval.	January 2002
8.	The board reviews the plan and makes recommendations prior to approval.	February 2002
9.	The director of Facilities reviews the plan annually, updates plan and cost analysis and presents recommendations to the board and superintendent.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) facilities use and management in two sections:

B. MAINTENANCE AND CUSTODIAL OPERATIONS

DVISD's maintenance operation consists of 19 employees as shown in (Exhibit 4-9). Custodial operations has a staff of 45 employees.

Exhibit 4-9
Del Valle Maintenance Staff
2000-01

Position/Function	Number of Staff
Foreman	1
Painter	1
HVAC Technician	3
Carpenter	1
Ground Crew	6
Custodian	1
General Maintenance	6
Total	19

Source: DVISD Facilities Office.

DVISD has 968,044 square feet of space in its facilities that is maintained by the maintenance staff. The 12 maintenance employees (excluding the foremen and groundskeepers) are each responsible for an average of 80,670 square feet. The staff handles routine repairs, painting, heat and air conditioning maintenance of its main facilities and the construction, maintenance and repair of the 104 portable classrooms.

Work performed by DVISD's maintenance staff is tracked through the use of work orders. **Exhibit 4-10** presents the total number of work orders completed since the 1996-97 year by facility.

Exhibit 4-10
Del Valle Independent School District

**Summary of Work Orders
1996-97 to 2000-01**

Facility	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	Total
Del Valle High School	1,021	1,243	1,170	744	193	4,371*
Del Valle Junior High School	348	654	429	281	132	1,844
Opportunity Center	135	201	146	173	144	799
Popham Elementary School	429	566	561	530	132	2,218*
Smith Elementary School	230	236	209	304	168	1,147
Hillcrest Elementary School	228	421	358	168	123	1,298*
Baty Elementary School	281	388	300	296	168	1,433*
Hornsby-Dunlap Elementary School	229	480	393	313	192	1,607
Administration Building	0	30	266	103	110	509*
Facilities Office	0	14	68	23	4	109
Maintenance/Transportation	335	291	235	243	112	1,216
McKenzie Bus Yard	0	2	3	0	0	5
Total	3,236	4,526	4,138	3,178	1,478	16,556*

Source: DVISD Facilities Office.

**Includes work orders for both old and new buildings.*

Exhibits 4-11 and **4-12** show a comparison of DVISD's maintenance operations cost to that of its peer districts for the years 1998-99 and 1999-2000.

**Exhibit 4-11
Actual Peer District
Plant Maintenance and Operation Cost Ranked**

District	1998-99 Cost per Pupil	Total Actual Cost
Lockhart	\$535	\$2,291,472
Bastrop	\$546	\$3,196,528

Del Valle	\$565	\$3,181,583
Hays	\$571	\$3,601,721
Eanes	\$591	\$4,395,355
San Marcos	\$609	\$4,240,840
Georgetown	\$614	\$4,503,553
Manor	\$874	\$2,076,567

Source: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS.

Exhibit 4-12
Actual Peer District
Plant Maintenance and Operations Costs Ranked

District	1999-2000 Cost per Student	Total Actual Cost
Lockhart	\$560	\$2,472,051
San Marcos	\$594	\$4,144,143
Hays	\$613	\$4,117,132
Eanes	\$616	\$4,597,098
Georgetown	\$630	\$4,788,029
Bastrop	\$658	\$4,038,899
Del Valle	\$686	\$4,183,847
Manor	\$969	\$2,408,209

Source: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS.

Exhibits 4-11 and **4-12** indicate that the \$565 and \$686 spent by DVISD on each child per year for the maintenance operation of the district's buildings is within the bounds of the peer data.

Exhibits 4-13 and **4-14** compare DVISD maintenance payroll cost with its peer districts for years 1998-99 and 1999-2000. PEIMS shares this information as a percent of maintenance costs. If a district is high in this category it could be for one of two reasons. Either the district is paying its employees too much or they have too many employees in the maintenance program.

**Exhibit 4-13
1998-99 Actual Payroll
Peer Districts Ranked**

District	Percent of Maintenance Cost	Total Actual Cost
Del Valle	37%	\$1,238,886
Eanes	39%	\$1,929,331
San Marcos	39%	\$1,892,066
Georgetown	40%	\$1,903,318
Hays	44%	\$1,723,016
Lockhart	44%	\$1,145,072
Manor	48%	\$1,053,871
Bastrop	50%	\$1,692,750

Source: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS.

**Exhibit 4-14
1999-2000 Actual Payroll
Peer Districts Ranked**

District	Percent of Maintenance Cost	Total Actual Cost
Eanes	46%	\$2,092,141
Hays	48%	\$1,970,728
Del Valle	48%	\$1,989,929
Bastrop	49%	\$1,967,587
Lockhart	52%	\$1,280,873
Georgetown	54%	\$2,568,478
Manor	54%	\$1,310,455
San Marcos	55%	\$2,265,732

Source: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS.

Exhibit 4-13 shows DVISD reports the lowest rate at 37 percent in 1998-99. In 1999-2000 DVISD falls in the mid-range of its peers at 48 percent (**Exhibit 4-14**).

These comparisons indicate that during the 1997-98 and 1998-99 years DVISD either had maintenance payroll within or below the range of its peer districts.

Exhibits 4-15 and **4-16** compares DVISD with peer district's maintenance supply and material costs for years 1997-98 and 1998-99 and their percentage of the budget.

Exhibit 4-15
1998-99 Actual Supplies and Materials Cost
Peer Districts Ranked

District	Percent of Maintenance Cost	Total Actual Cost
Bastrop	6%	\$213,088
San Marcos	7%	\$331,903
Hays	7%	\$264,789
Georgetown	8%	\$362,619
Del Valle	8%	\$258,748
Lockhart	8%	\$203,054
Eanes	9%	\$431,580
Manor	9%	\$187,283

Source: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS.

Exhibit 4-16
1999-2000 Actual Supplies and Materials Cost
Peer Districts Ranked

District	Percent of Maintenance Cost	Total Actual Cost
San Marcos	6%	\$262,260
Bastrop	7%	\$276,985
Del Valle	7%	\$273,246
Manor	9%	\$222,548

Georgetown	10%	\$472,215
Eanes	11%	\$506,082
Hays	11%	\$444,856
Lockhart	12%	\$299,208

Source: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS.

Exhibit 4-15 reflects that DVISD spent 8 percent of its maintenance budget on supplies during the 1998-99 year and **Exhibit 4-16** shows an expense of 7 percent for the 1999-2000 year. Both years compare favorably to its peer districts.

FINDING

DVISD does not track work order statistics. During 1999-2000 DVISD maintenance employees completed 3,178 work orders. DVISD has no way to verify whether the problem that required the work order was resolved, has recurred, is a symptom of a larger problem or whether the same problem has occurred in other buildings.

The district does not accumulate time and material costs for work orders. After a work order is completed the employee time spent on the work order and the material used is not entered into a system where the data can be analyzed and easily retrieved. The lack of a work order management system means the district is not able to prepare preventative maintenance plans because it does not know life cycle repairs and costs on equipment. Furthermore, the district is unable to gauge the need for additional staffing levels since work order statistics are not available to show how much labor is used to complete work orders.

Recommendation 35:

Develop and implement a work order management system.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Facilities develops a spreadsheet tool for use in tracking work order progress.	July 2001
2.	The director of Facilities or designee enters each work order into the spreadsheet tool upon approval of the work order.	August 2001
3.	The director of Facilities or designee continues to update the work order spreadsheet on a daily basis.	August 2001 - June 2002

4.	The director of Facilities submits work order utilization reports to the deputy superintendent for Business.	June 2002
5.	The director of Facilities adjusts resources as needed based upon the work order management system reports.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources

FINDING

DVISD does not use staffing standards for maintenance or custodial operations. The Association of Physical Plant Administrators (APPA) has developed a set of craft position staffing standards based upon a district's gross square footage. DVISD's staff assignments are not aligned with APPA standards. While some craft positions are staffed by more employees than the APPA recommends, other positions are staffed with fewer (**Exhibit 4-17**).

Exhibit 4-17
Del Valle Independent School District
Maintenance Personnel
2000-01

Craft	APPA Standard	APPA Recommended Staffing	Current Staffing	Variance Above (+)/ Below (-) Standard
Carpenter and Helper	1: 200,000 GSF	4.9	2	-2.9
Painter	1: 200,000 GSF	4.9	1	-3.9
HVAC Mechanic	1: 450,000 GSF	2.2	4	+1.8
General Maintenance	1: 500,000 GSF	1.9	5	+3.1
Total		13.9	12	-1.9

Source: DVISD Facilities Office and Association of Physical Plant Administrators.

Applying the standard of one custodian per 20,000 gross square feet adopted by the Association of School Business Officials (ASBO), **Exhibit 4-18** shows the variance between current custodial staffing and the recommended total.

Exhibit 4-18
Del Valle Independent School District
Custodians By Campus Compared to ASBO Standard
2000-01

Facility	Square Footage	Full-time Equivalent Custodians		Variance Above (+) or Below (-) Standard
		Current	ASBO Recommended	
Del Valle High School	318,505	12	16	-4.0
Del Valle Jr. High School	132,020	6	6.8	-0.8
Opportunity Center	23,098	.5	1	-0.5
Popham Elementary School	102,839	5	5.1	-0.1
Smith Elementary School	85,247	5	4.3	+0.7
Hillcrest Elementary School	96,328	5	4.8	+0.2
Baty Elementary School	94,864	5	4.7	+0.3
Hornsby-Dunlap Elementary School	80,309	5	4	+1.0
Administration Building	21,342	1	1.1	-0.1
Facilities Office	1,536	0	-	-
Maintenance/Transportation	10,956	.5	.5	0
McKenzie Bus Yard	1,000	0	-	-
Total	968,044	45	48.3	-3.3

Source: DVISD Facilities Office.

Recommendation 36:

Institute ASBO and APPA staffing formulas for custodial and maintenance staff.

Using staffing standards for maintenance and custodial operations will enable the district to align staff to facilities in a consistent manner. As the district grows the use of staffing standards will provide the district guidelines when additional staffing is needed. Budget development and projecting future costs will also be enhanced when staffing standards are implemented and used.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business recommends the Board of Trustees approve a policy accepting the staffing recommendations of the Association of Physical Plant Administrators for maintenance personnel and the staffing recommendations of the Association for School Business Officials for custodians.	July 2001
2.	The director of Facilities implements the standards and reallocates staff where necessary.	July 2001
3.	The director of Facilities advises the deputy superintendent of Business of any staffing budget impact for the new fiscal year.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

To bring the district up to ASBO and APPA standards will cost the district \$89,688 annually. This is based on adding two general maintenance personnel at beginning annual salaries of \$18,202 and three custodial positions with beginning annual salaries of \$13,766 plus fringe benefits of \$11,966 (15.4 percent).

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Institute ASBO and APPA staffing formulas for custodial and maintenance staff.	(\$89,668)	(\$89,668)	(\$89,668)	(\$89,668)	(\$89,668)

FINDING

The district does not have a preventative maintenance schedule. Without an adequate preventive maintenance program, a district runs the risk of its building systems being neglected resulting in system failures and increased costs.

Principals believe that the district does not adequately address the issue of preventive maintenance. In addition, the district has been so deeply involved with construction that the maintenance and custodial staff must

address the needs of new facilities and grounds and therefore are unable to perform preventive maintenance on older facilities. The district has had 16,556 work orders during the last 4.5 years. The large number of work orders could be a reflection of the lack of a preventative maintenance program.

A preventive maintenance schedule is critical in order for building systems to operate efficiently and to prevent system problems. Effective preventive maintenance is a planned approach designed to avoid equipment breakdowns and prevent minor problems from escalating into major ones.

Recommendation 37:

Create a preventive maintenance schedule for each of the district's buildings.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Facilities and the foreman for Maintenance review the maintenance needs of the district and create lists of equipment and systems that should be placed on a preventive maintenance schedule.	July 2001
2.	The director and foreman for Maintenance review lists with deputy superintendent for Business.	July 2001
3.	The deputy superintendent for Business reviews list and recommends adjustments and solidifies the schedule.	July 2001
4.	The preventive maintenance schedule is put into effect.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 5

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

This chapter of the report addresses the asset and risk management functions of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in five sections:

- A. Cash and Investment Management
- B. Risk Management
- C. Fixed Asset Management
- D. Bond Issuance and Indebtedness
- E. Internal and External Audit

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 school district assets. The goal of asset and risk management is to protect these assets from financial losses resulting from unforeseen events.

An effective asset and risk management program protects assets by ensuring that the district is adequately protected against all significant losses at the lowest possible cost. Effective tax management includes quick and efficient tax collections to allow the district to meet its cash flow needs and earn the highest possible interest. Fixed asset management should account for district property efficiently and accurately and safeguard it against theft and obsolescence. The district's insurance programs for employees' health, workers compensation and the district's fixed assets should be sound and cost effective to protect the district from financial losses.

Chapter 5

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

This chapter of the report addresses the asset and risk management functions of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in five sections:

A. CASH AND INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT (PART 1)

For a school district to achieve its instructional goals and objectives, cash and investments must be managed daily. Effective cash and investment management involves establishing and maintaining beneficial banking relationships, timely and accurate forecasting of cash requirements so that funds are available when needed and maximizing returns on assets deposited in appropriate, approved and safe investments.

The DVISD board designates the deputy superintendent for Business as the investment officer for the district. As the chief financial agent for the district, the deputy superintendent for Business has day-to-day responsibility for managing the district's cash and investments and reports to the superintendent of schools. The district does not use an external investment advisor.

On a daily basis, the deputy superintendent for Business checks balances and initiates wire transfers as primary initiator. He also supervises the accounting supervisor and maintains investment spreadsheets. The accounting supervisor prepares cash and investment entries to the general ledger and verifies deposits. The superintendent can also serve as a secondary initiator in the absence of the deputy superintendent for Business. The deputy superintendent for Business prepares an annual cash forecast that is updated monthly. The accounting supervisor is assigned the responsibility to perform bank reconciliation's on a timely basis.

The accounts receivable secretary, a full-time position, receives mail, counts money and prepares deposits. Athletic receipts, in season, are brought to the accounts receivable secretary each day for counting, depositing and posting. Deposits that miss the daily armored car pick up are stored in the administration building vault.

The district has a depository agreement with Chase Bank for a two-year term, which began in September 1999 and runs through August 2001. Under the terms of the agreement, the bank holds district funds under a compensating balance arrangement in which the district maintains sufficient balances to compensate the bank for account maintenance, items

processing and various other banking services. With the exception of the Tax Escrow account, all accounts are interest bearing.

The district generates cash from three general sources: local, state and federal revenues. Property taxes represent the primary source of cash and are generated through tax assessments on local property values. During 1999-2000, cash generated from property taxes was 67 percent of cash receipts, revenues from state sources were 32 percent and 1 percent was from federal and other sources. Property tax collections peak in December and most state revenues are received in October.

The district maintains 17 checking accounts for normal operations and nine bank accounts related to investments. Campus and student activity fund checking accounts are deposited in one account. These funds support campus-based activities such as student groups and student government and are maintained at the campus level.

Exhibit 5-1 summarizes funds held in checking accounts as of August 31, 2000 and describes each account's purpose.

**Exhibit 5-1
DVISD Bank Accounts
As of August 31, 2000**

Financial Institution	Account Name	Bank Balance at August 31, 2000	Purpose of Account
Chase Bank	Payroll	\$367,551	Clearing account
Chase Bank	Accounts Payable	\$855,592	Clearing account
Chase Bank	Local Maintenance	\$304,985	Money market account
Chase Bank	Debt Service	\$8,299	Money market account
Chase Bank	Workers Compensation	\$4,560	Controlled disbursement account
Chase Bank	Student Activity	\$165,754	School and campus activity fund accounts
Chase Bank	Tax Account	\$92,750	Type 1 Clearing account - ZBA
Chase Bank	Trustee Travis County Tax	\$0	Controlled

			Disbursement Account for transfer of taxes collected
Chase Bank	Tax Escrow	\$22,984	Escrow for delinquent taxes and partial payments
Chase Bank	Cafeteria Plan	\$25,745	Insurance funding account
Chase Bank	Capital Projects	\$4,473	Controlled disbursement account
Chase Bank	Bond Proposition 1	\$4,714	Controlled disbursement account
Chase Bank	Bond Proposition 2	\$3,318	Controlled disbursement account
Chase Bank	Bond Proposition 3	\$3,581	Controlled disbursement account
Chase Bank	Health Plan 1	\$41,332	Insurance funding
Chase Bank	Health Plan 2	\$6,059	Insurance funding
Chase Bank	Health Plan 3	\$59,675	Insurance funding
Total		\$1,971,372	

Source: DVISD Business 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 primary objectives of the district's investment policy, last updated in April 1998, are as follows:

SAFETY 1. Safety of principal is the foremost objective of the investment program. Investments of the district shall be undertaken in a manner that seeks to ensure the preservation of capital in the overall portfolio at all times.

LIQUIDITY 2. The district's investment portfolio will provide adequate liquidity to meet all debt service and operating expenses of the district as they arise.

YIELD 3. The district's investment portfolio will be designed to obtain the maximum rate of return available within all legal, legislated and mandated investment guidelines, giving effect to the district's risk constraints and cash flow requirements.

As of September 30, 2000, the date of the most recent quarterly investment report, the district had funds with a book value of approximately \$14.6 million in various investments allowed by its investment policy. **Exhibit 5-2** provides a description of the types of investment instruments in the district's portfolio.

**Exhibit 5-2
Description of Investments**

Type of Investment	Description
Direct Obligations of the U.S. government	Direct obligations of the U.S. government, its agencies with no stated maximum maturity from the date of purchase. The total portfolio may contain an unlimited percentage of this type security. No pro rata balance guideline exists in policy.
Other U.S. Obligations	Other obligations, the principal and interest on which are guaranteed or insured by, or backed by the full faith and credit of the United States. The total portfolio may contain an unlimited percentage of this type security. No pro rata balance guideline exists in policy.
Certificates of Deposit	Fully collateralized, non-negotiable certificates of deposit issued by a bank doing business in Texas. The total portfolio may contain an unlimited percentage of this type security. No pro rata balance guideline exists in policy.
Bankers' Acceptances	Prime domestic bankers' acceptances with a maximum maturity not to exceed 270 days. The total portfolio may contain an unlimited percentage of this type security. No pro rata balance guideline exists in policy.
Commercial Paper	Commercial paper that is rated, at time of purchase, not less than A1/P1 by at least two nationally recognized credit rating agencies, and with a maximum maturity not to exceed 270 days. The total portfolio may contain an unlimited percentage of this type security. No pro rata balance guideline exists in policy.
Repurchase Agreements (Repos)	Agreement between two parties whereby one sells the other a security at a specified price with a commitment to repurchase it at a later date for another specified price. These agreements have a defined termination date. Most repos are overnight

	transactions.
Constant Dollar Government Investment Pools	Entities created under the Public Funds Investment Act to invest public funds jointly on behalf of the entities that participate in the pool.
No Load Mutual Funds	As described in Sec. 2256.014, use of this instrument shall be limited to a "sweep account" in conjunction with the district's checking account(s) with its depository bank. The dollar-weighted average stated maturity must be 90 days or less.

Source: DVISD Policy Book.

Exhibit 5-3 summarizes the portfolio as of September 30, 2000 including monthly yield rates for September 2000.

**Exhibit 5-3
Investment Portfolio as of September 30, 2000**

Type of Investment	Book Value at September, 2000	Monthly Interest Rate	Percent of Portfolio
TexPool	\$5,614,309	6.44%	28.79%
LOGIC	\$216,695	6.36%	1.11%
MBIA Bank	\$332,709	6.32%	1.71%
Lone Star	\$917,222	6.49%	4.70%
Commercial Paper	\$7,487,000	6.62%	38.40%
Total	\$14,567,935		

Source: DVISD September 30, 2000 Investment Report.

Exhibit 5-4 describes the types of investments in the portfolio that are U.S. Government Securities.

**Exhibit 5-4
U.S. Government Securities Contained in Portfolio**

Type of Instrument	Book Value at September 30, 2000	Monthly Interest Rate	Percent of Portfolio
SLMA	\$215,000	6.13%	1.10%
FHLMC	\$1,956,976	6.05%	10.26%

FHLMC	\$1,951,538	6.11%	10.26%
FHLB	\$696,875	6.10%	3.67%
Total	\$4,820,389		

Source: DVISD September 30, 2000 Investment Report.

FINDING

Cash flow projections are vital for school districts to maximize interest earnings and plan appropriately. DVISD, prior to July 2000 did not prepare cash flow projections. Beginning in July 2000 the district began preparing cash flow projections for all accounts. Not relying on guesswork, the deputy superintendent for Business reviews proposed expenditures carefully and enters them into a pre-formatted spreadsheet tool. The next step is estimation of revenues to build a true cash flow statement. This is also completed in the pre-formatted spreadsheet tool.

More specifically, the deputy superintendent for Business tracks expenses weekly via the trial balance, then monthly when the trial balance is closed. Upon closure of the monthly trial balance, the deputy superintendent for Business estimates DVISD's accounts payable and payroll expenses for the upcoming month, in part based on expenditure history, and enters the figures in the cash flow forecasting tool.

The deputy superintendent for Business then estimates incoming revenues. Based on historical receipts, monthly incoming subsidies from the Texas Education Agency, the deputy superintendent for Business develops weekly and monthly estimates for incoming revenues.

Based upon weekly cash expenditure projections any surpluses are planned for investment during the month. The effect of this tool is to allow the district to maximize investment potential through the most efficient planning and cash management tools available to the district.

COMMENDATION

The district has developed a new cash forecasting tool which allows the district to manage the district investment portfolio more effectively than in previous years.

FINDING

DVISD does not have a policy for the diversification of investments in the general fund investment portfolio, thereby limiting investment returns. As of June 2000, the district was heavily (38.4 percent) invested in

Commercial paper. Commercial paper is a short-term unsecured promissory note issued directly to the investor or to a dealer. Commercial paper is offered by larger corporate borrowers at high interest rates. Higher risk and lower marketability reduce the attractiveness of commercial paper for most public cash management programs. While DVISD has earned competitive rates with Commercial paper, interest rates in Texpool are as competitive with greater security through pooling of funds.

On June 30, 2000, the largest portion of the district's investment portfolio was invested in commercial paper. According, to the district's standard operating procedures and investment policy, emphasis should be placed on safety of principal and liquidity, and must address investment diversification, yield and maturity. DVISD's policy CDA(H) Investments permits investing in U.S. Agency obligations and pooled investment funds. However, the district has relied on commercial paper as the main interest earning investment in the district's portfolio. The reliance on commercial paper in the district's investment portfolio was even heavier in previous fiscal years. **Exhibit 5-5** summarizes the district investment portfolio for the year ended 1998-1999.

**Exhibit 5-5
DVISD Investment Portfolio as of August 1999**

Description	Amount Invested	Percent of Portfolio	Interest Rate
Commercial Paper	\$31,811,194	72.4%	5.75%
Discount Note	\$209,608	.5%	5.38%
Texpool	\$847,615	1.9%	5.57%
LoneStar	\$11,092,340	25.2%	5.68%
Total	\$43,960,757	100%	

Source: DVISD Business Office 1998-99.

DVISD is classified as a type 3 payee for state funding purposes. A type 3 payee classification means that most of the district's state funding is received in September and October with a final payment in August of each fiscal year. Local property taxes are levied in October and become delinquent on February 1; the district typically collects more than 85 percent of its levy by the end of February. Thus, the district has excess funds for extended periods of time that can be invested. The district has improved the process of cash forecasting which will allow better

investment management and less reliance on higher risk investments such as commercial paper.

Exhibit 5-6 compares sample rates for various securities for September and October 2000.

Exhibit 5-6
Sample Investment Rates for September-October 2000

Type of Security	September 2000 Rate	October 2000 Rate
TexPool	6.57%	6.45%
LoneStar Liquidity Plus	6.53%	6.55%
LOGIC	6.48%	6.45%
90-day Agency	5.85%	6.46%
90 day Commercial Paper	5.95%	6.10%

Source: DVISD Business Office 2000.

At the end of the 1998-99 year the district had 72.4 percent of its total investment in commercial paper. At the end of the 1999-2000 year the district had 85.1 percent of its total investment in TexPool and 0 percent in commercial paper.

While there exists no policy on pro-ration of investment vehicles, diversification provides districts with greater security. The goal of diversification is to balance or spread risk and to minimize fluxuations in both the portfolio value and income. Diversification does not insure that a school district will not experience a loss but it does minimize the risk. Diversification requires judgment and thought and should be a major consideration when making investments.

Recommendation 38:

Revise board policy to increase investment diversification.

Determining the proper investment mix in the district's portfolio is driven by prudent cash forecasting techniques and daily management of the investment portfolio. Changing the current practice to lessen the heavy reliance on individual investments will lesson the volatility of the district's investment portfolio.

District personnel responsible for investments should be trained in the proper use of investment vehicles permitted under the Public Funds Act, U.S. Government Code 2256.013.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business develops a policy on investment portfolio benchmarks.	June 2001
2.	The board approves the policy on investment portfolio benchmarks.	July 2001
3.	The deputy superintendent for Business implements the approved investment portfolio benchmarks.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district does not verify the collateral position for institutional repurchase agreements. Through the district's depository agreement with Chase Bank, idle funds in district bank accounts may be invested in "sweep" repurchase agreements in an effort to earn more interest. Sweep repurchase agreements allow cash balances to be automatically transferred into interest-bearing investments then repurchased at a specific price and date. School Board policy permits such investments while not placing a limit on the amount of district funds allowed in these investment vehicles.

According to Policy CDA (H), CDA (L), and Government Code Section 2256.011, the district may use fully collateralized repurchase agreements that have a defined termination date and are secured by obligations of the United States or its agencies so long as the investment vehicles are pledged and held in the district's name.

Fully collateralized repurchase agreements are authorized investments if they have a defined termination date and are secured by obligations of the United States, its agencies or instrumentalities. The Public Funds Investment Act also requires that the securities being purchased by the school district be pledged to the district, be held in the district's name and be deposited at the time the investment is made. In addition, the repurchase agreement must be placed through a primary government securities dealer or financial institution doing business in Texas. Although not identified in the Public Funds Investment Act, a repurchase agreement should be executed under a Master Repurchase Agreement, which is a written contract that covers all repurchase transactions between two

parties and that establishes each party's rights in these transactions. Such an agreement will often specify, among other things, the right of the buyer or lender to liquidate the underlying securities in the event of default by the seller or borrower.

Recommendation 39:

Verify that depository "sweep" repurchase agreements are secured in compliance with the Public Funds Investment Act.

Monthly require the district's depository, or other institutions where repurchase agreements are used, to verify in writing that such agreements are being held consistent with Government Code 2256.011, and Board Policy CDA (H)-Investments.

All investments in treasuries, agencies and commercial paper should be held in the district's name and safekept by the trust department of the bank. The bank issues safekeeping receipts to the district, listing par amount, maturity date, discount/coupon rate and the CUSIP (Committee on Uniform Securities Identification Procedures) number.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business requires the district depository to provide monthly written verification of collateral when repurchase agreements are used.	July 2001
2.	The deputy superintendent for Business reports collateralization of repurchase agreements to the board each month.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 5

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

This chapter of the report addresses the asset and risk management functions of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in five sections:

A. CASH AND INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT (PART 2)

FINDING

The district has not updated the policy on investments since 1997. Policy CDA (H) Investments states that a review of the investment policy and investment strategies of the district shall be made at least annually. The board is required to adopt a written statement acknowledging that the review has been completed.

The board does not follow district policy in that an audit of management controls on investments, and adherence to the board's established investment policies has not been reviewed since 1998. Section 2256.005 of the Government Code requires school districts to annually review and adopt local investment policy and strategies.

The local investment policy must be written, primarily emphasizing the safety of principal and liquidity, and address investment diversification, yield, maturity and the quality and capability of investment management.

The school district investment policy must include the following elements:

- a list of the types of authorized investments in which the funds of the school district may be invested;
- the maximum allowable stated maturity of any individual investment, by fund, owned by the school district;
- for pooled fund groups, the maximum dollar-weighted average maturity allowed based on the stated final maturity date of the portfolio of any individual portfolio managed by the school district;
- methods to monitor the market price of investments acquired with public funds; and
- a requirement for settlement of all transactions, except investment pool funds and mutual funds, on a delivery versus payment basis, according to Section 2256.005(b)(4) of the Government Code.

A school district is also required to adopt a separate written investment strategy for each fund or pooled fund group (portfolio) under its control,

according to Section 2256.005(d) of the Government Code. Each investment strategy must describe the investment objectives for the fund using the following priorities in order of importance:

- Understanding the suitability of the investment to the financial requirements of the entity;
- Preservation and safety of principal;
- Liquidity;
- Marketability of the investment if the need arises to liquidate the investment before maturity ;
- Diversification of the investment portfolio; and
- Yield.

Each school district must customize its investment policy and strategies to meet board and administrative objectives as defined, as well as the unique conditions and resources of the district. School districts are required to review annually their investment policies and investment strategies, according to Section 2256.005(e) of the Government Code. Furthermore, the district must adopt a written instrument, such as a resolution, stating that it has reviewed the investment policy and investment strategies, and record any changes made to the policy or strategies.

A school district is also required to designate one or more of its employees (or other designee such as an investment adviser) as its investment officer to be responsible for the investment of funds, according to Section 2256.005(f) of the Government Code.

Recommendation 40:

Review Policies CDA (H) and CDA (L) Investments and update the policies to include benchmarks for investment vehicles.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business and the Treasurer review policies CDA (H) and CDA (L) updating the policies and including the investment strategies for the 2001-02 year.	July 2001
2.	The deputy superintendent for Business and the Treasurer present revised polices and investment strategies to the board for approval.	August 2001
3.	The deputy superintendent for Business develops a monitoring system to ensure investments are maintained in compliance with approved investment strategy.	August 2001
4.	The deputy superintendent for Business and the Treasurer revise	September

procedures to include timetables for when policies CDA (H) and CDA (L) are to be reviewed along with developing the investment strategy for the upcoming year.	2001
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FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district's depository posts payroll to employee bank accounts 24 hours earlier than the scheduled pay date. The district processes payroll 24 times per year, or twice per month. Employees who have their payroll deposited into their accounts through direct deposit have their pay deposited and available for withdrawal the day before the payroll is posted and available for other employees. The deputy superintendent for Business verified the current operation during an interview and stated that the early posting of payroll was enacted by the school board as an incentive for employees to use direct deposit.

Exhibit 5-7 details a summary of annual interest earnings lost.

**Exhibit 5-7
Lost Interest Earnings through Direct Deposit Processing Prior to
Actual Paydate**

Description	Amount
Number of Payrolls per Fiscal Year	24
Average Amount of Each Payroll	\$1,100,000
Average Direct Deposit Total Per Payroll	\$980,000
Total Direct Deposits per Fiscal Year	\$23,520,000
Average Daily Interest Rate	3.95%
Total Interest Lost	\$61,088

Source: DVISD deputy superintendent for Business and DVISD payroll secretaries.

As shown depositing the money early costs the district interest earnings.

Recommendation 41:

Post direct deposit payrolls on the actual pay date.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	Deputy superintendent for Business contacts the bank and makes arrangements to deposit payrolls on the actual pay day.	June 2001
2.	Deputy superintendent for Business deposits employee payrolls on actual pay day.	July 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

Exhibit 5-7 details the increased interest earnings to be realized by the district by the depository processing direct deposits on the actual pay date.

The fiscal impact of this recommendation is derived by multiplying the Total Direct Deposits per Fiscal Year by the Average Daily Interest Rate divided by 365 days multiplied by 24 days ($\$23,520,000 \times 3.95\% \div 365 \times 24$).

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Post direct deposit payrolls on the actual pay date.	\$61,088	\$61,088	\$61,088	\$61,088	\$61,088

FINDING

The district depository agreement does not include a provision for employee benefits, preventing the district from 100 percent direct deposit participation. According to the district, employees who do not participate in the direct deposit program do not have a banking relationship, therefore preventing them from direct depositing their paychecks. In many cases, employees do not use banking institutions and disincentives exist for the use of local banking institutions.

While the district has abided by the Texas Depository specification for banking services, the district has not moved pro-actively in requesting benefits for DVISD employees as part of the depository banking contract. Depository employee benefits may include:

- No fee checking or savings accounts;
- Discounts on loans;
- Discounts on brokerage services;
- Discounts for multiple accounts such as personal and business accounts;
- Incentives to purchase depository bank certificates of deposit;

- Reduced fees for Internet banking services.

While the district does not need to base the depository choice on employee benefits, competition among depositories will benefit the district. There are employees in the district who do not have bank accounts and cash their paychecks at local check cashing businesses. Since these employees do not presently have bank accounts, the district is prevented from moving to a full direct deposit payroll program.

Recommendation 42:

Require financial institutions to provide quotations for DVISD employee accounts as part of the district depository quotation process.

By requiring depositories to include a provision for employee benefits, employees who do not have bank accounts may establish accounts for receipt of their payroll direct deposit. Given the level of business the district brings to a depository relationship, this should be added to the specification listing.

If the district had 100 percent direct deposit participation among all employees, the district would reduce the amount of administrative time associated with processing paper paychecks.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business prepares specifications for district depository services including a provision for employee benefits.	July 2001
2.	The deputy superintendent for Business negotiates with respondents to include employee benefits.	August 2001
3.	The board approves the new depository agreement.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district has no security measures in place for the counting of cash in the administration building. Currently, the accounts receivable clerk, who also functions as the business office receptionist, counts and records incoming cash and other receipts. External audit reports have repeatedly identified this as an internal control weakness in the DVISD business

office. The DVISD business office standard operating procedure for counting cash and other incoming funds includes one employee recording incoming funds and executing the districts deposit. This places too much responsibility in the hands of one employee.

The district process of accounting for athletic receipts includes the transfer of large sums of cash to the district administration building where the accounts receivable clerk counts the cash. In many instances the accounts receivable clerk has been required to complete other tasks while counting the athletic receipts. When these situations occur, the cash is placed in a drawer for later counting. If the money has not been counted by the afternoon armored truck pickup time, the money is placed in the business office safe.

At some point after the deposit is prepared and submitted to the bank, the accounting supervisor and the deputy superintendent for Business approve the posting of daily deposits to the accounting system. This represents a clear breakdown in internal controls as no employee verifies that the monies received are all included on the deposits.

Recommendation 43:

Develop procedures that require two employees to participate in counting cash receipts and deposit of funds.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent of Business develops a set of cash counting and deposit standard operating procedures.	June 2001
2.	The deputy superintendent of Business requires the accounts payable secretary, along with another business office employee, count all incoming cash and prepare deposits.	July 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district does not secure the check-signing machine in the business office safe during times of non-usage. The DVISD manually signs all checks with a standard check signature machine, which uses a signature plate. This signature plate was observed fully engaged in the check signature machine on four separate days during this review.

During on-site data collection, a reviewer was able to enter the district business office vault, obtain a district check and proceed to the check signature machine unabated. In a worse case scenario, an individual might obtain a check, type an amount on the check and obtain a signature thereby being able to present an unapproved check for payment at the district's depository.

When the signature plate is engaged, anyone may use the machine to manually sign a check. This is a breakdown in internal controls, which could lead to fraudulent check signing.

Recommendation 44:

Develop procedures to secure the check machine signature plate during the day when not in use.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business locates a place to secure the signature plate while not in use.	July 2001
2.	The deputy superintendent for Business develops procedure to restrict access to secured area by limiting keys to only authorized employees.	July 2001
3.	The deputy superintendent for Business trains business office staff in procedures for securing check signature plate when not in use.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district issues accounts payable checks on a weekly, rather than monthly basis thereby limiting the potential investment earning on revenues. This processing schedule is the district's standard operating procedure and is intended to ensure the district makes timely payments to vendors.

This schedule limits the investment income for the district. By processing 52 accounts payable runs each year, the district does not maximize its investment potential.

Exhibit 5-8 presents a summary of accounts payable information. Issuing accounts payable checks on a monthly basis instead of a weekly basis will enable the district to keep approximately \$705,000 more invested in

interest earning accounts based upon the difference between average monthly accounts payable and the average weekly amount. The additional funds that would otherwise be deducted from district funds would remain in the account approximately three weeks longer earning interest.

**Exhibit 5-8
Accounts Payable**

Description	Amount
Number of Accounts Payable Runs per Fiscal Year	52
Average Amount of Each Accounts Payable Run	\$211,500
Average Monthly Amount of Accounts Payable	\$916,500
Total Accounts Payable per Fiscal Year	\$10,998,000
Amount Available for Investment by Changing Schedule	\$705,000
Average Daily Interest Rate	3.95%
Total Interest Lost	\$27,847

Source: DVISD deputy superintendent for Business and DVISD account payable secretaries.

Recommendation 45:

Process accounts payable on a monthly basis.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent of Business trains accounts payable staff on the procedures of processing monthly accounts payable runs.	July 2001
2.	The director of accounting develops monthly deadlines for processing of accounts payable.	July 2001
3.	The accounts payable secretaries notify vendors of change in accounts payable processing timelines through mailings.	August 2001
4.	The district begins processing accounts payable on a monthly basis.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of this recommendation is derived by multiplying the amount available for investment by changing schedule by the average daily interest rate (\$705,000 x 3.95%).

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Process accounts payable on a monthly basis.	\$27,847	\$27,847	\$27,847	\$27,847	\$27,847

FINDING

Accounts payable and payroll checks do not contain a watermark that displays the word "void" when copied. When district checks are processed and issued, an invitation exists for fraudulent activities since district checks do not contain a fraud-preventing watermark. District checks do not prevent fraud when copied by clearly displaying the word "void" on the check.

Recommendation 46:

Only purchase district checks containing a watermark to enhance fraud security.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business develops procedure that states that only checks with enhanced fraud security measures can be purchased.	June 2001
2.	The director of Purchasing orders new district checks with enhanced security measures.	June 2001
3.	The deputy superintendent for Business requires use of new checks.	July 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

District bank reconciliation's are not completed in a timely manner resulting in a significant breakdown in internal controls. Reconciliations are completed by the accounting supervisor. The external audit for the 2000 audit year reported that bank statements were not reconciled timely

and differences noted were not resolved monthly. Audits of the 1998 and 1999 years included similar findings.

When a month is concluded the district does not closeout the books in a timely manner which permits errors in the accounting system. When the month is closed-out, numerous adjusting entries are needed to make the financial system balance. Every year since 1997 the district has received a finding in the local audit regarding the material weaknesses in the financial statements because the district does not reconcile bank statements to the ledger in a timely manner.

The problems with bank reconciliations are ongoing. The new deputy superintendent for Business is struggling to correct the pervasive problem of improper and untimely bank reconciliations. **Exhibit 5-9** details the audit findings for bank reconciliation problems.

Exhibit 5-9
Summary of Audit Findings Due to
a Failure to Complete Bank Reconciliations

1997 Audit Finding	1998 Audit Findings	1999 Audit Finding	2000 Special Audit Finding	2000 Audit Finding
(97-1) "Bank account reconciliations were not completed in a timely manner."	(98-2) "Bank account reconciliations included reconciling items in error." (98-3) "Numerous audit adjustments were necessary to properly report current year transactions and prior year balances."	(99-1) "General ledger balances were not reconciled to the bank statements in a timely manner and included reconciling items in error."	(2000-6) "We noted that the bank reconciliation for the maintenance account is not being timely prepared and corrections made to the books of the district on a monthly basis. Numerous material adjustments and unresolved differences were noted on the bank reconciliations prepared monthly that had not been noted or resolved	(2000-1)The general ledger balances were not reconciled to the bank statements in a timely manner and material differences noted were not resolved monthly.

			promptly."	
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Source: DVISD audits of 1997, 1998, 1999, and 2000. Story and Stoval Special Audit issued July 14, 2000.

Timely bank reconciliations are necessary so that correction of errors can be made timely to accounting records. When bank reconciliations are not made timely errors continue in the accounting records and inaccurate reports are produced with those errors included. Delays in bank reconciliations also allow errors to go uncorrected in bank records that can interfere with proper cash management.

Recommendation 47:

Complete bank reconciliations in a timely manner and make corrections to accounts before the end of the month.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business develops a plan that enables reconciliations to be brought up to date.	June 2001
2.	The deputy superintendent for Business develops operating procedures requiring reconciliation's to be prepared immediately after the end of the month and for all necessary correcting entries to be made before the end of the month.	July 2001
3.	The deputy superintendent for Business includes in procedure the requirement that his approval is necessary on completed reconciliations so that he can monitor their completion.	July 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Food service funds were inappropriately co-mingled with maintenance funds until January 1, 2001 when a separate food service account was established. DVISD has 17 funds for which it must account each month. It is illegal to co-mingle food service revenues from student sales with other funds. The district has a history of food service deposits being made into the district's local maintenance fund.

Procedurally, each day the cafeterias collect and prepare deposits for the day's meal services. Cafeteria cashiers prepare deposit slips and the cafeteria managers approve the deposits. Cafeteria managers then proceed to make the daily deposits.

In accordance with the Texas Education Agency Financial Accountability System, Section 1.3.2.1, the school food service fund should be accounted for as a special revenue fund. DVISD does comply with this provision of the Financial Accountability System. The district did not, prior to January 1, 2001, account for deposits of food service revenue in a separate and distinct account.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, 7 CFR Chapter II, Sections 210.8, 210.14, and 210.15, school districts receiving funds under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) must comply with state guidelines for accounting for food service expenses and revenues. Moreover, Section 210.14(c), states that school districts must separate records of food service operations from other operations within the school district. This includes food service revenues.

COMMENDATION:

The district established a separate bank account so that food service funds can be accounted for separately.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district does not have a policy or standard operating procedure for the use of petty cash. Each school is allotted a petty cash account to make small purchases and emergency expenditures at the discretion of the supervisor. The board does not have a written policy and administrators do not have a set of standard procedures to follow in using petty cash. Petty cash accounts are reconciled and submitted for approval to the deputy superintendent for Business.

Each school holds a petty cash account of \$500. Monthly, or when the cash is depleted, receipts are summarized and submitted to the business office by school offices. Upon approval by the deputy superintendent for Business, the schools are reimbursed.

An absence of policies and procedures places employees who use and administer petty cash in a precarious position. Without comprehensive

policies and procedures the employees who administer the petty cash funds run the risk of using the funds for improper purchases and not adequately documenting their use.

Recommendation 48:

Develop a district policy and standard operating procedures for the use and administration of petty cash.

Procedures should fully address what the funds can be used for, the approvals required before acquisitions can be made, what documentation is needed for the purchase, when the petty cash account is to be replenished and the process to be used for replenishment.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business develops a district policy for petty cash and standard operating procedures for employees using petty cash accounts.	August 2001
2.	The board approves the new policy and procedures.	September 2001
3.	The business office manager trains all employees responsible for petty cash in using the new standard operating procedures in accordance with policies.	September 2001
4.	The deputy superintendent for Business implements petty cash policy.	October 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 5

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

This chapter of the report addresses the asset and risk management functions of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in five sections:

B. RISK MANAGEMENT

DVISD's insurance program consists of property and casualty insurance, group health care and employee benefit plans and workers' compensation insurance. **Exhibit 5-10** shows the district's property and casualty insurance coverages as of August 31, 2000.

Exhibit 5-10
DVISD Property Casualty Coverage as of August 31, 2000

Company	Type Coverage	Policy Limits	Deductible Amount	Policy Period	Premium Costs
North American Insurance Co.	Building and contents	\$79,569,777	\$5,000	3-01-00 to 3-01-01	\$41,896
North American Insurance Co.	Employee Dishonest Coverage	\$65,000	\$1,000	3-01-00 to 3-01-01	\$582
North American Insurance Co.	General Liability	\$1,000,000	None	3-01-00 to 3-01-01	\$6,880
North American Insurance Co.	Professional Legal Liability	\$1,000,000	\$2,000	3-01-00 to 3-01-01	\$5,780
North American Insurance Co.	Employee Benefits	\$1,000,000	\$1,000	3-01-00 to 3-01-01	\$341
North American	Inland Marine-	\$36,900 - \$1,512,584	\$250	3-01-00 to 3-01-	\$2,645

Insurance Co.	Equipment			01	
North American Insurance Co.	Auto Fleet	\$100,000 - \$300,000	\$25 / \$500	3-01-00 to 3-01-01	\$30,752
American National Life Insurance	Student Accident	\$5,000,000	\$25,000	09-01-00 to 08-31-01	\$19,575

Source: DVISD Business Office.

DVISD's Benefits Office resides in the Business Office under the supervision of the risk manager who reports to the deputy superintendent for Business. The risk manager helps the deputy superintendent evaluate employee benefit plans and monitor costs. In addition, a benefits clerk performs 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.

Section 22.004 of the Texas Education Code requires school districts to make available to its employees group health coverage provided by a risk pool, under a policy of insurance or group contract issued by an insurer. A district may provide other health care coverage such as vision or dental insurance.

During fiscal 1999 and 2000, the district offered employees a district sponsored self-funded health plan. During the second year, the plan was

significantly under funded with deficits exceeding \$1 million. The district moved in August 2000 to seek quotations from health care providers in an effort to replace the district's self-funded health care plan.

In September 2000, the district finalized a contract with CIGNA Healthcare with an effective date of November 1, 2000. **Exhibit 5-11** explains the various types of health care plans and **Exhibit 5-12** summarizes the features of DVISD's group health plan.

**Exhibit 5-11
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 Organizations (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

Source: Houston Area Health Care Coalition's (HCC) Employee Benefits and HCC's 1999 Healthcare Trend and Cost Survey.

**Exhibit 5-12
DVISD Summary of Health Benefits**

CIGNA Healthcare		
	In-Network	Out-of-Network
Calendar Year Deductible		
Individual	None	\$500
Family	None	\$1,000
Annual Out-of-Pocket Maximum		
Individual	\$2,000	\$3,000 plus deductible

Family Coinsurance Precertification Lifetime Maximum Pre-existing Condition Limitation	\$4,000 No Handled by Physician Unlimited No	\$6,000 plus deductible 70%/30% Member must obtain approval \$1,000,000 Yes
Physician Services Office Visits Primary Care Specialist Preventative Care Maternity Mental Health Specialists and Consultants	\$10 per visit \$10 per visit \$10 per visit \$10 per visit \$10 per visit/ No payment thereafter \$20 per visit individual outpatient \$10 per visit group therapy \$10 per visit	Not covered Not covered 30% of charges Not covered 30% of charges 50% of charges. 20 visits maximum per contract year. 30% of charges
Hospital Services Inpatient Outpatient Emergency Room Mental Health	\$250 per admission \$75 per use \$50 per visit, waived if admitted	\$250 per admission, then 30% 30% of charges 30% of charges \$250 per admission, then 30%
Substance Abuse	Covered as any other illness	Covered as any other illness
Diagnostic X-Ray and Lab	\$75 per use	30 % of charges
Rehabilitation and Physical Therapy	\$10 per visit	30% of charges; 60 days maximum per year.
TMJ Services Office Visits	\$10 per visit	30% of charges
Home Health Care	No copayment	30% of charges
Family Planning	\$10 per visit	30% of charges
Infertility Services	\$20 per visit	Not covered
Prescription Drugs	Retail: \$5 conav for	Retail: Subject to coinsurance and deductible.

	generic 30-day supply; \$10 copay for formulary 30-day supply; \$35 copay for non-formulary 30 day supply; Mail Order: \$10 copay for generic 90-day supply; \$40 copay for formulary 90-day supply; \$100 copay for non-formulary 90 day supply;	Mail Order: Not covered.
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Source: DVISD Business Office.

Exhibit 5-13 summarizes the DVISD life insurance program.

Exhibit 5-13
Summary of DVISD Life Insurance Coverage
As of May 2000

Coverage	Rate	Volume	Monthly Premium	Rate Guarantee
Basic Life	.140/\$1,000	\$8,904,000	\$1,246.56	2 years
AD&D	.020/\$1,000	\$8,904,000	\$178.08	2 years
Supplemental Life Employee:				
Under age 40	.15/\$1,000			2 years
40 and higher	.29/\$1,000			2 years
Supplemental Dependent Life Spouse:				
Under age 40	.15/\$1,000			2 years
40 and higher	.29/\$1,000			2 years

Children	.35/\$1,000 per family			2 years
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Source: DVISD Business Office.

Exhibit 5-14 summarizes the DVISD unemployment compensation program. The DVISD unemployment compensation program administrator is currently the Texas Association of School Boards.

**Exhibit 5-14
Summary of DVISD Unemployment Compensation Coverage
As of August 2000**

Coverage Period	Calendar Year Wages	2000-01 Rate	2000-01 Contribution
10-01-00 to 10-01-01	\$26,078,717	.001078	\$28,112.85

Source: DVISD Business Office.

Exhibit 5-15 summarizes the DVISD dental insurance program.

**Exhibit 5-15
Summary of DVISD Dental Insurance Coverage**

Category	Prepaid (DHMO) Plan	Discount Fee for Service	Indemnity: Shenandoah D	Indemnity: Shenandoah D with Orthodontics
Employee	\$8.07	\$4.90	\$17.50	\$17.50
Employee + one	\$15.05	\$9.50	\$30.00	\$33.75
Employee + family	\$19.60	\$13.50	\$44.00	\$51.75

Source: DVISD Business Office.

FINDING

The district has not issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for dental plan management since 1997. The dental plan provided by DVISD for district employees and their dependents is not required by the Texas Education Code but is provided as an additional benefit for employees should they

choose to participate. The current dental benefit program is managed by Compdent Corporation and was signed on October 1, 1997. The agreement term was for a period of one year. DVISD's agreement with Compdent Corporation does not have a contract extension provision; therefore, the district is operating without a valid contract. The district continues to compensate Compdent Corporation for services and processing of dental benefits for DVISD employees.

Under the agreement, benefit rates were guaranteed for one year from the effective date of the contract. Under this agreement, dental plan rates for DVISD employees expired on October 1, 1998 and efficacy is not measurable.

Recommendation 49:

Issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for dental program management services.

The district should administer the plan in a manner that ensures that the coverage is provided through a valid contract, is competitively priced and is comparable to that offered by other providers.

Further, because no district funds are being expended, one could argue that competitive procurement is not necessary. However to ensure the best price for district employees it is a sound management practice.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business, working with the benefits secretary, develops a bid specification package for dental program management services.	August 2001
2.	The benefits secretary advertises for quotations.	September 2001
3.	The deputy superintendent for Business summarizes and verifies quotations.	November 2001
4.	The board approves winning bid.	November 2001
5.	The deputy superintendent for Business executes the approved contract with dental program management firm.	January 2002
6.	The deputy superintendent for Business develops a procedure that requires an annual review of the dental program offered by the district.	January 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Recent changes in managing risks at DVISD has reduced the functions of the district's risk manager. The district employs a full-time director of risk management to oversee insurance programs as well as assess risk throughout the district. The risk manager's duties as detailed in the job description are to:

- Direct and manage the district's risk management, loss control, safety and/or employee benefits program.
- Direct workers' compensation, unemployment, employee insurance plan, and property and casualty insurance negotiations; make sound recommendations for selection of insurance brokers and carriers.
- Review and respond to all unemployment claims; serve as district representative for Texas Workforce Commission hearings.
- Coordinate employee safety programs.
- Perform other duties as assigned by the administration.
- Implement the policies established by federal and state law, State Board of Education rule, and local board policy in area of risk management.
- Compile, maintain and file all reports, records, and other documents required for risk management.
- Recommend sound policies to improve program.

A number of changes have taken place over the last two years, which have reduced or eliminated the need for this position. In the past two years the district has, in part:

- Eliminated the self-funded health insurance program. Employees in the district receive health care from an outside company, thus eliminating the need for daily health care program management.
- Changed Workers' Compensation carriers, thereby gaining the services of a company risk assessment analyst who provides services to the school district sites.
- Contracted COBRA compliance and notification to an outside agency for a minimal fee.

In addition, the district contracts for dental care, life insurance, disability insurance and other cafeteria plan coverages. The district has engaged the services of a Third Party Administrator for these coverages. Duties

currently required of the risk manager position do not justify the continuation of the position.

Recommendation 50:

Eliminate the position of risk manager and consolidate the duties with the deputy superintendent for Business and the benefits secretary.

The elimination of the risk manager position and assigning the functions directly to the superintendent for Business or to the benefits secretary will reduce staffing cost and will still provide adequate monitoring of the program.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AND TIMELINE

1	The superintendent proposes elimination of the risk manager to the board.	June 2001
2.	Transfer duties to deputy superintendent for Business and benefits clerk.	July 2001
3.	Eliminate the position of risk manager.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

Elimination of the position will produce salary savings of \$58,515 plus benefits of \$9,012 (15.4 percent) for a total of \$67,527 per year.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Eliminate the position of risk manager and consolidate the duties with the deputy superintendent for Business and the benefits secretary.	\$67,527	\$67,527	\$67,527	\$67,527	\$67,527

FINDING

The district experienced a planned shortfall of approximately \$1.4 million in 1999-2000 in the self-funded health insurance account. On November 30, 1999 the deputy superintendent for Business signed a contract with to provide third party administrator services (TPA) for the Del Valle ISD self funded health insurance plan. At the time of the signing of the service agreement, the district was in full knowledge of the plan deficit (**Exhibit 5-17**).

Additionally, the Plan Administrator attached an exhibit clearly stating that the fund was in deficit and would lose approximately \$1,069,527. Notwithstanding this projection, the school board approved the agreement, and the school district signed the agreement for third party administrator services. The district knew the program was not properly funded and proceeded into the new fiscal year without prudently funding the program, enforcing health insurance coverage limits or adequately informing the school board. During the 1998-1999 year, employees of the district were covered by a health insurance plan requiring the district to contribute \$160 per month per employee to the Plan. The district provided coverage for all full-time employees. Employees, at their choosing, authorized payroll deductions to purchase contributions for dependents. All contributions were paid to a third party administrator, acting on behalf of the self-funding pool.

The funding per employee of \$160 per month was inadequate to match the outflow in health plan expenses. By spring of 2000, the district was approaching an operating deficit of \$1.6 million. During this time the district authorized a transfer of funds from the Capital Projects fund of \$5,382,445 to offset loses in the health insurance fund, as well as the food service fund. This transfer also allowed the district to increase its fund balance.

In August 2000, the district began seeking quotations from health insurance providers as the self-funded plan was closed to employee participation. In September 2000, the district finalized a contract with CIGNA Healthcare with an effective date of November 1, 2000. CIGNA was the only respondent to the district's RFP for health care insurance. Employees are generally dissatisfied with their coverage, but the district was left with few options.

Exhibit 5-17
Del Valle ISD
Employee Welfare Benefit Plan
Service Agreement Insurance Premiums as
Approved on November 30, 1999

Plan A						
No. of Employees	Employee Cost	DVISD Cost	Total Cost	Total Contribution	Estimated Claims	Difference
283	\$34	\$160	\$194	\$660,182		
24	\$257	\$160	\$417	\$120,131		
61	\$203	\$160	\$363	\$265,745		
16	\$407	\$160	\$567	\$108,776		
				<u>\$1,154,834</u>	<u>\$1,971,118</u>	<u>(\$816,284)</u>
Plan B						
No. of Employees	Employee Cost	DVISD Cost	Total Cost	Total Contribution	Estimated Claims	Difference
275	\$0	\$160	\$160	\$528,000		
13	\$186	\$160	\$346	\$53,976		
41	\$140	\$160	\$300	\$147,600		
16	\$307	\$160	\$467	\$89,664		
				<u>\$819,240</u>	<u>\$806,588</u>	<u>\$12,652</u>
Plan C						
No. of Employees	Employee Cost	DVISD Cost	Total Cost	Total Contribution	Estimated Claims	Difference
0	-	\$160	\$160	-		
2	\$148	\$160	\$308	\$7,380		
13	\$109	\$160	\$269	\$41,948		
6	\$252	\$160	\$412	\$29,664		
				<u>\$78,992</u>	<u>\$11,716</u>	<u>\$67,276</u>
Totals						
No. of Employees				Total Contribution	Estimated Claims	Difference
558				\$1,188,182		
39				\$181,487		
115				\$455,294		
38				\$228,104		
750				<u>\$2,053,066</u>	<u>\$2,789,422</u>	<u>(\$736,356)</u>
Administrative Fee						\$333,172
Total Program Cost						\$3,122,594
Estimated Program Deficit						(\$1,069,527)
Contribution for Employees Not On Plan						\$3,456,600
Net Loss						(\$723,927)

Source: DVISD School Board minutes for November 30, 1999.

Recommendation 51:

Contact surrounding districts to determine if DVISD employees could receive better healthcare coverage under a cooperative arrangement.

While the State's Legislature is currently contemplating statewide coverage for school districts, it could be several years before the plan is fully implemented. Some districts, including districts as large as Dallas and Houston, are joining together to obtain coverage under one umbrella policy.

In analyzing a healthcare coverage plan, the district should carefully review the costs and benefits, provided by the current program, to be certain that the employees receive the greatest benefits at the lowest costs.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business contacts other districts to determine if employee health insurance can be cooperatively obtained through an umbrella policy.	June 2001
2.	The deputy superintendent for Business summarizes and verifies his findings and prepares a presentation to the board.	July 2001
3.	The board considers the options and determines the best course of action for DVISD.	August 2001
4.	The deputy superintendent for Business implements the board's selected option.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district's open enrollment period is not adhered to, causing personnel problems. An open enrollment period is provided to allow employees to make changes to insurance coverage. Employees are allowed to switch between offered plans, make changes to covered dependents, change life insurance and make changes to dental coverage. A limited open enrollment period is made available to limit the impact on administrative work required to make the changes including changes to payroll deductions. By consolidating the changes to a specific period the impact to administrative personnel can be planned for and changes made in an

orderly manner. Employees are advised in advance of the open enrollment period and urged to make any changes prior to September 30 of each year.

District administration allows employees to continue making changes after the deadline of September 30 each year. This non-adherence to the stated open enrollment timelines creates additional burdensome work for business office staff and negates the process of open enrollment.

Recommendation 52:

Require employees to adhere to the open enrollment period for regular changes to employee insurance coverages.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business notifies employees by email and memorandum of the district's plan to strictly adhere to the open enrollment timelines.	August 2001
2.	The deputy superintendent for Business closes the time for changes.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district has not explored a consortium of Travis County school districts to provide insurance coverages. DVISD participates in purchasing cooperatives that enable participants to pool their needs and acquire products or services in a cost effective manner. The same type of pooling of needs and resources has not been explored with other Travis County school districts general insurance coverages.

When school districts work in cooperative arrangements for the acquisition of products and services they are normally able to increase the quality of the products and reduce cost. DVISD has experienced difficulty in emerging from the financial difficulties of their self-funded health care experience. All Travis County school districts may benefit financially from forming an alliance for the purpose of entering the insurance market with greater economic power.

Recommendation 53:

Explore the feasibility of a regional alliance among school districts for the purchase of general insurances.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business contacts other districts and the Region 13 to determine who may be interested in forming an alliance for insurance purchasing.	September 2001
2.	The deputy superintendent for Business schedules and conducts a meeting among Travis County business officials and superintendents to assess feasibility of a insurance purchase cooperative.	October 2001
3.	The deputy superintendent for Business works with Region 13 to establish the alliance.	November 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district does not train all employees effectively regarding risks and workplace safety in an ongoing manner. An effective way to reduce workplace injuries and prevent accidents from happening is to provide inservice training for all employees on safety and risk reduction in the workplace.

DVISD requires new employees to attend a New Employee Orientation that includes risk and workplace safety training. The district also provides an annual refresher safety training for maintenance and custodial employees. Special topic training is held during the year.

According to the Texas Workers' Compensation Commission, DVISD is currently classified as a Hazardous Employer. The "Adjusted Injury Rate," as calculated by the Texas Workers' Compensation, is 1.85 times the Bureau of Labor Statistics Rate. Any school district with a rate of 1.70 or higher is classified as hazardous. DVISD does not provide adequate workplace safety training programs for all staff members.

Workers' Compensation claims from 1999-2000 as of July 31, 2000 showed \$647,516 in incurred costs; \$287,754 had been paid and \$358,762 remained outstanding. The current policy limits the districts total cost to \$489,639.

Exhibit 5-18 details the claims filed in 1999-2000.

**Exhibit 5-18
 DVISD Workers Compensation
 Injury Summary
 1999-2000**

Body Group Injured	Number of Injuries	Percent of Total Injuries
Upper Extremities	13	33.3%
Trunk	11	28.2%
Multiple Body Parts	8	20.5%
Lower Extremities	6	15.4%
Head	1	2.6%
Totals	39	100.0%

Source: Texas Workers' Compensation Commission.

The district has contracted with Liberty Mutual for Workers' Compensation to provide workers' compensation insurance coverage for the district's employees. As part of the contract, Liberty Mutual provides risk management services at no additional cost to the school district. These services include Liberty Mutual personnel inspecting each school site to identify and improve workplace safety and reduce injuries.

Recommendation 54:

Provide all employees with on-going workplace safety training.

Upon completion of a risk and workplace safety study, the district should provide safety training to all employees to improve safety and likely reduce workers' compensation injuries and claims.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business schedules a districtwide safety review program with district's insurance carrier.	August 2001
2.	The deputy superintendent for Business directs Liberty Mutual to schedule a series of campus building safety awareness programs.	September 2001
3.	The deputy superintendent for Business evaluates the effectiveness of the safety program.	February 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

If, through safety training, the district can reduce claims by even 5 percent the district will save \$24,482 annually (\$489,639 x 5 percent).

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Provide all employees with on-going workplace safety training.	\$0	\$24,482	\$24,482	\$24,482	\$24,482

Chapter 5

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

This chapter of the report addresses the asset and risk management functions of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in five sections:

C. FIXED ASSET MANAGEMENT

DVISD's deputy superintendent for Business has overall responsibility for fixed assets and reports to the superintendent. An accounting supervisor assists the deputy superintendent with 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 Guide* 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 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.

TEA guidelines also state that "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."

FINDING

The district does not have formal fixed-asset policies and procedures and does not require district personnel to conduct an inventory. As shown in **Exhibit 5-19**, 14 percent of DVISD's fixed assets include assets such as furniture, equipment and vehicles that can reasonably be inventoried.

Exhibit 5-19 shows the balances of DVISD's fixed assets as reported in the 1999-2000 financial statement.

Exhibit 5-19
Fixed Assets As Of
August 31, 2000

Description	Balance 8/31/00	Percent
Land	\$6,070,694	5.1%
Buildings	\$25,484,154	21.5%
Construction in Progress	\$70,248,367	59.4%
Furniture and Equipment	\$11,872,698	10.0%
Library Books	\$1,187,300	1.1%
Vehicles	\$3,477,075	2.9%
Total	\$118,340,288	100%

Source: DVISD 2000 Auditor's Report.

The fixed asset system has been inadequate for many years. As early as 1998, the business office staff raised concerns over fixed asset control weaknesses. In focus groups and interviews, the lack of a fixed asset appraisal and equipment security was a significant issue.

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 5-20** summarizes these best practices.

Exhibit 5-20
Best Practices for an Effective Fixed Assets Management System

Preliminary Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
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	effectively manage the system.
Creating the Fixed-Asset Management System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 svstem to support

	insurance coverage, budget requests, and asset replacements and upgrades.
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Source: Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts "Getting a Fix on Fixed Assets," City and County Financial Management, May 1999 Vol. 15 Issue 2.

Recommendation 55:

Develop and maintain a comprehensive fixed assets management system to ensure that district fixed assets are properly identified, monitored and safeguarded.

The process must begin by conducting a complete districtwide inventory of fixed assets to ensure that DVISD has a comprehensive database to begin with. 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 STRATEGY AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business advertises for proposals for a fixed asset inventory.	July 2001
2.	The board approves fixed asset inventory contract.	August 2001
3.	The winning firm conducts fixed asset inventory.	September 2001
4.	The deputy superintendent for Business develops a procedure to document the process that will be used in the district to ensure the inventory as maintain.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

It is estimated that a complete find asset inventory will require 1,500 hours to complete at \$10 per hour for a total of \$15,000.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
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Develop and maintain a comprehensive fixed assets management system to ensure that district fixed assets are properly identified, monitored and safeguarded.	(\$15,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
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Chapter 5

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

This chapter of the report addresses the asset and risk management functions of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in five sections:

D. BOND ISSUANCE AND INDEBTEDNESS

FINDING

The district does not take advantage of Tax and Revenue Anticipation Notes (TRAN's). School districts are able to borrow money on the anticipated revenue they will receive in the upcoming year based on the maximum anticipated cash flow deficit calculated in accordance with the United States Treasury regulations. The district can then invest this money at higher interest rates than the borrowing rates and receive substantial earnings.

DVISD is permitted under Texas Education Code 45.108, Section 26.012(7) of the Tax Code, and under the United States Internal Revenue Code to issue Tax and Revenue Anticipation Notes for the purpose of revenue enhancement. Districts may issue TRAN's equal to either the maximum deficit in any given month during a fiscal year, plus 5 percent of the prior years' working capital expenditures, not to exceed \$10 million per year. A district may not issue tax-exempt securities if the amount will exceed \$10 million per calendar year.

Recommendation 56:

Adopt a policy on the issuance of Tax and Revenue Anticipation Notes (TRANs) and issue TRANs in each year the district qualifies under IRS Code.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business determines cumulative cash flow deficit to assess TRAN eligibility.	October 2001
2.	The deputy superintendent for Business determines bond sale date.	October 2001
3.	The deputy superintendent for Business completes the request for proposals and sends the request for proposals along with the cash flow calculations to banks and financial institutions.	November 2001

4.	The deputy superintendent for Business determines the lowest net interest cost.	December 2001
5.	The deputy superintendent for Business invests TRAN proceeds.	January 2002
6.	The DVISD bond counsel files legal documents.	January 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

Using DVISD's most recent cash flow projections for fiscal 2000, the district's cumulative cash flow deficit is \$3,197,165. If the district adds 5 percent of the prior year's working capital expenditures, which equals \$1,800,000, the district's DVISD's maximum TRAN borrowing would be \$4,997,165. **Exhibit 5-21** details the interest earnings potential of a TRAN in the DVISD.

Exhibit 5-21 TRAN Estimated Interest Earnings

Description	Amount
Maximum TRAN borrowing permitted in 2000	\$4,997,165
Estimated Bond Rate from District Sale of TRAN	4.75%
Interest Payable One Year from TRAN Sale Date	\$237,365
Estimated Investment Earnings from TRAN Proceeds (if invested in TexPool or a similar instrument)	6.25%
Interest Earnings Payable One Year from TRAN Sale Date	\$312,323
Legal Fees for Filing TRAN with Government Agencies	(\$5,000)
TRAN Net Interest Earnings for DVISD	\$69,958

Source: DVISD Cash Flows Summary, United States Internal Revenue Service.

Interest earnings for the 2001-02 year reflect the sale of TRANs in February 2001. Fiscal impact based on seven months of interest less legal fees.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Adopt a policy on the issuance	\$38,725	\$69,958	\$69,958	\$69,958	\$69,958

of Tax and Revenue Anticipation Notes and issue TRAN's in each year the district qualifies under IRS Code.					
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Chapter 5

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

This chapter of the report addresses the asset and risk management functions of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in five sections:

E. INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AUDIT

State and federal law requires Texas school districts to have an annual independent audit of their financial statements. For fiscal 2000, DVISD has hired the firm of Freemon, Shapard & Story as their external auditor. For the fiscal years of 1997, 1998 and 1999 the firm of Gindler, Chappell, Morrison & Company P.C. was the district's auditor.

FINDING

DVISD received an unqualified opinion on the district's 1997 and 1999 annual financial reports and a qualified opinion in 1998.

An unqualified audit report is one in which the auditor found no significant problems that would impact the integrity of the financial statements. In other words, the district's annual financial report could be relied upon as being materially accurate. A qualified opinion is one in which the auditor found information or circumstances that could impact the accuracy of the district's financial statements. The 1998 report was issued with a qualified opinion due to the uncertainty that the district's year 2000 conversion plans would be successful and the unknown possible impact on operations.

DVISD has received numerous findings for internal control weaknesses, compliance issues and accounting errors. **Exhibit 5-22** details the findings in the audit reports of fiscal years 1998, 1999 and 2000.

Exhibit 5-22
Summary of Audit Findings

1998 Audit Report Findings	1999 Audit Report Findings	2000 Audit Report Findings
(98-1) "Employer's Quarterly Federal Tax Return and Texas Workforce Commission report for the third quarter were not timely	(99-1) "General ledger balances were not reconciled to the bank statements in a	(2000-1) " The general ledger balances were not reconciled to the

<p>filed". (98-2) "Bank account reconciliations included reconciling items in error." (98-3) "Numerous audit adjustments were necessary to properly report current year transactions and prior year balances." (98-4) "Several expenditure accounts were over budget at year end." (98-5) "Numerous purchases were made without approved purchase orders."</p>	<p>timely manner and included reconciling items in error." (99-2) "The district attempted to convert to a new accounting software program at the beginning of the fiscal year without running a parallel system to prevent delays in the processing of normal transactions. Because the conversion failed, the district did not have an accurate general ledger for the first four months of the year." (99-3) "The district failed to use TEA's Financial Accountability System Resource Guide prescribed account codes to record its transactions resulting in an excessive number of audit adjustments necessary to properly record current year transactions." (99-4) "The district's actual expenditures exceeded the approved budget in four functional categories." (99-5) "Several district organizations did not follow proper procurement procedures resulting in purchasing being</p>	<p>bank statements in a timely manner and material differences noted were not resolved monthly." (2000-2) "The District is not utilizing the correct accounting codes as prescribed by the TEA Financial Accountability System Resource Guide in all of its funds. This resulted in an excessive number of audit adjustments being required to properly record current year transactions in the correct expense account codes." (2000-3) The District's actual expenditures exceeded the approved budget in seven functional categories." (2000-4) "The interfund accounts for "due to/due from" and "transfer in/transfer out" did not reconcile at August 31, 2000. An extensive analysis and numerous adjusting entries had to be made to get these accounts in balance at year end." (2000-5) "The student activity fund transactions were</p>
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	made without approved purchase orders."	posted in fund 461 "Campus Activity Fund" during the year. Only funds relating to a principal's activity fund should be posted to fund 461. Student activity funds should continue to be posted to fund 865 as prescribed by the Resource Guide."
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Source: DVISD Audit Reports of 1998, 1999 and 2000.

FINDING

There are no internal auditing activities performed in DVISD. In most school districts and similar organizations, internal auditors have no operating responsibility or authority. The Texas State Auditor's Office recommends that school districts with annual expenditures of at least \$20 million or enrollment of 5,000 or more students would benefit from internal auditing services. DVISD has an expenditure budget of more than \$37.7 million and an enrollment of more than 6,000 students. Internal auditors 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, systems and other controls. The objective of internal auditing is to help management effectively discharge their responsibility by providing analyses, appraisals, recommendations and pertinent comments on the activities reviewed. The district has charged expenses to wrong accounts, requiring numerous adjusting entries in an effort to complete the trial balance at the end of the year. In addition, the district has been cited repeatedly since 1997 for not abiding by the *TEA Financial Accountability System Resource Guide*.

The former superintendent and some board members repeatedly purchased materials without a purchase order using their district-issued credit card and the credit card holder's secretary completed the accounting for these expenses. Some of these credit card expenses are questionable, and under review at this time.

Exhibit 5-23 describes the five general professional standards for internal auditors issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA). These standards exist as a guideline for districts when considering the employment of an internal auditor.

**Exhibit 5-23
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.

DVISD should follow the Institute of Internal Auditor recommendations on internal auditing standards when employing an internal auditor. In addition, the district should make the elimination of findings related to accounting inconsistencies a primary goal of the next audit.

Recommendation 57:

Hire an internal auditor.

DVISD has a history of internal control weaknesses, accounting errors and other deficiencies where the involvement of an internal auditor would be beneficial to the district. Many of these deficiencies have gone uncorrected for a number of years.

The internal auditor would report directly to the School Board Ad-Hoc Finance Committee and work in the board room. The auditor would review district expenditures to ensure that all spending is appropriate, within the approved budget and serve to prevent fraud in the school district. Additionally, the auditor may review all ledger and account postings for accuracy and compliance with the *TEA Financial Accountability System Resource Guide*. The internal auditor will submit monthly reports on internal control violations in order to make corrections and improve the district's budgeting and accounting systems.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business establishes a budget for the position of internal auditor.	July 2001
2.	The board's Ad-Hoc Finance Committee develops a job description for the position of internal auditor.	August 2001
3.	The board approves the position and job description.	September 2001
4.	The deputy superintendent for Business advertises for the position.	September 2001
5.	The board's Ad-Hoc Finance Committee interviews prospective candidates.	November 2001
6.	The board approves the Ad-Hoc Finance Committee's recommendation for hiring.	December 2001
7.	The internal auditor begins duties.	January 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

Adding the position of internal auditor will cost the district approximately \$51,930 annually. Annual costs are based on a salary of \$45,000 and fringe benefits of \$6,930 (15.4 percent). (Recent job announcements for openings in the area indicate salaries for comparable positions are in the range of \$40,000 to \$50,000 a year.)

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Hire an internal auditor.	(\$51,930)	(\$51,930)	(\$51,930)	(\$51,930)	(\$51,930)

FINDING

Understanding that TSPR does not conduct criminal investigations or fraud audits, the DVISD board and administration asked the review team

at the time they requested the audit, to determine if a fraud audit was warranted. As part of the review, TSPR looked carefully for evidence of fraud or the basic indicators that fraud was possible and/or probable.

In the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Inc., Journal of Accountancy column entitled *The Fraud Beat* for February 2001, Joseph Wells wrote that, "...fraud does not occur in isolation. All crime is a combination of motive and opportunity. The opportunity to commit fraud is typically addressed through internal controls-if the proper checks and balances exist, it is more difficult (though still not impossible) to defraud an organization."

DVISD does not have a strong system of internal controls as evidenced by a series of recommendations such as segregating duties, strengthening cash management controls and securing check writing machines.

There are also a number of instances sited throughout this report that indicate that even when there were procedures in place to deter fraud, the processes were overridden. For example, credit card charges were to have been approved and signed by the former business manager to ensure that abuses did not occur and reimbursements for non-district expenses were received. The former business manager did not sign the invoices, deferring instead to a clerical person without the expertise or authority to withhold payment or confront board members or the superintendent regarding questionable items. Further, no documentation was retained to prove that obvious non-district expenses were reimbursed by board members or the former superintendent.

Purchasing policies and guidelines are also not followed and bank reconciliations are not being completed in a timely manner. The external auditor has repeatedly cited the district for overspending of the budget without proper board authorization - all a symptom of circumvention of the internal control structure.

Joseph Wells further writes that one important aspect of detecting fraud is "[stepping] back from the books long enough to privately ask each employee they worked with a powerful but simple question: Do you suspect any fraud within this organization?" TSPR asked. Several high-ranking employees within DVISD's administration said they thought that fraud had occurred. The evidence that they pointed to included off-handed comments made about certain questionable expenditures and the conspicuous absence of documentation that would prove or disprove the appropriateness of expenditures. In attempting to validate these comments, TSPR found that documentation was indeed limited for many questionable items, making it difficult to trace the origin and history of expenditures. In one instance, the board and superintendent credit card purchases, TSPR

had to contact the bank and the individuals to recreate the bills and the history of reimbursement.

Another troubling sign that fraud is occurring is unexplained deficit expenditures in certain categories. As noted repeatedly throughout this report, the DVISD board and administration transferred funds that had been designated for capital improvements to deal with three fund deficits: food service, health insurance and the general fund balance. In particular, the losses associated with the health insurance program in the past are unexplained and the losses continue to mount.

While no one of these indicators would alone be symptomatic of fraud, taken together there is sufficient evidence to justify further investigation of the suspicions of the board and community.

Recommendation 58:

Conduct a fraud audit of the district's financial records, giving careful consideration to the unexplained losses of funds in food service, health insurance and the general fund.

The magnitude of the deficit incurred by the DVISD in its self-funded health insurance account in such a short period of time indicates that a review of the transactions associated with the program should be undertaken. A forensic audit should review checks, review requests for payments and verify money trails to provide the district with assurances that funds expended were proper and that all parties received correct payments for services actually performed.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business develops a bid specification package for a forensic audit.	July 2001
2.	The Board secretary advertises for quotations.	July 2001
3.	The deputy superintendent for Business reviews proposals and develops recommendation for board approval.	August 2001
4.	Board approves winning bid.	August 2001
5.	The deputy superintendent for Business executes a contract with the winning firm.	August 2001
6.	The deputy superintendent for Business reviews report and recommends appropriate action to the Board of Trustees.	December 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

The one-time cost of \$12,000 is arrived at by multiplying 120 hours times an hourly rate of \$100 per hour for an external forensic auditor.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Conduct a fraud audit of the districts financial records, giving careful consideration to the unexplained losses of funds in food service, health insurance and the general fund.	(\$12,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Chapter 6

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This chapter of the report addresses financial management of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in three sections:

- A. Organization and Management
- B. Budgeting
- C. Administrative Technology

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

DVISD's expenditure budget for 2000-01 is approximately \$42.8 million, while budgeted revenues were approximately \$43 million and are generated from local, state, federal and other sources such as investment income. **Exhibit 6-1** presents a summary of DVISD's budgeted expenditures by function for 1999-2000 and 2000-01.

Exhibit 6-1
Del Valle ISD and State Budgeted Expenditures by Function
as a Percentage of Total Expenditures
1999-2000 through 2000-01

Function (Code)	Del Valle 1999-2000	Percent of	State 1999-2000	Percent of	Del Valle 2000-2001	Percent of
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		Total		Total		Total
Instruction (11, 95)	\$19,239,159	50.7%	\$13,159,445,408	51.7%	\$20,782,324	48.5%
Instruction related services (12,13)	\$941,075	2.5%	\$666,296,654	2.6%	\$981,207	2.3%
Instructional leadership (21)	\$415,091	1.1%	\$311,220,547	1.2%	\$677,132	1.6%
School leadership (23)	\$1,609,803	4.2%	\$1,326,894,889	5.2%	\$2,068,041	4.8%
Support services-student (31,32,33)	\$1,439,079	3.8%	\$1,013,514,855	4.0%	\$1,729,489	4.0%
Student transportation (34)	\$1,723,480	4.5%	\$616,224,181	2.4%	\$2,493,247	5.8%
Food services (35)	\$1,802,022	4.7%	\$1,228,742,205	4.8%	\$2,126,240	5.0%
Co-curricular/extracurricular activities (36)	\$1,040,895	2.7%	\$580,840,151	2.3%	\$1,120,296	2.6%
Central administration (41,92)	\$1,966,738	5.2%	\$885,567,473	3.5%	\$1,901,967	4.4%
Plant maintenance and operations (51)	\$3,516,030	9.3%	\$2,445,463,630	9.6%	\$3,721,150	8.7%
Security and monitoring services (52)	\$56,004	0.1%	\$136,016,222	0.5%	\$129,574	0.3%
Data processing services (53)	\$59,299	0.2%	\$243,622,559	1.0%	\$126,398	0.3%
Other*	\$4,128,875	10.9%	\$2,853,112,784	11.2%	\$4,958,007	11.6%
Total Budgeted Expenditures	\$37,937,550	100%	\$25,466,959,558	100%	\$42,815,072	100%

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 1999-2000 and PEIMS 2000-2001.

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

Exhibit 6-2 shows how DVISD's budgeted funds were distributed in 1999-2000 compared to the regional and state averages. DVISD spent more on instruction, student transportation, and co-curricular/extracurricular activities, and spent less for school leadership, security and monitoring services.

Exhibit 6-2
DVISD, Peer Group, Region 13 and State Budgeted Expenditures by
Function
as a Percentage of Total Expenditures
1999-2000

Function (Code)	Del Valle	Peer Group	Region 13	State
Instruction (11,95)	50.7%	48.4%	48.5%	51.7%
Instruction related services (12,13)	2.5%	2.3%	2.1%	2.6%
Instructional leadership (21)	1.1%	1.0%	1.1%	1.2%
School leadership (23)	4.2%	4.9%	5.0%	5.2%
Support services-student (31,32,33)	3.8%	3.9%	3.4%	4.0%
Student transportation (34)	4.5%	3.7%	3.0%	2.4%
Food services (35)	4.7%	4.8%	4.6%	4.8%
Co-curricular/extracurricular activities (36)	2.7%	2.2%	1.9%	2.3%
Central administration (41,92)	5.2%	3.9%	3.4%	3.5%
Plant maintenance and operations (51)	9.3%	9.2%	8.3%	9.6%
Security and monitoring services (52)	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%	0.5%
Data processing services (53)	0.2%	0.9%	0.9%	1.0%
Other*	10.9%	14.7%	17.3%	11.2%

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

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

District expenditures per student increased 4.7 percent from 1996-97 to 1999-2000 (**Exhibit 6-3**).

Instruction and instructional leadership spending increased 4 percent, or \$125 per student, while school leadership expenditures decreased 10.8 percent.

Exhibit 6-3
DVISD Expenditures Per Student
1996-97 through 1999-2000

Expenditure Category	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	Percent Change 1996-97 to 1999-2000
Instruction and Instructional leadership	\$3,102	\$3,010	\$2,830	\$3,227	4.0%
School leadership	\$296	\$324	\$301	\$264	(10.8%)
Central administration	\$364	\$260	\$242	\$323	(11.3%)
Other operating	\$1,823	\$1,908	\$1,742	\$1,737	(4.7%)
Total operations	\$5,585	\$5,503	\$5,116	\$5,551	(0.6%)
Total non-operations	\$362	\$187	\$89	\$677	87.0%
Total per student	\$5,947	\$5,689	\$5,205	\$6,228	4.7%

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 1996-97-1999-2000.

Exhibit 6-4 presents a four-year summary of district revenues.

Exhibit 6-4
DVISD Budgeted Revenues by Source
1997-98 through 2000-2001

Revenue Source	1997-98 Revenues	Percent of all Revenues	1998-99 Revenues	Percent of all Revenues	1999-2000 Revenues	Percent of all Revenues	2000-01 Revenues	Percent of all Revenues	Percent Change 1997-98 to 2000-01
Local	\$16,670,911	55.5%	\$16,670,911	66.8%	\$26,791,137	71.4%	\$32,374,548	75.3%	94.2%
State	\$11,166,243	37.2%	\$6,095,000	24.4%	\$8,798,345	23.5%	\$8,090,347	18.8%	(27.5%)
Federal	\$990,000	3.3%	\$990,000	4.0%	\$1,350,000	3.6%	\$1,575,000	3.7%	59.1%

Other local and intermediate	\$1,197,000	4.0%	\$1,187,000	4.8%	\$575,000	1.5%	\$969,240	2.3%	(19.0%)
Total	\$30,024,154	100%	\$24,942,911	100%	\$37,514,482	100%	\$43,009,135	100%	43.3%

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 1998-2000 and PEIMS 2000-2001.

As illustrated in **Exhibit 6-4**, total revenues for the district increased from approximately \$30 million to about \$43 million, or 43.3 percent between 1997-98 and 2000-2001. During this same period, local revenues grew from \$16.7 million to \$32.4 million or 94.2 percent; federal revenues increased from nearly \$1 million to approximately \$1.6 million, or 59.1 percent due to increased Title I and National School Lunch Program funding. At the same time, state revenues decreased from \$11.2 million to \$8 million or 27.5 percent. Because of DVISD's increasing property wealth, district officials anticipate increased dependency on local revenue sources in the future.

Based on a review of DVISD tax records and interviews, the large growth rate is attributed to the influx of new commercial businesses, and the opening of Austin-Bergstrom International Airport. Additionally, new housing developments planned at the time of this review include over 600 new homes.

Exhibit 6-5 outlines budgeted revenues generated per student during 1999-2000 for DVISD and peer districts.

Exhibit 6-5
DVISD and Peer Districts Budgeted 1999-2000 Revenues per Student

District	1999-2000 Revenues per Student
Manor	\$8,660
Eanes	\$8,078
Georgetown	\$6,584
Hays	\$6,491
Bastrop	\$6,298
Del Valle	\$6,159
San Marcos	\$6,018

Lockhart	\$5,924
Peer Average	\$6,865

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

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. DVISD's 1999-2000 tax rate is \$1.614, consisting of \$1.482 M&O and \$.132 I&S. 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 may levy up to an additional \$0.50 per \$100 of taxable value for debt service taxes at the time its bonds are issued. DVISD receives nearly 72 percent of its revenues from local property taxes. 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, 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 \$23 per student in WADA from a combination of local and state resources. Districts with wealth above \$295,000 per WADA are subject to the wealth-reduction provisions of Chapter 41 of the Texas Education Code. For 1999-2000, DVISD's wealth per WADA was just under the limit at \$280,708. DVISD 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 2001-2002.

Texas Senate Bill 4 of 1999 added a new component to the education funding formula. Tier III funds, as the component is known, provides for local school districts to receive partial state funding for debt service requirements on previously issued bonds.

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.

DVISD has experienced a 46.9 percent increase in its property values since 1996. This reflects the construction boom that has continued in the district surrounding the new Austin-Bergstrom International Airport. The forecast for future property values is positive. **Exhibit 6-6** details this increase as well as other tax rates.

Exhibit 6-6
DVISD Tax Rates
1996-1997 through 1999-2000

Description	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	Percent Change 1996-97 to 1999-2000
Comptroller Certified Property Value	\$1,367,957,421	\$1,568,634,451	\$1,709,789,810	\$2,008,860,159*	46.9%
Property \$/WADA	\$240,798	\$261,560	\$273,124	\$280,708	16.6%
Adopted Tax Rate	\$1.4750	\$1.4750	\$1.6800	\$1.6140	9.4%
M&O Tax Rate	\$1.3800	\$1.3950	\$1.4800	\$1.4820	7.4%
I&S Tax Rate	\$.0950	\$.0800	\$.2000	\$.1320	38.9%
Total Students	4,876	5,230	5,625	6,091	24.9%

Source: Texas Education Agency, Snapshot 1997-2000 and Texas State Comptroller, Final Report 1997-2000.

*Preliminary

Nearly 63 percent of DVISD's property value is for business, compared to 32.2 percent average for other districts in Region 13 and 40.6 percent for the state. DVISD also has less residential property value than the state and regional averages. DVISD's commercial property has increased due to the rapid expansion of businesses such as AMD and Sematech. **Exhibit 6-7** presents a summary of property values by category.

Exhibit 6-7
DVISD, Region 13, State
and Peer District Property Values
by Category as a Percentage of Total Property Value
1999-2000

Entity	Business	Residential	Land	Oil and Gas	Other
Bastrop	21.7%	49.4%	26.2%	0.1%	2.7%
Eanes	24.3%	70.1%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Del Valle	62.8%	26.6%	9.2%	0.0%	1.4%
Georgetown	18.2%	70.7%	10.9%	0.0%	0.2%
Hays	22.3%	62.4%	14.3%	0.0%	1.0%
Lockhart	17.3%	46.2%	31.8%	0.4%	4.3%
Manor	82.8%	10.3%	6.2%	0.0%	0.7%
San Marcos	37.2%	52.8%	8.9%	0.0%	1.1%
Region 13	32.2%	57.6%	9.8%	0.4%	0.5%
State	40.6%	48.7%	7.3%	2.8%	0.6%

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 1999-2000.

In 1999-2000, 46 percent of Texas school district funds came from local property taxes, and 46.1 percent came from state funds. In the DVISD, 71.4 percent came from property tax, and 23.5 percent came from the state. The regional averages are 64 percent and 29 percent respectively (**Exhibit 6-8**). Compared to the region and state, DVISD derives more revenue from local property tax and gets a lesser percentage from state sources.

Exhibit 6-8
DVISD, Region 13, State and Peer District
Sources of Budgeted Revenue as a Percentage of Total Budgeted
Revenue
1999-2000

Entity	Local Property Tax	Other Local And Intermediate	State	Federal
Bastrop	34.2%	4.4%	58.4%	3.0%
Eanes	84.1%	8.0%	7.9%	0.0%
Del Valle	71.4%	1.5%	23.5%	3.6%
Georgetown	60.9%	6.5%	30.8%	1.9%
Hays	36.4%	3.3%	58.5%	1.8%
Lockhart	21.8%	4.3%	70.3%	3.6%
Manor	67.5%	22.8%	6.8%	2.9%
San Marcos	49.7%	3.8%	41.8%	4.7%
Region 13	64.3%	4.8%	28.7%	2.3%
State	46.0%	4.5%	46.1%	3.4%

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 1999-2000.

For 1999-2000, DVISD had a \$280,708 property value per student while having a tax rate higher than state and regional averages (**Exhibit 6-9**).

Exhibit 6-9
DVISD Tax Rate and Property Value per Student
Compared to Peer Districts, Region 13 and the State
1999-2000

Entity	Tax Rate	Value per Student
Hays	\$1.79	\$128,482
Manor	\$1.69	\$549,057
Eanes	\$1.67	\$546,646
Georgetown	\$1.62	\$248,125
Del Valle	\$1.61	\$280,708
Bastrop	\$1.52	\$145,170

San Marcos	\$1.44	\$209,657
Lockhart	\$1.41	\$91,813
Region 13	\$1.57	\$278,944
State	\$1.51	\$198,090

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 1999-2000.

Chapter 6

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

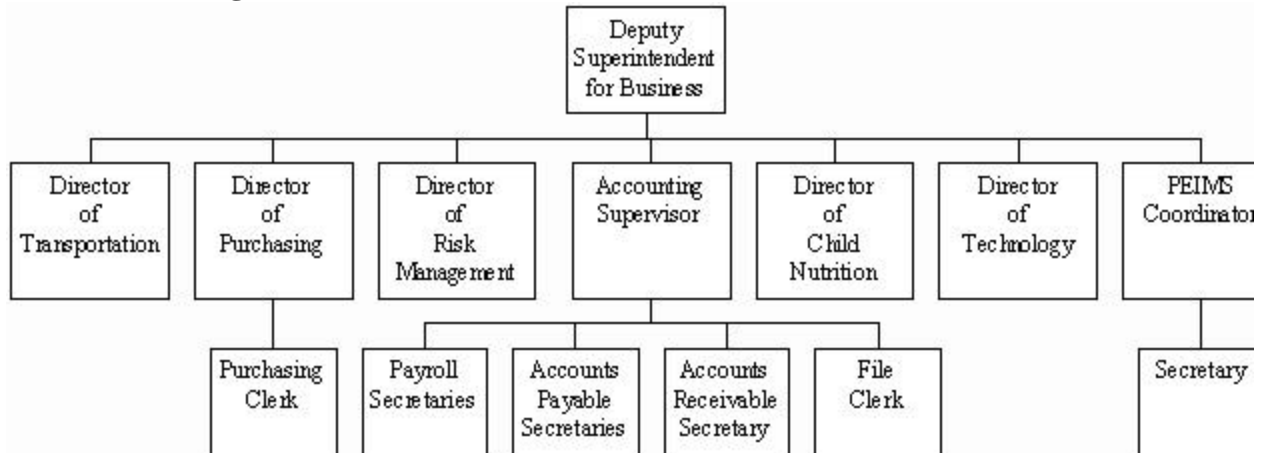
This chapter of the report addresses financial management of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in three sections:

A. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

The DVISD business office is led by the deputy superintendent for Business. The deputy superintendent also shares duties with the human resources office in terms of interviewing, evaluation and salary and benefit decisions. The deputy has an office support staff divided into the functional areas of accounting, accounts payable, payroll and accounts receivable. Eight staff members, distributed among the four functional areas, report to the accounting supervisor who is referred to as the office manager by the business office staff.

Exhibit 6-10 shows the organizational structure of DVISD's Business office.

Exhibit 6-10
Organization of the DVISD Business Office



Source: DVISD deputy superintendent for Business.

FINDING

Business office staff members are not cross-trained, thereby limiting the versatility of staff resources. If, for example, staff members are absent in the area of accounts payable, no other staff members are trained to assist in this process area. Consequently, vendor payments are delayed in the accounts payable process. When the payroll secretaries are absent, payroll questions are not answered for employees. When the insurance clerk is

absent, insurance and benefits matters are not completed. When the accounts receivable secretary is absent, cash and non-cash receipts are not counted and booked in a timely manner. This example applies across all functional areas. The lack of cross-training prevents the most efficient operation of the DVISD business office.

The district does not have a formal procedures manual that documents and governs all fiscal operations by functional area. In the absence of a procedures manual, business office employees cannot function outside of their area of responsibility. The lack of a procedures manual is a hindrance during times of prolonged illness or employee turnover.

Smaller districts often function without a formal written procedures manual because someone in the district has been responsible for a particular function for many years and others become dependent upon their institutional knowledge. Written procedures assist district personnel in following a process from beginning to end should they need to perform that function suddenly.

Recommendation 59:

Develop a formal procedures manual for the business office that details day-to-day operations and use this manual to cross-train business office staff.

Procedures manuals provide direction on the correct methods for processing specific transactions and serve as a training tool for new employees. In addition, procedures manuals provide a source of continuity and uniformity especially when there is turnover in staff.

Cross training in areas in which a person does not have primary job responsibilities is recommended. Through training in more than one process area, the deputy superintendent for Business will ensure that duties will be performed in a timely manner. Additionally, when employee turnover occurs, the district is protected during the time it takes to replace an employee.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business requires each business office staff member to prepare a procedures statement for their respective job.	September 2001
2.	The deputy superintendent for Business prepares the procedures manual.	November 2001
3.	The deputy superintendent for Business distributes the	January

	procedures manual and requires employees to follow the guidelines contained therein.	2002
4.	The deputy superintendent for Business develops a plan to cross train business office staff.	February 2002
5.	All business office employees are issued a business office procedures manual and provided in-service training on the manual.	February 2002
6.	The business office cross training begins.	March 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 6

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This chapter of the report addresses financial management of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in three sections:

B. BUDGETING

Texas school districts must comply with financial reporting guidelines in the TEA's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide*. The guide includes the accounting and reporting requirements of recognized generally accepted accounting principles, federally mandated auditing and financial reporting requirements and specific TEA accounting and financial reporting requirements. A district's annual audited financial statements must include all necessary financial information and related disclosures as prescribed by the *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide*.

The link between planning and budget preparation makes school district budgets unique. School district budgets are often considered the ultimate policy document since they are the financial plan a school district uses to achieve its goals and objectives. School district budgets reflect:

- Public choices about what goods and services the district will produce;
- District's priorities;
- Relative weight given to the influence of various participants and interest groups in the budget development process; and
- Methods a district employs to acquire and use its resources.

The budget itself is the method for ensuring that school district administrators are accountable to the taxpayers.

The state, TEA and local school districts formulate legal requirements for school district budgets. State and federal grants also may impose additional legal requirements.

District administrators and the superintendent are responsible for preparing district budget guidelines and the budget calendar. Because the guidelines and calendar create a framework for the entire budget development process, their careful design is critical to an efficient and effective process.

The development of a budget calendar lists critical dates for the preparation, submission and review of campus budgets for the school

district and are prepared at the district level. A variety of simple techniques are used to build a district budgeting calendar.

FINDING

The district does not hold community budget forums. Community budget forums provide a method for communicating the district's budget directly to the stakeholders in the community in a non-board meeting environment. Currently, the district budget is developed by central administration, presented to the board, deliberated in the boardroom and approved in the same room. This process limits community interaction with-and reaction to-the budget.

Communication with the Del Valle community is essential for building cooperative relationships, partnerships and trust. The development of a school district's budget is the single most important document the board approves. When a board approves a spending plan, and the subsequent taxing resolution, taxpayers and families with children in the district are directly impacted as they pay tax bills and send their children to the Del Valle schools.

Community communication strategies often include active participation of all district interest groups in the budgeting process. One strategy is the community forum.

Chapter 44 of the Texas Education Code, Subsection 004, specifies that when a budget is adopted, a notice of public meeting to discuss and adopt the budget shall be published in a daily, weekly, or biweekly newspaper published in the district. The board is required to hold a public meeting for discussion of the proposed budget. At the conclusion of the public meeting, the board may adopt the proposed budget or make changes and adopt the budget at a future meeting. Although DVISD complies with the regulations of Chapter 44, the community only receives information at this one mandated public budget hearing, but the community cannot fully assess the impact of the district's budget with only one opportunity being provided.

United ISD uses the community forum process to take this budget message to the parents, and general community in a non-formal session.

Recommendation 60:

Schedule and conduct community budget forums in each school building in July prior to adoption of the budget.

Parents and interested taxpayers are more likely to attend a budget discussion held at their child's school or the school closest to their home. By conducting these forums, the district will reach more citizens and better communicate the district's spending plan. These forums are scheduled to be held during the months of June and July. Additionally, when support for bond issues is needed, the school community forum permits school districts to educate the community about the bond issue and the budgetary needs for the upcoming fiscal year.

By scheduling community budget forums for budget discussion, the district will provide a vital community outreach program. More importantly, the board will hear community input allowing it to make better-informed decisions benefiting the children of the DVISD.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business and the superintendent present a plan for community budget forums to the board.	January 2002
2.	The board accepts the community budget forum plan.	February 2002
3.	The deputy superintendent for Business schedules budget forums through the school principal's office.	March 2002
4.	The director of Community Relations notifies DVISD employees and community of dates for the scheduled community budget forums.	April - May 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 6

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This chapter of the report addresses financial management of the Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) in three sections:

C. ADMINISTRATIVE TECHNOLOGY

FINDING

The board does not have a policy restricting the spending of capital projects funds. In 1998-99, the board elected to transfer funds designated for school construction to erase shortfalls in other district accounts caused by poor administration and planning.

When the decision was made to convert Bergstrom Air Force Base into the new Austin-Bergstrom International Airport, DVISD was directly affected, as the district had four schools in the airport's flight path. In 1998, the City of Austin purchased the school buildings and land for \$44 million. These funds entered the DVISD capital projects account with no requirements on their use as stated in the purchase agreement. The district was not legally obligated to use the funds for new schools.

The district acquired land, planned for and built four schools to replace those acquired by the City of Austin. The district funded these facilities by issuing \$38 million in bonds, to match the \$44 million received from the City of Austin. The schools that DVISD sold to the City of Austin were very old and in need of extensive repairs. The DVISD board was advised by the architects that \$44 million would not fund all the schools needed. Four schools were built with the original budget of \$82 million, including Baty Elementary, Hillcrest Elementary, Popham Elementary and Del Valle High School.

In 1998-99, as the building plans were moving forward, the district's health insurance fund was experiencing financial difficulties and began on a path approaching a deficit of approximately \$1 million because of significant under funding. The under funding consisted of artificially low contribution rates set by administration and higher than expected claims. Moreover, DVISD is too small for a self-insurance plan. In addition, the food service fund had a deficit from poor planning, lower than expected student participation, and high personnel costs and the technology fund had a deficit due to over spending and loose budgetary controls. The district's fund balance was being drawn down quickly as the district used the fund balance to offset general fund shortfalls.

With these financial missteps, the 1998-1999 budget was being affected severely in terms of overspending of accounts. The district administration asked the board to transfer a total of \$5.3 million from the capital projects account to the general fund to offset deficits in the food service fund of \$722,248 and in the technology fund of \$996,996. The remaining \$3.6 million was placed in the fund balance of the general fund to replenish funds previously depleted, which included approximately \$1 million for the health insurance program.

The actions taken by the board were not illegal because the funds received from the purchase of the school buildings by the City of Austin came with no strings attached and could have been placed directly in the General Fund. Because of poor financial management, it became necessary to use construction funds to bail out other district funds.

Recommendation 61:

Implement a board policy restricting capital project funds to the use of school construction only.

The only method for the board to erase the effects of poor management was to transfer funds designated to build schools. By implementing a policy and establishing standard operating procedures for transfers, the board will ensure that prudent financial stewardship over district funds will be the standard for the DVISD.

In addition, the policy should contain language determining what conditions must be present for a district inter-fund transfer to occur.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent develops a policy restricting all capital project funds to school construction projects only.	July 2001
2.	The board approves the policy.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Financial accountability at the campus level and district department offices does not exist because the district's administrative information system does not allow administrators access to financial data. Real-time

access to school financial data is not available because the system is not programmed to allow DVISD school administrators to have access to financial data to make the best possible decisions for the benefit of students. Administrators must contact the business office for financial accounting data.

The district pays Region 13 \$77,484 annually for the use of its DOS-based business application software.

The lack of information about individual school budgets has created difficulty in decision-making on the part of directors of elementary and secondary instruction, principals and teachers because they do not have real-time access to purchase order information, encumbrances, account code balances and campus budget balances. DVISD administrators cannot effectively plan and be held accountable for their budgets without the necessary financial information.

Recommendation 62:

Make financial accounting information available to campus and department administrators.

The district can accomplish this recommendation through permitting access by administrators to the existing financial management system in read-only mode.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business permits read-only access to financial data for school administrators and district department directors.	July 2001
2.	The deputy superintendent for Business trains school administrators and district department directors in the use of reading and analyzing financial data.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The business office administrative software system is antiquated and does not permit the deputy superintendent for Business necessary information to manage district finances. Central to a school district's financial operations is the management information system. DVISD operates its

financial management systems on Region 13 Education Service Center's DOS-based software. This software serves the district poorly in performance and has many limitations. Some examples of the limitations that affect the deputy superintendent for Business' ability to manage the business of the district:

- The purchasing process is not electronic, is not in real-time format, and prevents administration from access to reports and status of purchase orders and requisitions.
- Payroll and human resources are not inter-relational. For instance, when an employees' electronic personnel file is updated, the secretaries of payroll are not notified or made aware of the change. This has lead to employees being paid after they have left the district, or employees being paid an incorrect salary.
- School and district administrators cannot be held accountable for site-based budgets because they do not have access to school financial data.
- The purchasing function and the accounts payable function are not inter-relational. For instance, when a purchase order is issued and a partial shipment of an order received, the accounts payable secretaries have no way of knowing a partial order has been received and cannot process a partial payment. In addition, at least 10 instances of the district paying finance charges were observed because the purchasing department was prevented from electronically closing-out a purchase order and notifying accounts payable that vendor payments should be processed.
- Payroll staff cannot track substitute teachers and absences of staff members. School secretaries cannot load daily personnel information into the payroll system. For instance, the lack of updated, electronic teacher daily absences has resulted in payroll errors.
- The district's budgeting system is not integrated with the purchasing and payroll systems. For instance, when the budget is approved and loaded into the district general fund accounting structure, the budget is not loaded in the purchasing and payroll simultaneously. This prevents the payroll, and purchasing staff from access to the loaded data.
- Purchases are possible without proper documentation being entered into the system. During an analysis of the purchasing function by the review team, it was discovered that it is possible for district employees to make requested purchases before the purchase order is issued. This leads to duplicated paperwork, and purchases made without proper authorization. In some instances, sales taxes are paid by employees. This has prevented the deputy superintendent for Business from accessing accurate financial information.

- The software is not user friendly. Most administrative software systems are windows-based and easy to understand and use by all employees. The software DVISD is using is DOS-based and difficult to maneuver.
- The general ledger has been out of balance or functional categories over-expended, with the district being cited for this in the audit reports of fiscal 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000. Due to the lack of real-time financial summaries available to the deputy superintendent for Business, budgets have been over-expended. The deputy superintendent for Business is not aware of accounts which are over-expended, and therefore is unable to make the appropriate budgetary transfers. This is compounded by the lack of inter-relational structure of the present system.
- Fund transfers are out of balance and not traceable. As late as fiscal 1999, independent external audit reports cited the district for interfund transfers not reconciling. Under a system with effective double-entry controls, it should not be possible for a school district to financially closeout a month unless all transfers are in balance. To complete the fiscal 1999 audit, the local auditors were forced to complete an "extensive analysis and numerous adjusting entries" in balancing the accounts.
- The software does not allow for uploads and downloads into or from such tools as Microsoft Office. For instance, it is not possible for the deputy superintendent for Business to download financial information for use in modern spreadsheet tools. For instance, the system does not permit the deputy superintendent for Business to download school maintenance expenditures for trend line analysis or project estimating. This feature would be particularly useful in the preparation of accurate monthly board reports.
- Budgetary reports are unreliable. For instance, when the deputy superintendent for Business wants a monthly report of accounts, the data contained in the report is unreliable. The system will permit the user to print any report, regardless of whether the fund is in balance, without the purchasing department data, and without posting of payrolls. The consequence of this is to produce budget reports that are not accurate and reliable.

The impact to the district has been poor performance and less than peak efficiency in operations.

The DVISD administration recognizes that the Region 13 administrative software is not meeting its information needs. In 1998, the district attempted to implement a new administrative software platform. This attempt was poorly planned and failed with a significant impact on the district. During the conversion process, the district failed to run the old software parallel to the new software. When the new software was

determined to be failing, the district did not have a back-up plan with the old software. The district ceased the new software installation and reverted to the old program. The poor planning and execution of this resulted in an external audit finding in the fiscal 1999 audit report. **Exhibit 6-11** details the audit finding.

Exhibit 6-11
Fiscal 1999 Audit Finding Regarding
New Administrative Software Implementation

Audit Finding	District Response
(99-2) "The district attempted to convert to a new accounting software program at the beginning of the fiscal year without running a parallel system to prevent delays in the processing of normal transactions. Because the conversion failed, the district did not have an accurate general ledger for the first four months of the year."	(99-2) "The district canceled the software conversion and returned to its original software correcting the situation."

Source: DVISD Audit Report of 1999.

Recommendation 63:

Develop and issue a Request for Information for a new administrative software solution.

DVISD should perform a needs assessment before developing a request for information for a new administrative software system. Vital in the process of developing a needs assessment is requesting information on available solutions in the market today. Building administrators should have input in determining what information and reports would be useful at the school level. Moreover, the district should develop specifications that eliminate the weaknesses outlined above.

The district should include specifications in the request for information that permit regular upgrades, and comprehensive training for all staff who are proposed to use the new system.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business develops a needs assessment plan and schedule for an administrative software solution.	September 2001
2.	The deputy superintendent for Business and director of	October

	Technology conduct focus groups with district staff on end user needs.	2001
3.	The deputy superintendent for Business, assisted by the director of Technology, prepares the request for proposals based on needs assessment, and focus group data.	December 2001
4.	The board secretary advertises for proposals, and the request for information is released.	February 2002
5.	The deputy superintendent for Business summarizes and verifies information.	March 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

In fiscal 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000, the school district overspent the budget without prior board approval. Budget planning is key to not exceeding the board's approved budget plan. The day-to-day management and oversight of the budget is the responsibility of the deputy superintendent for Business. This translates into accountability for prudent business planning. When a budget is exceeded, the will of the school board and the trust of the community have been violated.

Financial controls prevent account over-expending before they happen. When a purchase order is prepared, it is not to be processed unless money exists in the account against which the charge is to occur. While the district's existing software is a catalyst in the problem, the district recognizes the need for a system that includes significant financial controls.

Exhibit 6-12 details the findings issued in the external audit reports of fiscal 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000.

Exhibit 6-12 Summary of Audit Findings

1997 Audit Report Finding	1998 Audit Report Findings	1999 Audit Report Findings	2000 Audit Report Findings
"Certain appropriations at the function	(98-3) "Numerous audit	(99-3) " The district failed to use TEA's Financial	(2000-2) " The District is not utilizing the correct

<p>expenditure level within the various fund groups were overexpended as shown in the financial statements Exhibit A-3."</p>	<p>adjustments were necessary to properly report current year transactions and prior year balances." (98-4) "Several expenditure accounts were over budget at year end."</p>	<p>Accountability System Resource Guide prescribed account codes to record its transactions, resulting in an excessive number of audit adjustments necessary to properly record current year transactions." (99-4) " The district's actual expenditures exceeded the approved budget in four functional categories."</p>	<p>accounting codes prescribed by the TEA Financial Accountability System Resource Guide in all of its funds. This resulted in an excessive number of audit adjustments being required to properly record current year transactions in the correct expense account codes." (2000-3) " The District's actual expenditures exceeded the approved budget in seven functional categories."</p>
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Source: DVISD Audit Reports of 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000.

The DVISD budget monitoring and purchasing process permits purchase orders to be written against accounts that do not have enough money or have a zero balance. This permits deficit account spending in each account line item which then escalates into a function code being in deficit spending. Because of poor financial controls and lack of proper oversight, the district has engaged in deficit spending since 1997.

Recommendation 64:

Develop verification procedures to require that budgeted funds be available prior to issuing and approving purchase orders.

With this recommendation, purchase orders should no longer be issued and approved if funds do not exist in the account line item. Procedures should be developed to allow district personnel to verify the availability of funds prior to creating a purchase order.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business develops verification	August 2001
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	procedures.	
2.	The deputy superintendent for Business trains relevant accounting staff on the purchase order verification system.	September 2001
3.	The verification procedures become effective.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 7

PURCHASING AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) purchasing, distribution and contract management in these sections:

- A. Purchasing Policies and Operations
- B. Warehousing Policies and Operations
- C. Textbook Policies and Procedures

The goal of a school district Purchasing Department is to purchase the best products, materials and services at the lowest practical prices within relevant statutes and policies.

BACKGROUND

An effective purchasing system requires several essential components. One of the most important is a good organization staffed with well-trained people. Roles and related responsibilities must be clearly defined and be adapted to meet the unique operating environment of the organization. Although purchasing organization structures may vary, most perform the following duties:

- Approves purchase orders and service contracts, including competitive procurement specifications and tabulations;
- Assists in the development and modification of purchasing policies and procedures and is responsible for their implementation;
- Resolves purchasing problems;
- Establishes good working relations with vendors, and monitors them;
- Communicates with vendors (for example, by setting up precompetitive procurement conferences and competitive procurement openings) and approves vendor communication with schools and departments;
- Provides training programs that ensure district staff is aware of relevant purchasing statutes, regulations and board policies; and
- Keeps staff current on purchasing statutes, regulations and practices by requiring them to attend various purchasing-related courses, seminars or workshops, and read current purchasing periodicals and books.

The purchasing administrator or an assistant typically prepares competitive procurement specifications, evaluates competitive procurement tabulations, maintains a vendor list, supervises the processing of purchase orders and evaluates the performance of vendors. Buyers and

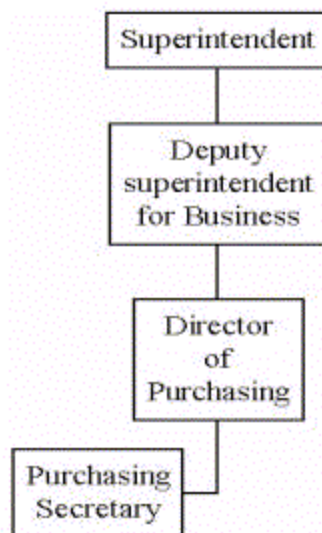
clerical staff typically write, review and modify specifications for competitive procurements; assist in the evaluation of competitive procurements; identify sources with competitive prices and terms; assist in maintaining an updated vendor list from which purchases can be made; and obtain and verify vendor price quotes.

In order to maximize the efficiency of its purchasing, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) recommends districts centralize purchasing. Centralized purchasing is essential to efficiency because:

- Small-volume purchases can be consolidated into larger volume purchases for the entire district;
- Vendors and the business community have a single central contact within the district;
- The Purchasing Department and its personnel have experience and are trained in purchasing, sourcing, pricing and vendor relations, which saves money and allows more efficiency; and
- The Purchasing Department and its personnel are trained in state and federal laws and local board policies applicable to purchasing, providing better compliance.

Exhibit 7-1 details the organizational chart for DVISD's purchasing department.

**Exhibit 7-1
Purchasing Department
Organizational Chart**



Source: DVISD Business Office interviews.

Chapter 7

PURCHASING AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) purchasing, distribution and contract management in these sections:

A. PURCHASING POLICES AND OPERATIONS

Competitive procurement methods, as outlined by the Texas Education Code (TEC), must be used for all school district purchases valued at \$25,000 or more in the aggregate for each 12-month period, except for contracts for the purchase of vehicle fuel and produce. For purchases valued between \$10,000 and \$25,000 in the aggregate over a 12-month period, the school district is required to obtain written or telephone price quotes from at least three suppliers. State laws prohibit the use of competitive bidding for certain types of professional services, including engineering, architectural, accounting and land surveying.

In 1995, the Texas Legislature added three methods of competitive procurement: design-build contracts, competitive sealed proposals and requests for proposals for personal property and construction contracts. In 1997, the Legislature included two additional methods: job-order contracts and contracts using construction managers. With these additions, school districts can select among eight methods for competitively purchasing goods valued at \$25,000 or more in the aggregate over a 12-month period (**Exhibit 7-2**).

Exhibit 7-2
Competitive Procurement Methods
\$25,000 or more over 12 months

Purchasing Methods	Method Description
Competitive bidding	Requires that bids be evaluated and awarded based solely upon bid specifications, terms and conditions contained in the request for bids, bid prices offered by suppliers and pertinent factors affecting contract performance. Forbids negotiation of prices of goods and services after proposal opening.
Competitive sealed proposals	Requires the same terms and conditions as competitive bidding, but allows changes in the nature of a proposal and prices after proposal opening.
Request for Proposals	Generates competitive sealed proposals and requires several key elements, including newspaper advertisement, notice to

	proposers, standard terms and conditions, special terms and conditions, a scope-of-work statement, acknowledgement form/response sheet, a felony conviction notice and a contract clause.
Catalog purchases	Provides an alternative to other procurement methods for the acquisition of computer equipment, software and services only.
Interlocal agreement	Provides a mechanism for agreements with other local governments, the state or a state agency to perform government services.
Design/build contract	Outlines a method of project delivery in which the school district contracts with a single entity for both design and construction of a project. (The single entity is usually a team of firms including a general contractor, architect and sometimes an engineer. One firm almost never performs both the design and the construction.)
Job Order Contracts	Provides for the use of a particular type of contract for jobs for minor repairs and alterations (manual labor work).
Construction management contracts	Outlines the use of a contract to construct, rehabilitate, alter or repair facilities using a professional construction manager.

Source: Texas Education Agency.

FINDING

DVISD maximizes purchasing opportunities through extensive use of joint purchasing. While the purchasing department is still in the early stages of operation, the director has quickly moved to take advantage of purchasing cooperatives and joint purchasing agreements. As of October 2000, the district participated in the following purchasing cooperatives:

- Regional Education Service Center 2, Multi-Regional Purchasing Cooperative;
- Regional Education Service Center 13, (Region 13) Central Texas Purchasing Cooperative; and
- The General Services Commission Purchasing Cooperative

From June 1998 to October 2000, the district saved an estimated \$250,000 through the use of purchasing cooperatives.

The director of Purchasing plans to further expand the use of these cooperatives by adding fuel oil and general supplies to the list of items the district purchases through cooperatives.

COMMENDATION

DVISD uses many local and statewide cooperative purchasing organizations, saving tax dollars through bulk and competitive bidding practices.

FINDING

A formal purchasing policy and procedures manual is not available for district departments or campuses. Currently, there are written board policies, but no standard operating procedures in place for making purchases. The last update to the DVISD policy on purchasing was in August 1999.

While the business office is willing to answer client questions regarding the purchasing process, 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. Therefore, when a person on a campus needs to purchase something, they are expected to either know the procedures, or call the Purchasing Department.

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 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 included as part of a financial and accounting manual.

Exhibit 7-3 details the essential bid and quote requirements in the DVISD purchasing process.

Exhibit 7-3 Bid and Quote Requirements

Purchase Levels	Bid Requirements (if no bid or contract exists)	Approval Requirements
More than \$25,000	Formal sealed bid.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Budget manager• Director of Purchasing• Superintendent or designee

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Trustees
\$10,001-\$25,000	Formal written quotations from at least three vendors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget manager • Director of Purchasing • Superintendent or designee
\$1,000 - \$10,000	Written quotations from at least three vendors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget manager • Director of Purchasing
\$100 - \$999	Telephone, fax or written quotations from at least three vendors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget manager • Director of Purchasing

Source: Texas General Services Commission.

Recommendation 65:

Develop a comprehensive purchasing policy and procedures manual for all offices in the Purchasing Department, campuses and departments, and place the manual on the district's Web page.

A formal, comprehensive policy and procedures manual will reduce the frustrations and inefficiencies in the purchasing process.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the deputy superintendent for Business to develop a comprehensive policy and procedures manual for employees.	June 2001
2.	The deputy superintendent for Business coordinates with the director of Purchasing to develop the policy and procedures manual.	June 2001
3.	The director of Purchasing contacts the Regional Service Center and other school districts for examples of good purchasing policy manuals to use as models and produces the policy and procedures manual for DVISD.	June - September 2001
4.	The director of Purchasing, in conjunction with the director of	September

	Technology, places the manual on the district's Web site.	2001
5.	The director of Purchasing develops training for use of the manual.	October 2001
6.	The director of Purchasing conducts training courses for department and campus representatives.	October 2001
7.	The director of Purchasing distributes the comprehensive policy and procedures manual to each department and school.	October 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

DVISD currently uses an inefficient manual purchase order system, rather than an automated system.

The existing purchasing process is cumbersome, ineffective and a disincentive for acquiring supplies through the district's approved process. Numerous difficulties have arisen as a result of the manual purchasing process, including the inability of DVISD management staff to access purchasing reports and the status of purchase orders and requisitions; the possibility of district employees making purchases before purchase orders are issued which leads to duplicated paperwork and purchases being made without proper authorization, and in some instances sales tax being paid; and the inability of the accounts payable department to process partial shipments of orders received. In audits of fiscal 1998 and 1999, the district was cited for employees making purchases outside of the approved purchasing process without supervisor approval.

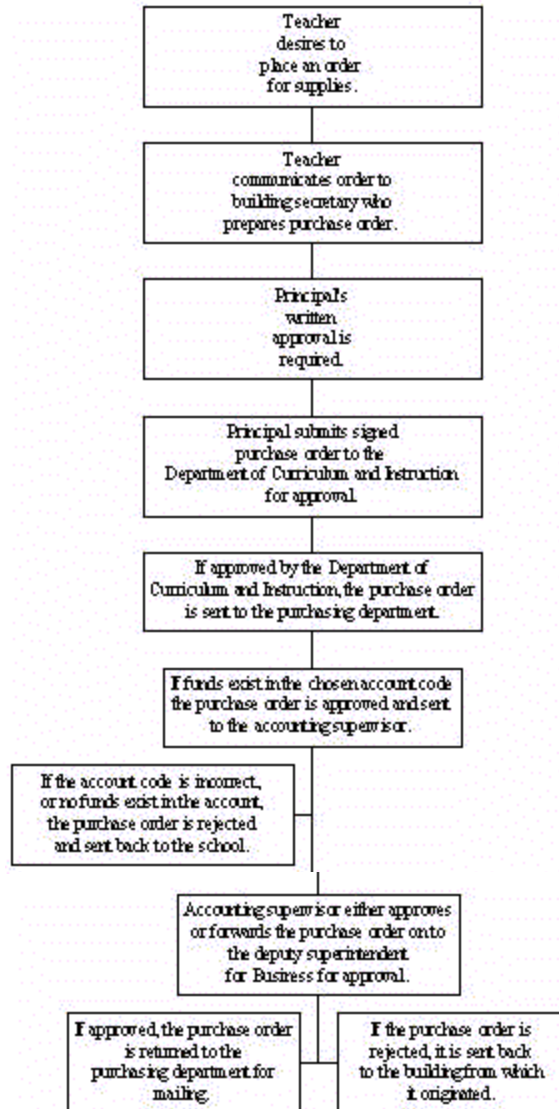
DVISD's existing purchase order consists of six items:

- Vendor copy (white)-this copy is mailed to the vendor for fulfillment of the order;
- Accounting copy (yellow)-this copy is sent to the accounts payable secretary;
- School copy (pink)-this copy is sent to the school office of origination;
- Back order copy (green)-this copy is retained in the purchasing department for reconciliation;
- Numerical copy (blue)-this copy is sent to the purchasing department;

- Inventory control (gold)-this copy is held by the purchasing department or maintenance department for inventory reconciliation;

Exhibit 7-4 details the process for making a typical purchase at DVISD.

**Exhibit 7-4
DVISD Typical Purchasing
Chain-of-Events**



Source: DVISD interviews with director of Purchasing and deputy superintendent for Business.

The district's financial software, Regional Service Center Computer Cooperative (RSCCC), has an automated purchase order module, but DVISD's Purchasing Department does not use it in part because the

Administration Building is not connected to all of the district's other building offices and the software has many limitations.

Recommendation 66:

Automate the purchase requisition and order process.

Without an efficient, electronic purchasing program, fraud and abuse may be present in the purchasing process. While a new administrative software solution is being sought, DVISD should use Region 13's automated purchase order module to automate the purchase order function. E-mail communication can be used to facilitate communication among unconnected buildings until connection can be established.

Despite current software limitations, with automated purchase orders DVISD could simplify data entry, provide automatic checking of fund availability and generate management reports showing purchasing volumes by vendor or purchasing category. Automated purchase orders also could allow electronic approval by department heads and financial administrators, resulting in improved turn-around times for mailing purchase orders. Specifications for future purchase requisition and order software should be included in any future administrative software upgrades.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business asks the director of Technology to implement the Region 13 computerized system for purchase orders.	July 2001
2.	The director of Technology activates the Region 13 purchase order module.	July 2001
3.	The director of Technology provides user training.	October 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

The recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

DVISD does not formally track key performance data or use performance measures to monitor the performance of the Purchasing Department. During TSPR's review, the district expressed a need for additional purchasing personnel. However, without access to historical performance, there are no supporting data to justify the request. There were no data

indicating an increase in workload, only an assumption that as the district grows, so will the amount of work.

Performance measures provide benchmarks that allow management to evaluate its performance over time compared to other districts and industry. **Exhibit 7-5** outlines sample performance measures for three key purchasing duties.

Exhibit 7-5
Examples of Performance Measures

Type of Performance Measure	Sample Effectiveness and Efficiency Measures
Financial Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of purchase orders by amount. • Cost of operating purchasing as a 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 a percent of the total budget.
Cycle Time and Productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 one-year reporting period.

Source: Center for Advanced Purchasing Studies, 1997.

Recommendation 67:

Develop and use key performance measures to aid in the management of DVISD's purchasing operations.

By calculating and analyzing key financial, cycle time and supply performance measures on a regular basis, a purchasing agent can identify key variances in departmental costs and supplier performance, and better manage department operations.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent charges the director of Purchasing to develop performance measures for Purchasing.	June 2001
2.	The deputy superintendent for Business works with the director of Purchasing to develop performance measures.	July 2001
3.	The director of Purchasing coordinates with the director of Technology to develop the required management reports, which would allow the director to monitor the performance of the Purchasing Department.	September 2001
4.	The director of Purchasing processes the required reports on a quarterly basis.	October 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 7

PURCHASING AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) purchasing, distribution and contract management in these sections:

B. WAREHOUSING POLICIES AND OPERATIONS

An efficient warehouse operation should ensure that all purchases and deliveries to schools and departments are complete and timely, and that inventory levels are sufficient to meet requests for supplies from individual schools and departments. It also ensures that property and equipment are accounted for properly and controlled; and surplus or obsolete property is properly disposed of and removed from district records.

FINDING

DVISD has no central warehouse. Because purchases must be delivered to various locations, the district cannot maximize the use of purchasing cooperatives or take advantage of discounts on additional large-scale purchasing opportunities. District purchases in 1999-2000 exceeded \$13 million.

One pallet of copy paper containing 40 cases of paper recently was quoted at a price per case of \$34. An order of 50 pallets, or 2,000 cases, dropped the price to \$25.25 a case—a savings of \$8.75 per case. Similar savings were quoted for toilet paper. The price of one case of toilet paper was quoted at \$46.80; however, an order of 500 cases dropped the price to \$33 per case—a savings of \$13.80 per case. Savings on paper, at a savings rate of \$8.75 per case, could exceed \$50,000 per year. Other bulk supplies would generate additional savings for the district.

However, the Wimberly Independent School District (WISD) saves administrative time and overhead by delivering merchandise directly to schools. WISD processes purchase orders to obtain supplies and materials as needed. All supplies and materials are delivered directly to the schools allowing the district to avoid the additional costs associated with operating a central warehouse, such as staffing and maintaining a warehouse facility.

Recommendation 68:

Conduct a feasibility study to determine if opening a central warehouse would be beneficial.

Some of the factors to be considered in the feasibility study include renovation of existing school facilities, moving items to the newly constructed facility, security measures, the total number of purchases that would be affected, increased staff, estimated savings and increased needs due to the expected growth of the district. Maintenance costs should also be determined in the feasibility study.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent asks the board to approve a feasibility study.	June 2001
2.	The superintendent directs the deputy superintendent for Business to conduct a feasibility study.	June 2001
3.	The deputy superintendent for Business appoints a committee to conduct the feasibility study.	June 2001
4.	The committee conducts the feasibility study.	July- August 2001
5.	The committee reports the findings of the feasibility study to the board.	September 2001
6.	The board determines if the district should build or purchase a warehouse.	October 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 7

PURCHASING AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) purchasing, distribution and contract management in these sections:

C. TEXTBOOK POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

TEA is responsible for selecting and purchasing most of the textbooks used in Texas school districts. Each year, TEA provides districts with a list of recommended textbooks, 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 order 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 district officials report the data 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.

FINDING

The district's textbook process is in transition from a disorganized system in which the districtwide textbook custodian had other duties and operated the textbook system consistent with a small school district. For example, the textbooks are received in the administration building, placed in the hall, sorted and sent to the appropriate school. Other factors such as having no central warehouse also contributed to the disorganization of the system.

This disorganization left some classrooms without necessary textbooks. Participants at the bilingual teacher focus group stated that some bilingual

classrooms did not have the appropriate number of textbooks. Comments about the lack of bilingual textbooks are also found in TSPR surveys of the district.

In addition, the district's disorganized textbook collection system contributed to a number of textbooks not being returned at the end of the school year, which resulted in a high cost paid to TEA for replacement of textbooks. **Exhibit 7-6** displays the amounts paid to TEA by DVISD and its peer districts. Only one district paid more than DVISD for lost textbooks.

**Exhibit 7-6
Peer Districts Payments to TEA
1997-2000**

School District	1997	1998	1999	2000	Total
Del Valle	\$10,373	\$1,898	\$0	\$4,475	\$16,746
Lockhart	\$2,258	\$1,809	\$1,978	\$1,033	\$7,078
Georgetown	\$0	\$6,638	\$0	\$0	\$6,638
Hays	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Manor	\$4,680	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,680
Eanes	\$1,663	\$8,528	\$8,775	\$9,944	\$28,910
Bastrop	\$3,485	\$5,675	\$0	\$0	\$9,160

Source: Texas Education Agency, Textbook Administration Office.

The district has a newly appointed textbook custodian who is learning the requirements of the position. The custodian does not have the TEA publication entitled "The New Textbook Coordinator's Manual" or other resources such as Austin ISD's "A Guide to Textbooks." The new custodian has attended training sessions conducted by various companies; however, thus far the custodian does not have any of the standard systems in place, such as:

- a secure receiving place in the warehouse for the incoming textbooks;
- a system for determining the number and type of textbooks to be given to each classroom;
- an electronic tracking system for textbooks; and
- a procedure for getting funds from individual schools for lost and/or destroyed textbooks.

Recommendation 69:

Establish standard operating procedures for textbook distribution and collection.

Part of the standard operating procedures should be the development of a Guide to Textbooks like the one published by Austin ISD. Recommendation 116 of TSPR's review of Austin ISD included a sample of Austin ISD's textbook procedures. The TEA publication entitled "The New Textbook Coordinator's Manual" should also be considered when developing the DVISD guide. A copy of Austin ISD's guide is available from Austin ISD and the TEA publication is available online at ww.tea.state.us.textbooks or in print from TEA.

Campuses should be required to carefully control textbook activities by:

- taking an annual inventory of all instructional materials, 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.

As part of the proposed feasibility study on the central warehouse, a secure area should be identified for the textbook storage.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The newly appointed districtwide textbook custodian develops procedures for the textbook distribution and collection process.	August 2001
2.	The newly appointed districtwide custodian meets with the superintendent, assistant superintendent for business, executive directors of curriculum and warehouse supervisor to present the textbook distribution and collection process.	September 2001
3.	The superintendent approves the process, and modifies it if necessary.	September 2001
4.	The process is implemented.	October 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

DVISD does not have a computerized textbook management system in place at all schools. The ordering, distribution and redistribution of textbooks is done and documented via a paper management system. School-based textbook custodians also use the paper-based requisition and distribution system.

A textbook inventory program is in place at the middle school and high school and the newly appointed districtwide textbook custodian has attended a training session for the program sponsored by the company. The system became operational in 1999-2000. The five elementary schools continue to operate manually.

Recommendation 70:

Purchase a textbook management inventory system for each elementary campus and maintenance agreements for elementary, junior high and high school campuses.

The system should include a computerized system such as the Textbook Inventory Program currently available at the middle and high schools.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent meets with the districtwide textbook custodian, deputy superintendent for Business, and representatives from textbook inventory companies to discuss purchasing a textbook inventory program.	June 2001
2.	The superintendent makes purchasing decision with input from the textbook custodian and deputy superintendent for Business.	July 2001
3.	A training session for DVISD staff is conducted.	July 2001
4.	Textbook inventory program is implemented.	July 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

The same or similar textbook inventory programs should be purchased for each of the five elementary schools in the district for \$995 per school ($\$995 \times 5 = \$4,975$) and the maintenance agreement could be purchased for \$100 per year for each of DVISD's seven schools. The district should

purchase the system for each of the remaining schools and the maintenance agreement for all schools.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Purchase a textbook management inventory system for each elementary campus.	(\$4,975)				
Purchase maintenance agreements for elementary, junior high and high school campuses.	(\$700)	(\$700)	(\$700)	(\$700)	(\$700)

Chapter 8

FOOD SERVICES

This chapter examines the Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) food services in two sections:

- A. Organization and Management
- B. Financial Management

Food service operations in schools are responsible for providing students and staff a nutritious breakfast and lunch served at a reasonable cost in a safe, clean and accessible environment. Each of these responsibilities must comply with federal and state regulations, as well as local school board policy. The school lunch program's predominant goal, as defined under the National School Lunch Plan, is to provide proper nutrition to all students so they can learn and succeed in the classroom.

BACKGROUND

The National School Lunch Act (NSLA) requires school meals that "safeguard the health and well-being of the Nation's children." Participating schools must serve lunches that are consistent with the applicable recommendations of the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans. These guidelines recommend people: eat a variety of foods; choose a diet with plenty of grain products, vegetables and fruits; choose a diet moderate in sugars and salt; and choose a diet with 30 percent or less of calories from fat and less than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat.

In addition, lunches must provide, on average over each school week, at least one-third of the daily Recommended Dietary Allowances for protein, iron, calcium and vitamins A and C. Under the Traditional Food-Based Menu Planning Approach, which is the approved National School Lunch Plan process for menu planning, schools also must offer five food items from four food components. These components are: meat or meat alternate, vegetables and/or fruits, grains/breads and milk. This menu format is known as the Type-A meal. Minimum portion sizes are established by age and grade groups. The National School Lunch Program permits approved snacks to be sold in all cafeterias in addition to breakfast and lunch.

The Texas School Food Service Association (TSFSA) has identified 10 standards of excellence for evaluating school food service programs. TSFSA states effective programs should:

- Identify and meet current and future needs through organization, planning, direction and control;
- Maintain financial accountability;
- Meet the nutritional needs of students and promote the development of sound nutritional practices;
- Ensure procurement practices meet established standards;
- Provide appetizing and nutritious meals;
- 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.

Between August and December 2000, the DVISD Child Nutrition program served an average of 7,975 meals per day in five elementary schools, one junior high school, one senior high school and one alternative school. DVISD uses the approved Texas Education Agency (TEA) "offer-versus-serve" method to allow students to make their own food selections. Meals are prepared at all of the schools except those that are transported to the alternative school, and are prepared at the high school facility.

A school district's food service operations are funded from four sources:

1. Student and adult meal sales;
2. Federal reimbursements for free and reduced-price school meals;
3. A la carte sales; and
4. Fees from special catered functions.

By the end of 1998-99, the Child Nutrition operating fund had accumulated a deficit of \$722,248. The board authorized a transfer from the capital project fund to the Child Nutrition program fund to erase the deficit. To prevent future occurrences, the board authorized the district to enter a "Management Agreement" with Sodexo Marriott Services of Texas Limited Partnership (SMSTLP), effective July 1, 2000 through June 30, 2001 to manage DVISD school cafeterias.

Section 7.5 of the agreement is entitled "Guarantee." This section, which is the heart of the financial arrangement, states, "District and SMSTLP shall work together to ensure a financially sound operation. If food service operations result in a surplus [of] less than \$51,336 during the 2000-2001 school year, SMSTLP shall reimburse the district for the [difference] in an amount not to exceed Sodexo Marriott's annual management fee." The on-site Child Nutrition manager for SMSTLP is the only employee compensated by SMSTLP.

Chapter 8

FOOD SERVICES

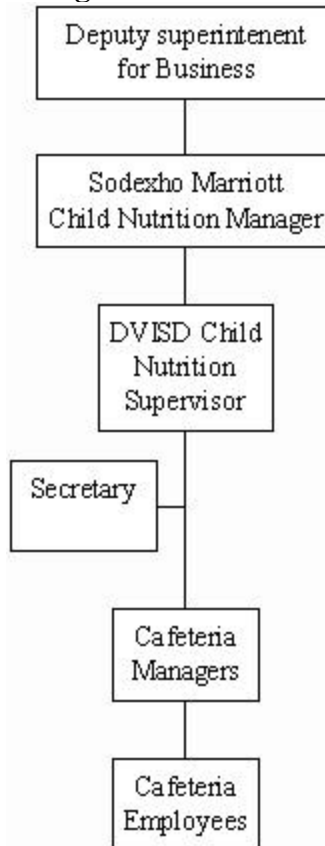
This chapter examines the Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) food services in two sections:

A. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

The SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager heads the DVISD Child Nutrition program, reports directly to the deputy superintendent for Business and presents a report to the board once during the school year. At the October 2000 board meeting, the SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager reviewed goals for the year and identified successes and issues to address at each campus.

Exhibit 8-1 is the organization chart for the food service program in DVISD.

Exhibit 8-1
DVISD Child Nutrition
Organization Chart



Source: *DVISD Business Office*.

In July 2000, DVISD signed a one-year agreement, with four one-year extensions permitted, for SMSTLP to manage the Child Nutrition program. Under the agreement, the responsibilities for the DVISD Child Nutrition program are divided between the district and the contractor (**Exhibit 8-2**).

Exhibit 8-2

Components of the DVISD and SMSTLP Food Service Agreement

Section 4.1 Services and Locations

- SMSTLP prepares meals for the schools and the district grants SMSTLP the right to bid on procurement of furnishings, fixtures, and equipment and on the provision of design services.

Section 4.2 Meal Program

- SMSTLP provides breakfasts, lunches, milk service, a la carte items, and if applicable, after school snacks, summer feeding meals, charter schools, elderly feeding, and other Federal and State feeding programs requested by the district.
 - A. Food shall be prepared in the district's food service facilities for service at premises.
 - B. Prices for a la carte items, faculty and staff meals, snack foods and beverages shall be mutually agreed by the parties.
 - C. All free and reduced price pattern meals and all other pattern meals shall be administered by SMSTLP on behalf of the district. District shall be responsible for establishing and notifying parents and guardians of program criteria for providing free and reduced-price meals for eligible students. It is the joint responsibility of the district and SMSTLP to protect the anonymity of children receiving free or reduced price meals and to establish methods for insuring such anonymity.
 - D. Summer food service program
 - 1. District obligations
 - a. Attend federally required training.
 - b. Complete the summer food service program application.
 - c. Monitor the program.
 - d. Serve as site supervisor.
 - e. Conduct summer food service program training for staff.
 - f. Perform accounting functions (including payment of staff or bills, including cost of preparing meals).
 - g. Enforce corrective actions.
 - h. Ensure that meals are not claimed under the national school lunch program

- i. Ensure that meals served meet United States Department of Agriculture requirement for the summer food service program for children.
 - j. Ensure clearly established meal rates.
 - k. Ensure that meal rates are not based on "cost plus a percentage of cost" or "cost plus a percentage of income."
2. SMSTLP obligations
- a. Prepare menus in accordance with summer food service program guidelines.
 - b. Supervise food service production employees.
 - c. Plan meals and consult with district on food purchases (amended).
 - d. Supervise and pay SMSTLP staff.

Under *Section 6* of the agreement, the district is responsible for:

- Purchasing and replenishing inventories of food, beverages, goods, merchandise, and supplies.
- Furnishing food service equipment and smallwares.
- Providing SMSTLP with office facilities.
- Cleaning and sanitation of dining area floors, and all walls, ceilings, ceiling fixtures, air ducts, hood vent systems, all windows and rest rooms, and shall provide for adequate fire extinguishing equipment, pest control, and refuse removal.
- Providing maintenance personnel and outside maintenance personnel, parts and supplies as required.
- Ensuring that the premises and equipment are in good condition and maintained properly.
- Providing any vehicles and equipment necessary for transportation of lunches.

Section 7 details the assumptions, and includes:

- SMSTLP shall invoice the district at the end of each month for the amounts due based on on-site records.
- Gross sales shall be remitted to the district or deposited in the district's account on a daily basis. The district is required to provide bank reconciliations within thirty days after the close of each month.
- District shall pay SMSTLP a management fee equal to \$0.025 for each pattern meal and meal equivalent for the 2000-01 contract year.
- District will pay opening expenses, covered in section 2.11, and includes all costs charges and expenses related to opening the cafeterias.
- District will provide, at its expense, electricity, gas, water, and other utilities, ventilation, security service, telephone service, janitorial supplies, replacement china, new equipment, painting decorating, fire and extended coverage insurance and real and personal property taxes.

- District and SMSTLP shall work together to ensure a financially sound operation. If food service operations result in a surplus less than \$51,336, during the 2000-01 school year, SMSTLP shall reimburse the district for the deficit in an amount not to exceed SMSTLP's annual management fee of \$0.025 for each pattern meal and meal equivalent. If at any time the district is not 100% satisfied with any part of SMSTLP's performance, SMSTLP shall refund its Management fee for that accounting period.
- Changes in district policies, practices, changes or restrictions in a la carte sales, and service requirements shall result in an appropriate adjustment.
- Average daily attendance for the contract year beginning July 1, 2000, shall remain at 6,720.
- Legislation, regulations and reimbursement rates that create changes in the school lunch program shall remain consistent throughout the year.
- Usable commodities, of adequate quality and variety required for SMSTLP's proposed menu cycle, valued at \$0.1475 per pattern meal for the 2000-01 contract year.
- The government reimbursement rates in effect as of July 1, 2000 shall remain constant throughout the year.
- Changes to meal components and quantities required by the National School Lunch Act or the National School Lunch Program.
- There shall be no competitive sales during the lunch period, with the exception of vended water and juice sales.
- Service hours, service requirements type or number of facilities selling food and/or beverages on district's premises shall remain consistent throughout the year.
- Total labor cost for the food service operation including, but not limited to wages, vacation, sick pay, medical/dental, retirement, general liability and workers' compensation shall not exceed \$990,469 for the 2000-01 contract year.
- District costs charged to the food service program for the 2000-01 contract year shall not exceed \$26,482.
- The state or federal minimum wage rate and taxes in effect as of July 1, 2000 shall remain consistent throughout the year.
- The projected feeding days shall remain at 175.

Source: DVISD Child Nutrition Office.

The SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager is responsible for the menu cycle, publishing the production records, safety, hiring, discipline, CNPIMS (Child Nutrition Programs Information Management System), payroll, catering booking, and petty cash and financial reporting. The district employs a Child Nutrition supervisor and secretarial support for the SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager.

The Child Nutrition supervisor is responsible for production records monitoring, orientation and training, name tags, aprons, smocks ordering, inventory data entry, purchasing review and payroll.

The Child Nutrition office has one secretary who is responsible for free and reduced-price lunch applications, invoice processing, sales reporting, payroll, attendance, catering billing, signage, cashier training and lunch identification cards.

The seven cafeteria managers are responsible for student discipline in the cafeteria, inventory, purchasing/ordering, cash/meal reporting and production records. The Child Nutrition supervisor and the SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager jointly supervise the cafeteria managers. The cafeteria managers supervise the cafeteria staff in each building.

FINDING

The SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager has been proactive and responsive in reaching out to DVISD, staff, students and parents. At the October 2000 board meeting, the manager presented marketing strategies that included plans to survey district administrators and a second survey geared specifically to principals. The purpose of these surveys is to determine administrators' knowledge of and perception of the Child Nutrition program. Vote 2001 is a survey conducted to find out what students favorite foods are and will be conducted this year.

Additionally, DVISD food services produces colorful newsletters and circulars, which are distributed to the students each week and month and include menus, nutrition information, a calendar of planned events and requests for recommendations and suggestions.

Many Halloween activities were organized by the school system to insure that students would celebrate in safe and appropriate ways. The Child Nutrition staff contributed in preparation and service of food during these activities. Several administrators commented in the TSPR interviews about the success of this event.

Several administrators referred to the willingness of the SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager to respond to complaints, suggestions or recommendations. Principals, for example, suggested that the portion size for older children should be adjusted and the SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager responded with increased meal portions for this age group. When a principal expressed concerns about the length of lunch lines, the SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager arranged to have an additional station installed.

COMMENDATION

The focus of the SMSTLP Child Nutrition program is on the customer, and includes actively communicating with customers and expeditiously responding to concerns and requests.

FINDING

DVISD has high student participation rates in the Child Nutrition program when compared to the peer group. Increasing student meal participation is important to a school district not only because of federal reimbursements it receives for every student who participates in meal programs, but because it ensures that students receive adequate nutrition as directed by the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs. The Child Nutrition program has employed a variety of efforts to brighten up the cafeterias and increase participation. Among these include updating menus with new selections, creating a food court at the high school and establishing a food services advisory committee.

Surveys for this review completed by parents and principals reflected that the children feel welcome in the food service areas. Sixty percent of DVISD students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch and breakfast. From August 1999 to April 2000, the average monthly participation rate was 70 percent.

Exhibit 8-3 shows the student participation by school in the DVISD during the month of October 2000.

Exhibit 8-3
Student Participation in the DVISD Child Nutrition Program
Summary Report for October 2000

School	Homeroom Count	Free Lunch	Reduced Lunch	Paid Lunch	Total Students Served
High School	1,593	9,143	1,971	5,937	17,051
Junior High	977	7,885	2,130	5,126	15,141
Popham	782	6,810	2,217	4,249	13,276
Smith	805	7,909	2,151	3,211	13,271
Hillcrest	918	9,627	1,759	4,187	15,573
Baty	875	11,010	2,067	2,711	15,788
Hornsby-Dunlap	734	5,987	2,516	4,181	12,684

Total	6,684	58,371	14,811	29,602	102,784
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Source: DVISD Child Nutrition office.

Exhibit 8-4 shows the participation rates of DVISD as compared to its peer districts.

**Exhibit 8-4
Del Valle ISD and Peer District Percentage of Average Daily
Participation
1999-2000**

District	Average Daily Attendance	Average Daily Lunch Participation	Daily Participation Rate	Average Daily Breakfast Participation	Daily Participation Rate
Hays	7,137	2,962	41.5%	1,076	15.1%
Bastrop	5,835	3,136	53.7%	1,272	21.8%
San Marcos	13,572	4,481	33.0%	1,677	12.4%
Lockhart	4,043	2,222	55.0%	789	19.5%
Del Valle	6,157	4,195	68.1%	2,323	37.7%
Eanes	3,285	1,608	48.9%	0	0%
Georgetown	7,728	4,261	55.1%	1,277	16.5%
Manor	2,565	1,626	63.4%	1,074	41.9%
Average	6,290	3,061	48.7%	1,186	18.9%

Source: Texas Education Agency.

Exhibit 8-5 shows the district's average daily participation in breakfast and lunch during the period between August 1999 and April 2000.

**Exhibit 8-5
Average Daily Participation in Breakfast and Lunch
August 1999 through April 2000**

Month	Average Daily Attendance	Average Daily Lunch Participation	Daily Participation Rate	Average Daily Breakfast Participation	Daily Participation Rate
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August	5,661	1,792	32%	324	6%
September	5,606	4,093	73%	2,337	42%
October	5,568	4,257	77%	2,447	44%
November	6,057	4,252	70%	2,498	41%
December	5,567	4,327	78%	2,601	47%
January	6,078	4,294	71%	2,136	35%
February	5,729	4,301	75%	2,335	41%
March	5,730	4,495	79%	2,513	44%
April	5,459	4,202	77%	2,462	45%
Average	5,717	4,001	70%	2,184	38%

Source: DVISD, Reimbursement Claim Worksheets for School Lunch and Breakfast Programs.

COMMENDATION

DVISD Child Nutrition program has achieved high student participation by increasing customer service, food selections and creating a more appealing atmosphere for students.

FINDING

DVISD's agreement with SMSTLP does not include performance measures that allow the district to monitor the efficiency of outsourcing food services. The district entered into the agreement with the goals of reducing costs, increasing revenues and an overall goal of preventing any additional financial losses. Under the agreement, SMSTLP supervises the Child Nutrition program, files the federal food program reimbursement requests and places all food orders.

Section 7.5 of the agreement with SMSTLP is entitled "Guarantee." This section states, "District and SMSTLP shall work together to ensure a financially sound operation. If food service operations result in a surplus [that is] less than \$51,336 during the 2000-2001 school year, SMSTLP shall reimburse the district for the [difference] not to exceed SMSTLP's annual management fee as provided in Section 7.2 [or \$0.025 for each Pattern Meal and Meal Equivalent]."

Continuing evaluation of performance and efficiency of a contract is easier to review if standards, program goals and district expectations are clearly

defined in outsourcing contracts. In 1996, the Comptroller's office issued a performance review of the Houston ISD. In response, the district looked to outsourcing of several functional areas. The district developed and publicized criteria for each outsourcing agreement, including minimum product and service standards that must be fully specified in the contract and defined a system to ensure compliance. The district established a set of goals to benefit the district. These goals included:

- Train district employees to adopt best practices.
- Determine how and when various functions are performed.
- Develop procedures manuals that outline the "preferred practices" based on industry standards.
- Identify those practices of the district that should or should not continue.
- Strengthen existing preventative maintenance systems and develop new ones.
- Develop ways to eliminate waste.
- Protect the interests of all district employees affected by the partnering process.
- Save money when buying supplies and services.
- Obtain enough "guarantee savings" to offset the cost of the partnership program.

Recommendation 71:

Develop performance standards for Child Nutrition that will accurately measure the effectiveness and efficiency of service provided to DVISD students, faculty and administration.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent of Business directs SMSTLP to include proposed performance criteria as part of the proposed contract to manage food services for DVISD.	June 2001
2.	The SMSTLP includes the proposed performance criteria in the contract to manage child nutrition.	June 2001
3.	The board approves contract with the performance criteria.	August 2001
4.	The SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager reports regularly to the deputy superintendent of Business on the progress in meeting the criteria.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The deputy superintendent for Business does not use the industry standard for determining productivity, known as meals per labor hour (MPLH), in completing food service performance analyses. MPLH allows the district an easy way to measure efficiency and compare productivity. The standard, or benchmark, should be individualized for each food service facility. MPLH is calculated by dividing the number of meals served by the total number of hours worked over a given period. Additionally, the recommended calculations for meal equivalents are shown in **Exhibit 8-6**.

**Exhibit 8-6
Formula for Calculating Meal Equivalents**

Meal	Equivalent
Breakfast Meal Equivalents	Number of Breakfast Meals divided by 2
A la Carte Meal Equivalents	A la Carte Sales divided by free lunch reimbursement plus the commodity value of the meal.
Catered/Contract Meal Equivalents	Catered Sales divided by free lunch reimbursement plus commodity value of the meal.

Source: Managing Child Nutrition Programs, Martin and Conklin, 1999.

Exhibit 8-7 details the cost per meal hour calculated in the district's schools using the MPLH analysis. The exhibit shows that the cost per meal hour is highest at Hillcrest elementary, while the lowest cost per meal hour is at the High School. All the elementary schools experience higher costs per meal hour than the average for the district.

**Exhibit 8-7
SMSTLP Child Nutrition-Labor Analysis of DVISD Child Nutrition**

School	Number of Managers	Number of Cooks	Number of Custodians	Total Food Service Hours per Day	Total Meals Served per Day	Cost per Meal/Hour
Baty	1	6	1	56.0	1,179	\$21.05
Hillcrest	1	6	1	52.0	1,174	\$22.58

Hornsby	1	5	1	48.5	1,013	\$20.89
Popham	1	6	1	55.5	1,162	\$20.94
Smith	1	5	1	49.5	1,055	\$21.31
Junior High	1	7	1	65.0	1,087	\$16.72
High School	1	14	0	105.0	1,587	\$15.11
Average	1	7	1	61.6	1,180	\$19.16

Source: DIVISD Child Nutrition supervisor.

Recommendation 72:

Establish Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH) standards and evaluate each cafeteria's productivity.

The district should first determine the appropriate meals per hour standard, taking into account the operational capacities and characteristics for the district and each cafeteria. The district should continually compare its actual MPLH to the developed standard and evaluate productivity for each cafeteria as a way to select areas to cut costs.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business and the SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager develop recommended standards, including MPLH, for DIVISD Child Nutrition.	July 2001
2.	The board approves standards for Child Nutrition services.	July 2001
3.	DVISD adds language to the food services management agreement specifying that cafeterias will be measured by the MPLH standard and productivity results will be shared with the business officer.	August 2001
4.	The deputy superintendent for Business and the SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager implement MPLH standards.	August 2001
5.	The SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager develops a plan for each cafeteria to increase productivity where necessary.	September 2001
6.	The deputy superintendent for Business and the SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager use the MPLH guidelines as one way to evaluate performance.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

The recommendations can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

DVISD does not have its Child Nutrition policy on-line. The district has placed several school board policies on-line on topics such as, basic operations, local governance, business and support services, student issues and community and governmental relations. Policy statements on-line give the general public and employees full access to the expectations of the school board and the administration. A school breakfast policy published on-line would give parents information about the program, the information that they need to determine whether or not their child is eligible and the procedures to apply for services.

DVISD has an on-line district policy manual through the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) and the school board subscribes to the policy service provided by TASB. In addition, the district publishes a comprehensive employee handbook and has an exemplary technology infrastructure that will permit the administration to place additional policies and operating procedures on-line.

The district's Website cross index refers to policies and policy identifier codes in the following areas: breakfast program (COB), free and reduced price meals program (COB), junk food sales restricted (CO), National School Lunch Program (COB), purchasing (COA), summertime free lunch program (COA), surplus commodities (CO) and vending/food dispensing machines (COC). Currently however, only district employees, can access these policies.

San Marcos ISD, for example, has the following food service policies on-line with open access: breakfast program, (COB), free and reduced price meals program (COB), junk food sales restricted (CO), National School Lunch Program (COB), purchasing (COA), summertime free lunch program (COA), surplus commodities (CO) and vending/food dispensing machines (COC).

Recommendation 73:

Publish the district's Child Nutrition policy and related standard operating procedures on-line.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business arranges to have the	September
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	Child Nutrition policies and procedures added to the district's Website and current on-line policy manual.	2001
2.	DVISD Child Nutrition policies and procedures are available on-line and updated as needed.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

The recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

DVISD has not published a Child Nutrition staff-training plan. Superior school food service performance includes providing in-service training and professional development before the beginning of each school year. The SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager has made considerable effort to provide staff training, even without a plan or a budget. DVISD's 2000-01 goal statement clearly indicates the district's intention to have one training event per month for all staff and two per month for cafeteria managers. The Child Nutrition office has conducted safety training, held managers meetings, sent staff to train at Leander ISD, and sent staff to attend the All Texas Team Leaders Meeting.

Tyler ISD has successfully implemented an effective staff training program, which provides training seven times during the school year. Topics covered include: sanitation procedures, reporting, ordering and management of cafeterias. All staff members participate in the county sanitation course. All managers must obtain (TSFSA) Texas School Food Service Association certification.

Recommendation 74:

Publish a plan for a Child Nutrition staff development program.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business along with the SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager develop a staff development plan to acquaint staff with procedures, safety measures and current developments in food service.	July 2001
2.	The deputy superintendent for Business and SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager present the plan to the school board for approval.	October 2001
3.	The deputy superintendent for Business publishes and	December

implements the plan.	2001
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FISCAL IMPACT

The recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district has not reviewed its employee recognition program in more than five years. Since there has been a change in the management of the Child Nutrition program, the SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager has had difficulty locating information on what happened in the past, but reports that plans to incorporate SMSTLP's successful employee recognition strategies into the DVISD Child Nutrition program.

There is also the perception reported in interviews and surveys that staff at some cafeterias are "maxed out." The SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager said that some of the stress results from absences and/or tardies. The department uses a substitute list prepared by the Human Resources Office to fill vacant spots.

Recognition rewards positive performance and can increase productivity, morale, service and attendance. To date, the manager has used the district's attendance reward program, conducted a decorating contest with rewards and has recognized employees in the district's newsletter. Killeen ISD (KISD) instituted an Employee of the Quarter Award Program. This program stipulates that one elementary school employee and one secondary school employee receive a recognition reward based on established performance criteria (**Exhibit 8-8**).

Exhibit 8-8
Killeen ISD Food Service Department
Criteria for Employee of the Quarter Awards Program
September 1999

General Criteria	Specific Criteria
Attendance	Absences or tardiness.
Work Performance	Demonstrates quality and accuracy of work; follows directions well; is self motivated; makes suggestions when appropriate; wears proper uniform including shoes and hairnet; practices good personal hygiene; and uses proper safety techniques.
Customer	Demonstrates appropriate relationship skills with students. staff

Service	and guests (customer comments considered).
Attitude	Portrays a good attitude.
Teamwork	Works well with others; does one's share of work; considers team of employees in decisions; and assists other employees after completing own duties.

Source: KISD Food Services department.

Recommendation 75:

Expand the employee recognition program.

Specific rewards for a typical program consist of a certificate of recognition, an employee pin, a sign posted on a campus marquee and/or a gift certificate. Rewards have been presented in other districts during the fifth week of each nine-week school period. A committee is made up of cafeteria managers, food service staff (on a rotating basis) and the Food Services manager.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business directs the SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager to organize a food service employee recognition committee.	August 2001
2.	The recognition committee reviews the existing program.	August 2001
3.	The recognition committee develops a suggested system for recognizing employee performance.	September 2001
4.	The SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager presents the recognition system to the deputy superintendent for Business to present to the board for approval.	October 2001
5.	The board approves the employee recognition program.	November 2001
6.	The deputy superintendent for Business implements the system.	January 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 8

FOOD SERVICES

This chapter examines the Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) food services in two sections:

B. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Exhibit 8-9 shows expenditures per student between 1995-96 and 1998-99 for DVISD and peer districts.

Exhibit 8-9
DVISD and Peer District Food Services Expenditures per Student
From 1995-96 to 1999-2000

District Name	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Manor	\$328.32	\$361.54	\$366.12	\$383.10	\$396.40
San Marcos	\$262.54	\$290.52	\$286.46	\$302.80	\$359.92
Bastrop	\$266.18	\$292.17	\$279.54	\$321.96	\$336.98
Georgetown	\$159.83	\$163.06	\$219.55	\$261.11	\$319.84
Lockhart	\$262.16	\$275.80	\$288.60	\$287.07	\$314.74
Eanes	\$235.01	\$253.49	\$285.29	\$310.27	\$313.82
Del Valle	\$318.44	\$305.12	\$318.49	\$296.12	\$295.85
Hays Consolidated	\$180.40	\$184.21	\$198.18	\$272.03	\$256.03

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 1996 through 2000.

Exhibit 8-10 details the Child Nutrition Program budget and actual expenditures for the three-year period of 1997-98 through 1999-2000.

Exhibit 8-10
DVISD Budget Compared to Expenditures
for Child Nutrition Program
1997-98 through 1999-2000

	1997-98 Budget	1997-98 Actual Expenditures	1998-99 Budget	1998-99 Actual Expenditures	1999-2000 Budget	1999-2000 Actual Expenditures
Payroll	\$1,213,468	\$994,227	\$1,075,518	\$826,307	\$928,170	\$933,143

Contracted Services	\$15,755	\$12,419	\$20,147	\$17,401	\$40,000	\$44,790
Food	\$723,123	\$889,317	\$603,123	\$850,679	\$347,235	\$845,832
Commodities	\$8,050	\$63,755	\$8,950	\$9,081	\$0	\$4,421
Other	\$63,025	\$83,037	\$69,275	\$143,457	\$555,595	\$111,590
Travel	\$2,650	\$1,346	\$2,650	\$2,835	\$1,664	\$4,077
Other	\$2,629	\$270	\$2,629	\$1,583	\$3,336	\$4,447
Capital Outlay	\$35,000	\$9,272	\$29,708	\$26,099	\$20,000	\$0
Totals	\$2,063,700	\$2,053,643	\$1,812,000	\$1,877,442	\$1,896,000	\$1,948,300

Source: DVISD Child Nutrition program.

Exhibit 8-11 compares the district's food service operating budgeted expenditures with peer districts between 1995-96 and 1999-2000.

Exhibit 8-11
DVISD and Peer District Food Service Total Budgeted Expenditure Comparison
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Entity	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Hays	\$982,073	\$1,058,847	\$1,196,984	\$1,715,676	\$1,717,197
Bastrop	\$1,420,885	\$1,613,942	\$1,611,547	\$1,881,545	\$2,063,002
San Marcos	\$1,745,632	\$1,993,844	\$1,987,722	\$2,109,600	\$2,505,741
Lockhart	\$1,041,281	\$1,133,797	\$1,197,133	\$1,227,234	\$1,386,435
Del Valle	\$1,233,750	\$1,487,748	\$1,665,700	\$1,728,558	\$1,948,300
Eanes	\$1,613,363	\$1,763,304	\$2,049,502	\$2,301,565	\$2,335,791
Georgetown	\$1,004,235	\$1,092,011	\$1,524,747	\$1,911,571	\$2,423,750
Manor	\$624,801	\$757,7899	\$823,032	\$910,239	\$984,646

Source: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 1996, AEIS 1997 through 2000, and DVISD Business office.

Exhibit 8-12 compares food service budgeted revenue of DVISD and peer districts.

Exhibit 8-12
DVISD and Peer District Food Service Budgeted Revenue
Comparison
1995-96 through 1998-99

District	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	Percent Change
Georgetown	\$1,129,597	\$1,305,211	\$1,762,302	\$2,093,472	85%
Manor	\$644,389	\$747,348	\$831,091	\$965,469	50%
Hays	\$1,267,415	\$1,430,940	\$1,538,913	\$1,756,222	39%
Bastrop	\$1,440,255	\$1,652,584	\$1,707,297	\$1,892,046	31%
Eanes	\$1,862,336	\$1,692,432	\$2,218,204	\$2,376,906	28%
San Marcos	\$1,608,564	\$1,752,429	\$1,864,718	\$2,017,066	25%
Lockhart	\$1,084,789	\$1,102,729	\$1,132,796	\$1,186,523	9%
Del Valle	\$1,770,216	\$1,634,940	\$1,867,668	\$1,748,612	-1%

Source: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS Ad Hoc Reporting Division.

The DVISD Child Nutrition program uses Computer Aided Food Service (CAFS) software to identify and track those eligible for free and reduced-price lunch and to provide POS (Point of Sale) data.

Exhibit 8-13 represents the federal reimbursement rates for each eligible breakfast and lunch served. "Severe Need" breakfast funding is available to schools that served 60 percent or more of their lunches free or at reduced prices for two prior consecutive years and have breakfast costs higher than the full breakfast reimbursement rates.

Exhibit 8-13
DVISD Federal Reimbursement Rates
Breakfast and Lunch for 2000

Category	Breakfast	Lunch
Full Price	\$0.21	\$0.19
Reduced-Price	\$0.82	\$1.62
Free	\$1.12	\$2.02
Severe Need	\$0.21	Plus \$0.02 in districts with 60% or more free and reduced price lunches served during the 1998-99

		school year.
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Source: TEA, Notice of Reimbursement Rates for 2000-01, July 10, 2000.

FINDING

The district has not prepared a separate budget for the Child Nutrition program. The existing agreement with SMSTLP does not call on the contractor to develop and supply a food service budget. Before contracting with SMSTLP, the Child Nutrition program fund had an accumulated deficit of \$722,248. On a day-to-day basis, the food service fund was treated as a cost center as opposed to a propriety fund. The deputy superintendent for Business expensed costs against food service accounts and booked revenues according to federal guidelines. However, a standard budget was not prepared and a spending plan was not developed.

Recommendation 76:

Develop a Child Nutrition program budget each year.

Prudent and effective financial management requires preparing and following a budget each year and distributing copies to the board. The board is responsible under the federal Single Audit Act of 1984 to ensure funds are spent in accordance with federal guidelines, as expressed in U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-133 Compliance Supplement, as well as Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business directs the SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager to prepare a preliminary food service budget.	June 2001
2.	The SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager prepares a preliminary budget.	June 2001
3.	The SMSTLP Child Nutrition manager submits the food service budget to the deputy superintendent for Business.	June 2001
4.	The deputy superintendent for Business incorporates the food services budget into the district's General Fund budget report that is presented to the board.	August 2001
5.	The board approves food service budget.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 9

TRANSPORTATION

This chapter reviews the Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) transportation function in the four sections:

- A. Organization and Staffing
- B. Policies and Procedures
- C. Operations
- D. Vehicle Maintenance

The primary goal of every school district's transportation department is to transport all students to and from school and approved extracurricular functions in a timely, safe and efficient manner.

BACKGROUND

The Texas Education Code (TEC) authorizes, but does not require, each Texas school district to provide transportation between home and school, from school to career and technology training locations, for co-curricular activities and for extracurricular activities. The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires a school district to provide transportation for students with disabilities if the district also provides transportation for the general student population or if disabled students require transportation to receive special education services.

The state reimburses Texas school districts to transport 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 funds to transport regular education students living two or more miles from the school they attend. The state does not reimburse districts for transporting 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 costs that exceed the state allotment.

To receive state funding, all Texas school districts must submit two reports to TEA by July of each year. The first, the *School Transportation Operation Report*, is designed to establish a cost-per-mile to be used for reimbursement in the fiscal year following the report.

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 on standard routes to the number of route 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. School districts receive more in state reimbursements as their linear density increases.

Exhibit 9-1 shows the seven categories as defined by TEA.

Exhibit 9-1
Categories of State Linear Density Reimbursement for Regular Bus Routes

Category	Linear Density Range	Reimbursement per Mile
1	.000-.399	\$0.68
2	.400-.649	\$0.79
3	.650-.899	\$0.88
4	.900-1.149	\$0.97
5	1.150-1.649	\$1.11
6	1.650-2.399	\$1.25
7	2.400-9.999	\$1.43

Source: Texas Education Agency.

The second state report, the *School Transportation Route Services Report*, includes information on ridership and mileage for regular, special and career and technology programs. It also includes a calculation of "linear density" for the regular home-to-school program, which is the basis for transportation funding. Due to the reporting deadlines for the *School Transportation Operation Report*, some peer districts' 1999-2000 data were not available for this report. For the sake of consistency, the 1998-99 data are used when comparing DVISD to its peer districts.

Miles driven on routes with students on board are reimbursable; deadhead (miles driven to or from a route) or maintenance miles (miles driven for maintenance purposes) are not. TEA recalculates linear densities every two years. The state does not fund extracurricular transportation, such as

trips to after-school and weekend events. Local funds must pay for transportation costs not covered by the state.

Exhibit 9-2 shows DVISD linear density and state allotments for 1998-99 compared to peer districts. DVISD has the third highest linear density compared to its peer districts and obtains 48 percent of its operating revenue from the state allotment.

**Exhibit 9-2
DVISD and Peer Districts, Linear Density and State Allotment
1998-99**

School District	Linear Density	Allotment per Mile	Total State Allotment	Percent of Operating Costs
Lockhart	0.787	\$0.88	\$392,310	31%
Manor	1.016	\$0.97	\$388,043	38%
Eanes	1.253	\$1.11	\$432,809	40%
Del Valle	1.018	\$0.88	\$911,219	48%
San Marcos	1.441	\$1.11	\$559,498	36%
Georgetown	0.939	\$0.97	\$746,459	58%
Bastrop	0.705	\$0.88	\$986,799	59%
Hays	1.077	\$0.97	\$1,339,714	64%

Source: Texas Education Agency, School Transportation Route Services Reports, 1998-99.

TEA does not base reimbursement for special education transportation on linear density. The Texas Legislature sets the per mile allotment rate for special education transportation. All transportation for special education, except for certain field trips, is eligible for state reimbursement at \$1.08 per mile. The actual cost to DVISD for transporting special program students in 1999-2000 was \$1.56 per mile. The special program, unlike the regular program, is not able to achieve efficiency by clustering students at bus stops.

The state reimburses career and technology education transportation costs based on the previous fiscal year's regular education program miles.

DVISD's Transportation Department operates 61 routes with 234 daily runs covering 1,169,260 miles annually. The district transports 4,645

students daily and 812,875 students annually. Of the 234 daily bus routes: 184 are regular program; 29 are special education; five are TLC/Even Start; nine Tutorial; two Athletic; and five take band students to the High School after band practice.

The Transportation Department has experienced great changes. The change most directly affecting the Transportation Department was the conversion of Bergstrom Air Force Base to a commercial airport. The conversion caused several schools and the administration building to be directly under the flight path of the airplanes. For safety and educational reasons, the administration building and some schools were moved. Additional schools also were built. The bus yard was not moved and is located in the old administration area directly under the flight paths of the airplanes. Moving and building new schools increased the amount of miles that DVISD buses traveled over the previous year because there are more schools and they are farther apart.

Exhibit 9-3 shows that, while the number of annual route miles has increased by 93.9 percent over the last four years, DVISD's operations costs in transportation have increased 10.4 percent.

Exhibit 9-3
DVISD Transportation Operations Costs and Mileage Summary
1996-97 through 1999-2000

	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	Percent Change
Operations Cost*					
Salaries & Benefits	\$1,288,740	\$1,466,986	\$1,331,529	\$1,808,336	40.3%
Purchased & Contracted Services	39,313	51,877	85,891	57,464	46.2%
Supplies & Materials	127,051	88,197	101,057	258,674	103.6%
Other Operating Expenses	40,562	33,735	1,274	111,563	175.0%
Debt Service	0	0	91,845	0	-100%
Capital Outlay	862,961	293,352	299,950	367,722	57.4%
Total Operations Costs	\$2,358,627	\$1,934,147	\$1,911,546	\$2,603,759	10.4%
Mileage Summary*					
Route mileage	604,695	879,713	1,023,490	1,172,259	93.9%

(includes deadhead)					
Extra/Co-curricular Mileage**	0	63,638	49,446	50,339	-20.9%
Non-School Organizations Mileage	0	0	0	0	0%
Other Mileage	9,341	8,500	9,212	10,551	13.0%
Total Annual Mileage	614,036	951,851	1,082,148	1,233,149	100.8%
Cost per Mile-Regular	\$3.53	\$2.00	\$1.75	\$2.28	-35.4%
Cost per Mile-Special	\$6.28	\$2.26	\$1.88	\$1.56	-75.2%

Source: TEA School Transportation Operation Reports, 1996-97 through 1999-2000.

**Regular education transportation and special education transportation.*

***Percent change calculated with data from the years 1997-98 through 1999-2000.*

Exhibit 9-4 compares DVISD's operations cost for transportation to its peer districts.

**Exhibit 9-4
DVISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Operations Costs
1998-99**

School District	Salaries & Benefits	Purchased & Contracted Services	Supplies & Materials	Other Operating Expenses	Debt Service	Capital Outlay	Total Operating Costs
Eanes	\$844,080	\$34,928	\$111,474	\$13,496	N/A	\$89,012	\$1,092,990
Bastrop	\$1,053,457	\$89,836	\$296,904	\$46,430	\$23,707	\$167,116	\$1,677,450
San Marcos	\$1,239,452	\$26,528	\$155,270	\$18,219	N/A	\$130,503	\$1,569,972
Hays	\$1,707,739	\$72,092	\$194,343	\$39,090	N/A	\$92,965	\$2,106,229

Georgetown	\$913,329	\$34,816	\$178,813	\$70,611	\$80,044	N/A	\$1,277,613
Lockhart	N/A	\$943,590	\$31,284	\$301,601	N/A	N/A	\$1,276,475
Manor	\$744,043	\$28,951	\$90,690	\$32,345	N/A	\$119,681	\$1,015,710
*Peer Average	\$1,083,683	\$47,859	\$171,249	\$36,699	\$51,876	\$119,855	\$1,456,657
Del Valle	\$1,331,579	\$85,891	\$101,057	\$1,274	\$91,845	\$299,950	\$1,911,546

Source: Texas Education Agency, School Transportation Operation Reports, 1998-99.

*Lockhart ISD is not calculated in the average because the district outsources its busing.

Exhibit 9-5 shows the same information, but each cost category is shown as a percentage of the total operations costs for each district. DVISD's percentage of operating costs for capital outlay is well above the average for the peer districts, but below average on salaries and benefits and supplies and materials.

Exhibit 9-5
DVISD and Peer Districts, Percentage Analysis of Operating Cost
Categories
1998-99

School District	Salaries & Benefits	Purchased & Contracted Services	Supplies & Materials	Other Operating Expenses	Debt Service	Capital Outlay
Bastrop	62.8%	5.4%	17.7%	2.8%	1.4%	10.0%
Eanes	77.2%	3.2%	10.2%	1.2%	N/A	8.1%
Georgetown	71.5%	2.7%	14.0%	5.5%	6.3%	N/A
Hays	81.1%	3.4%	9.2%	1.9%	N/A	4.4%
Lockhart	N/A	73.9%	2.5%	23.6%	N/A	N/A
San Marcos	78.9%	1.7%	9.9%	1.2%	N/A	8.3%
Manor	73.3%	2.8%	8.9%	3.2%	N/A	11.8%
*Peer Average	74.1%	3.2%	11.6%	2.6%	3.8%	8.5%

Del Valle	69.7%	4.5%	5.3%	0.1%	4.8%	15.7%
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Source: Texas Education Agency, School Transportation Operation Reports, 1998-99.

*Lockhart ISD is not calculated in the average because the district outsources its busing.

To establish route mileage and daily ridership figures, TEA requires districts to gather mileage and ridership data on the first Wednesday of each month. **Exhibit 9-6** shows the route data for DVISD for five years, beginning with the 1995-96 school year.

Exhibit 9-6
DVISD Summary of Route Services Reports
1995-96 through 1999-2000

	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Regular Program					
Annual Standard Ridership	511,740	583,200	446,580	733,320	633,420
Annual Standard Mileage	768,060	729,000	676,744	720,666	672,688
Linear Density	0.666	0.800	0.660	1.018	0.942
Allotment per Mile	\$0.97	\$0.97	\$0.88	\$0.88	\$0.88
Total Annual Mileage (incl. hazardous)	856,119	817,655	758,828	815,428	858,403
Total Daily Ridership (incl. hazardous)	3,214	3,657	2,613	4,413	4,865
Hazardous Annual Mileage	8,424	17,388	2,288	18,036	93,744
Hazardous Daily Ridership	307	308	21	224	1,146
Special Program					
Total Daily Ridership	83	112	155	177	161
Total Annual Mileage	169,416	146,575	86,930	171,165	273,217

Career and Technology Program					
Total Daily Ridership	42	42	60	5	66
Total Annual Mileage	15,102	20,088	33,955	4,392	37,639
Allotments					
Regular Program	\$830,435	\$793,125	\$667,769	\$717,577	\$740,190
Special Program	182,969	158,301	93,884	184,858	295,074
Career and Technology Program	25,281	30,453	119,861	8,784	65,868
Private Program	0	0	0	0	0
Total Allotment	\$1,038,685	\$981,879	\$881,514	\$911,219	\$1,101,132

Source: TEA School Transportation Route Services Reports, 1995-96 through 1999-2000.

Exhibit 9-7 compares mileage data for regular transportation between DVISD and the peer districts.

Exhibit 9-7
DVISD and Peer Comparison of Regular Transportation Mileage Data
1998-99

School District	Route Mileage (incl. Deadhead)	Extra/Co-Curricular Mileage	Non-School Organizations Mileage	Other Mileage	Total Annual Mileage	Cost per Mile
Lockhart	324,659	82,295	0	0	406,954	\$2.48
Manor	333,001	41,074	328	1,250	375,653	\$2.43
Eanes	318,464	83,044	1,285	700	403,493	\$2.36
Del Valle	852,325	49,446	0	7,671	909,442	\$1.75
San Marcos	554,996	71,141	6,102	143,932	776,171	\$1.72
Georgetown	514,866	97,920	17,321	1,069	631,176	\$1.62
Bastrop	822,500	79,917	0	69,669	970,086	\$1.50
Hays	860,201	116,988	0	2,940	980,129	\$1.60

Source: Texas Education Agency, School Transportation Operations Reports, 1998-99.

DVISD's level of regular education route mileage is the second highest when compared to its peer districts, but its regular education cost per mile is fourth highest.

For special education transportation, DVISD's level of route mileage is the second highest among the peer districts, while its special education cost per mile (\$1.88) is second highest (**Exhibit 9-8**). Lockhart ISD has the highest special education cost per mile (\$2.28) of the peer districts.

Exhibit 9-8
DVISD and Peer Comparison of Special Transportation Mileage Data
1998-99

School District	Route Mileage (incl. Deadhead)	Extra/Co-Curricular Mileage	Non-School Organizations Mileage	Other Mileage	Total Annual Mileage	Cost per Mile
Lockhart	111,598	5,894	0	0	117,492	\$2.28
Manor	100,636	763	0	50	101,449	\$1.00
Eanes	120,698	4,720	0	200	125,618	\$1.11
Del Valle	171,165	0	0	1,541	172,706	\$1.88
San Marcos	121,884	1,423	2,464	0	125,771	\$1.85
Georgetown	145,166	2,056	0	200	147,422	\$1.72
Bastrop	164,591	7,555	0	1,438	173,584	\$1.28
Hays	388,187	330	0	1,109	389,626	\$1.37

Source: Texas Education Agency, School Transportation Operations Reports, 1998-99.

Exhibit 9-9 compares DVISD's annual operating costs, annual riders and cost per rider with its peer districts.

Exhibit 9-9
DVISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Operating Costs,
Annual Riders and Cost per Rider
1998-99

School District	Total Annual Operating Costs	Annual Riders	Cost Per Rider
Lockhart	\$1,276,504	299,700	\$4.26
Manor	\$1,325,855	295,380	\$3.44
Eanes	\$885,325	419,940	\$2.60
Del Valle	\$1,911,546	794,340	\$2.40
San Marcos	\$1,569,972	544,260	\$2.90
Georgetown	\$1,277,613	569,520	\$2.24
Bastrop	\$1,677,430	581,220	\$2.89
Hays	\$2,106,229	816,120	\$2.58

Source: Texas Education Agency, School Transportation Operation Reports and School Transportation Route Services Reports, 1998-99.

DVISD has the second highest operating costs, the second highest annual riders and the second lowest cost-per-rider when compared to its peer districts.

Exhibit 9-10 shows how the age of DVISD buses compares to the age of peer district buses.

Exhibit 9-10
DVISD and Peer District, Comparison of Age of Buses
1998-99

District	Age			Total Number of Buses	Percent Greater Than 10 Years
	1-5 Years	5-10 Years	10 Years or Greater		
Eanes	17	4	45	66	68%
Hays	19	31	48	98	49%
Del Valle	35	2	31	68	46%
Manor	14	7	17	38	45%
Bastrop	27	22	39	88	44%
San Marcos	15	25	19	59	32%
Lockhart	29	3	5	37	14%

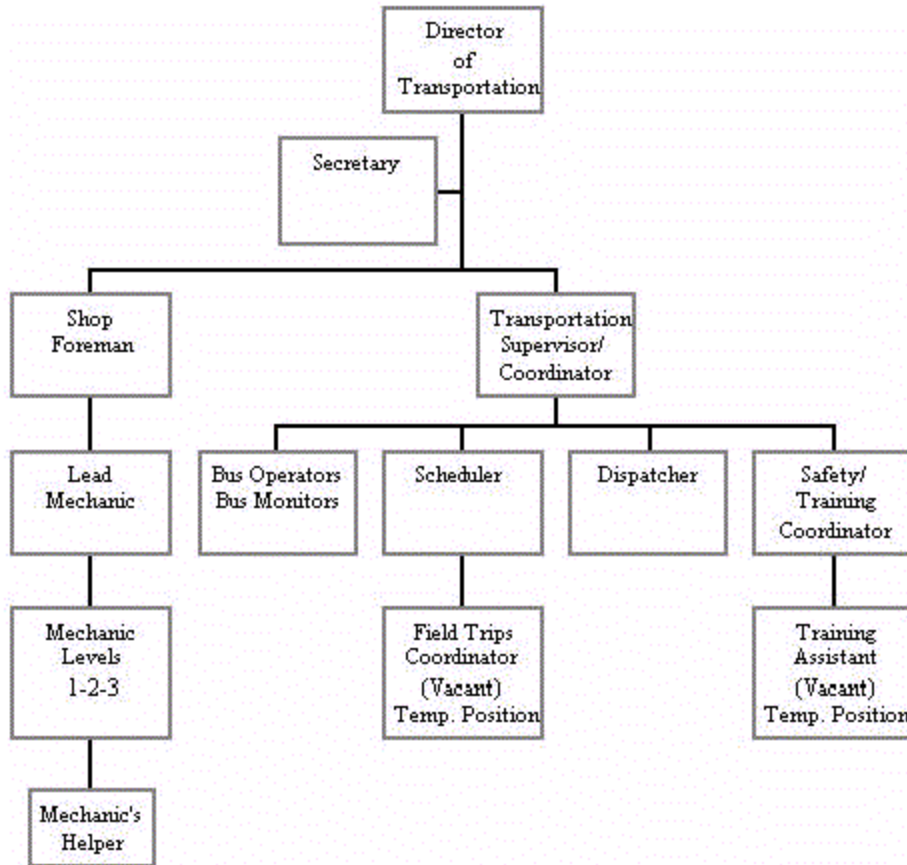
Georgetown	20	27	18	65	28%
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Source: Texas Education Agency, School Transportation Operations Reports, 1998-99.

DVISD has the third highest percentage of buses older than 10 years (46 percent) of the peer districts, while Eanes ISD has the highest percentage of buses older than 10 years (68 percent). Lockhart ISD, which outsources student transportation, has the lowest percentage of buses older than 10 years (14 percent).

The director of Transportation reports directly to the superintendent and has worked for the district two years. A staffing chart for the DVISD Transportation Department is shown in **Exhibit 9-11**.

Exhibit 9-11
DVISD Transportation Department Organization



Source: DVISD Director of Transportation.

Exhibit 9-12 compares Del Valle ISD's transportation program to its peer districts.

**Exhibit 9-12
DVISD and Peer Districts, Staffing Comparisons
2000-01**

District	Professional	Clerical/Technical	Auxiliary
Del Valle	1 director 1 supervisor	1 secretary 1 scheduler 1 dispatcher	1 shop foreman 1 safety person 74 drivers 15 monitors 4 mechanics
Bastrop	1 transportation manager 1 assistant transportation manager	1 secretary 1 dispatcher 1 router/cover driver 1 Camera Tech/Cover Driver	2 trainers/cover drivers 56 drivers 7 school monitors 2 substitute bus drivers 1 shop foreman 5 mechanics 1 seat repair specialists/driver 2 shop helpers drivers
Eanes	1 director	1 secretary 1 special needs coordinator/dispatcher 1 co-curricular trip coordinator/dispatcher	42 regular bus drivers 7 special needs bus drivers 3 special needs monitor 3 standby bus drivers 1 shop foremen 4 shop mechanics 3 shop service workers
Georgetown	1 director	1 secretary 3 clerks/drivers	77 drivers
Hays	1 director	1 secretary 1 dispatcher 1 extra trip-coordinator 1 transportation	1 shop foreman 3 mechanics

		coordinator	
Lockhart	1 general manager 1 operation manager	2 clerical staff	3 mechanics 32 drivers
Manor	1 director	1 clerical	1 shop foreman 2 mechanics 1 shop clerk 1 driver/trainer 80 bus drivers 20 monitors 1 tire changer 1 repair person
San Marcos	1 director	1 secretary	58 bus drivers and monitors 3 mechanics

Source: Telephone/email survey with DVISD and peer districts.

Chapter 9

TRANSPORTATION

This chapter reviews the Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) transportation function in the four sections:

A. ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING

The director of Transportation, who reports to the deputy superintendent for Business, heads the DVISD Transportation Department. The Transportation Department has one director, one supervisor, one shop foreman, one secretary, one scheduler, one dispatcher, one safety person, 74 drivers, 15 monitors and four mechanics. The district maintains 76 buses in its fleet, but operates 74 of those buses, with two kept as salvage. In 1998-99, the district provided 990,985 reimbursable miles of service and received \$911,219 in state funds. The average number of daily riders was 4,595. For 1999-2000, the reimbursable miles increased to 1,169,259; the funds increased to \$1,101,132; and the average number of daily riders increased to 5,092. The state has given notice that the funding for 2000-01 will increase by 25 percent.

FINDING

DVISD successfully recruits bus drivers. The average salary for bus drivers in DVISD is \$13.41 per hour, as compared to average salaries in the region of \$12.88 per hour.

Manor ISD's average driver salary is \$11.35 per hour. Lockhart and Bastrop ISDs provided beginning, mid-point and maximum wage rates instead of average salaries. Lockhart ISD's maximum wage rate is \$11.00 per hour. Bastrop ISD's minimum wage rate is \$11.62 and its maximum rate is \$15.21.

DVISD bus drivers also are eligible for benefits whereas many school districts do not provide benefits for their drivers. Consequently, the director of Transportation stated that there are always more applicants than open slots.

COMMENDATION

DVISD has competitive salaries and benefits for bus drivers, thereby eliminating a need for active recruitment of drivers.

Chapter 9

TRANSPORTATION

This chapter reviews the Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) transportation function in the four sections:

B. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Effective management is built upon sound, clearly written and legally valid policies. The board adopts policies governing the operations of schools and school districts. Districts use procedures to show district employees how to carry out the policies in their various organizational units.

FINDING

The Transportation Department publishes an Employee Handbook every year. The 2000-01 handbook's stated mission is: "...to provide all members of the school and community an environment that assures intellectual, social, physical and character development appropriate for citizenship into the next century."

The table of contents lists the following chapters:

- Administration
- Disclaimer
- General Guidelines
- Bus Operators Guidelines
- Special Transportation Driver Guidelines
- Monitor Guidelines
- Extra-Curricular Trip Guidelines

The preface of the handbook states that "the handbook provides drivers with rules, regulations and procedures that will give the Del Valle Independent School District safe, economical and efficient operation of school buses." It also stipulates that the information in the handbook is to be used in conjunction with the Texas School Bus Driver's Handbook. According to drivers and administrators, the handbooks are a significant help, not only for day-to-day operations, but also for training new employees.

COMMENDATION

DVISD publishes a transportation handbook for all staff, which is a vital resource for transportation staff.

FINDING

The district has an email system, but does not use it for scheduling and billing extra-curricular trips and field trips. The Transportation Department receives many requests for extra-curricular buses via a paper system. Teachers use a form to request a bus, send the form to the principal for approval and the principal sends the form to the Business Office for approval. The Business Office sends the form to Transportation, which then schedules the trip. Teachers say that they often do not get timely notification of field trip approval because of the paper process.

When a trip is complete, Transportation sends the cost of the trip to the Business Office via a paper document. This process also is slow and cumbersome. Some districts have begun using a paperless process for requesting, scheduling and billing extra-curricular trips, which has cut down on the time and the paperwork required to handle the requests.

Recommendation 77:

Implement procedures for using the email system for scheduling and approving extracurricular trips and field trips.

Based upon interviews with the director of transportation and teachers, this electronic approval and scheduling system can be implemented on the district's existing network. All of the steps required by the paper system can be done via email. The procedures should also "charge back" the cost to the requesting school.

An example of the procedures is: the teacher downloads the appropriate form on the teacher's classroom monitor, completes the form and sends the completed form via email to the principal; the principal electronically approves the trip and sends the electronic form to the Business Office; the Business Office approves the electronic form and sends it to the Transportation Department; Transportation schedules the trip and notifies the teacher and the principal via email. After the trip is taken, Transportation determines the cost and sends, via email, the cost to the principal and the Business Office.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business, the director of Transportation the director of Technology and a teacher develop the procedures to use the email system for scheduling and approving extracurricular trips and field trips.	June 2001
2.	The director of Technology develops the electronic trip request form	June

	and the template(s).	2001
3.	The director of Technology and the director of Transportation meet with the principals to explain the procedures.	August 2001
4.	The principals meet with the teachers/staff to explain the procedures.	August 2001
5.	The teachers/staff implement the procedures.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 9

TRANSPORTATION

This chapter reviews the Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) transportation function in the four sections:

C. OPERATIONS

The decision to convert Bergstrom Air Force Base into the new Austin-Bergstrom International Airport, had a direct impact on DVISD because the district had three schools in the flight path of the airport. In 1998, the City of Austin purchased the school buildings and land for the sum of \$44 million. According to the purchase agreement, these funds entered the DVISD capital projects account with no requirements on their use. The district was not legally obligated to use the funds for new schools.

The district raised \$38 million through issuing school bonds to match the \$44 million settlement with the City of Austin. The district acquired land, planned for and built three schools to replace those acquired by the City of Austin. Baty Elementary, Hillcrest Elementary, Popham Elementary and Del Valle High School were recipients of the construction fund. The district constructed the new facilities, which ultimately placed new demands on the transportation program.

FINDING

The location of DVISD's bus yard and the new locations of schools have resulted in some inefficiency. Each day, buses travel to the high school and middle school, which are located within one mile of each other. The bus yard is three miles away from these two schools.

There are sixty-two regular and twelve special needs buses. If each bus takes one trip from this central location (where the high school and the middle school are located) to the bus yard per day, the costs per year is \$56,700 (60 trips x 3 miles x 180 days x \$1.75 cost per mile). In addition, the high school and middle school must transport students to out-of-town athletic and UIL events. Upon returning from an out-of-town event, the buses drop off the students at these two schools and then the buses must travel three miles back to the bus yard. This adds cost to transportation. The anticipated growth of the enrollment of the DVISD will cause the building of new schools. Each new school will cause a subsequent shift in the areas in need of transportation services. In the bond program to build the newest school and administration building, plans to move the bus yard next to administration complex were considered but were rejected. DVISD

is developing another bond program to add more facilities. The time is right to do an analysis for the placement of the bus yard.

Recommendation 78:

Conduct a transportation service analysis.

A bus yard located far from the center of the district causes additional transportation costs. As part of the long-range plan to build new facilities, an analysis of the cost of providing transportation services should be conducted.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent for Business and the director of Transportation meet to design a transportation service analysis including hub and spoke and transfer stations.	June 2001
2.	The deputy superintendent for Business and the director of Transportation conduct an analysis of the present transportation services.	June-July 2001
3.	The deputy superintendent for Business and the director of Transportation present the analysis of the present services to the superintendent.	July 2001
4.	The director of Transportation attends all long-range planning meetings involving the placing of schools and conducts an analysis of the costs incurred in the location of new schools.	June 2001
5.	The director of Transportation presents, in subsequent long-range planning meetings, a report on the transportation needs and costs as a result of the plans of the previous meetings.	June 2001
6.	The director of Transportation presents a written report to the deputy superintendent for Business on options for transporting students including, if appropriate, costs resulting from the proposed location of the new buildings.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

DVISD transports all children in the district without regard to the distance the child lives from the school. 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. In 1999-2000, DVISD reported 93,744 hazardous annual mileage. DVISD buses drove 28,875 miles to transport students that live within the two-mile limit.

Few neighborhood schools exist in DVISD that would be conducive to a child walking safely from home to school and back. There are major highways and crossings that make walking an extreme hazard. To designate a route as hazardous, the board must vote to give the route that designation.

In the Wimberley ISD, the board designated all routes hazardous, thereby allowing all children to ride the bus and the district to collect state reimbursement.

Recommendation 79:

Review all routes within the two -mile limit and designate them as hazardous where appropriate.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Transportation reviews the guidelines to designate hazardous routes.	July 2001
2.	The director of Transportation identifies routes that meet the guidelines.	July 2001
3.	The director of Transportation presents the routes to the director of Business and the superintendent.	August 2001
4.	The superintendent recommends to the board that the routes be designated as hazardous.	August 2001
5.	The board designates the routes as hazardous.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 9

TRANSPORTATION

This chapter reviews the Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) transportation function in the four sections:

D. VEHICLE MAINTENANCE

The DVISD Maintenance Department is located in an old school building that is under the flight paths of the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport. The facilities are too small for maintenance operations and anticipated growth. DVISD recognized this and included \$2.6 million in the proposed bond issue for a new maintenance facility.

FINDING

The district does not fully use the computer program that monitors preventive maintenance and repairs of buses. DVISD monitors bus maintenance and repairs manually, which makes it difficult for the district to know when preventive maintenance is needed.

The district operates 74 buses each day. As maintenance and repairs are completed on each bus, a record showing the repairs of a bus' "vital signs" alerts the director of Transportation to begin the decision process for replacement of each bus. The decision to replace a bus is typically made by the Transportation director two or three years prior to complete breakdown of a bus.

Recommendation 80:

Fully implement the computerized school bus maintenance system.

The fully implemented system will provide organized and up-to-date information to better determine individual bus preventive maintenance and replacement needs.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Transportation determines the critical needs to fully implement the computerized maintenance system.	June 2001
2.	The director of Transportation contacts the software vendor to seek price quotes for training.	June 2001
3.	The director of Transportation meets with the deputy superintendent	June

	to discuss including funds for employee training on the computerized system in the 2001-02 General Fund Budget.	2001
4.	The director of Purchasing proposes including funds in the General Fund Budget.	June 2001
5.	The board approves the budget.	July 2001
6.	The director of Transportation contacts the vendor and training begins.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

On-site training is needed to fully implement the system. The software vendor estimated that an initial 10 hours of training at \$65 per hour will be needed. For continued full implementation, yearly training is required. The company offers training sessions at various times each year for \$350 per person. Training one individual per year will ensure quality operation.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Fully implement the computerized school bus maintenance system.	(\$650)	(\$350)	(\$350)	(\$350)	(\$350)

FINDING

DVISD does not have a bus replacement and acquisition policy that would allow the district to control capital expenditures. In recent years, capital outlays for buses have been significant, and inconsistent, making it difficult for the board to anticipate and budget for expenditures. In 1996-97, the district spent \$862,961 for buses; in 1999-2000 it spent \$367,722. **Exhibit 9-13** shows the bus (unit) number, the bus identification number, passenger capacity and the year and make.

Exhibit 9-13
DVISD Bus Unit Number
Passenger Capacity Year and Make

UNIT NUMBER	VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER	PASSENGER CAPACITY	YEAR	MAKE
81	#1GDM6P1B5FV626644	71	1986	GMC
82	#1GDM6P1B9FV626548	71	1985	GMC

83	#1GDM6P1B2FV626553	71	1985	GMC
84	#1GDM6P1B4FV626554	71	1998	CHEV
86	#1GDM6P1B86V524482	71	1986	GMC
88	#1GDM6P1B1GV524419	71	1986	GMC
89	#1GDM6P1B3GV524406	71	1986	GMC
90	#1GDM6P1BXHV537025	71	1987	GMC
92	#1GDM6P1BOHV537146	71	1987	GMC
93	#1GDM6P1B3HV537187	71	1987	GMC
94	#1GDM6P1B1HV537852	71	1987	GMC
95	#1GBM6P1B5HV117505	71	1987	CHEV
96	#1GBM6P1B7WV117506	71	1987	CHEV
97	#1GBM6P1BOHV117508	71	1985	CHEV
98	#1GBM6P1BOHV117511	71	1985	CHEV
99	#1GBM6P1B4HV117513	71	1987	CHEV
1	#1HVBBPEM7NH467359	35	1992	WARD
2	#1HVBBPEM3NH467360	35	1992	WARD
103	#1GBM6PIB6KV102227	71	1988	CHEV
105	#1GBM6P1B2KV102743	71	1988	CHEV
107	#1GBM6P1B7KV102754	71	1988	CHEV
110	#1GDM6P1P2LV514052	71	1990	GMC
111	#1GDM6P1P6LV514054	71	1990	GMC
112	#1GDM6P1P1LV514057	71	1990	GMC
113	#1GDM6P1P3LV514061	71	1990	GMC
114	#1GDM6P1PQLV514064	71	1990	GMC
116	1GDM6P1P4LV514070	71	1990	GMC
117	#1GDM6P1P1LV514074	71	1990	GMC
120	#2GDHG31K7L4520019	15	1990	GMC
121	#1GBK6P1P3MV102241	71	1991	CHEV
122	#1GBK6P1P9MV102244	71	1990	CHEV
123	#1GBK6P1P6MV1O2251	71	1991	CHEV

124	#1GBK6P1P7MV102274	71	1991	HEV
126	#1GBK1P1P8MV102251	71	1991	CHEV
127	#1GBK6P1PXMV102317	71	1991	CHEV
128	#1GVK6P1P7MV102324	71	1990	CHEV
129	#1T7HT4B22V1148803	84	1996	THOMAS
130	#1T7HT4B27V1148800	84	1996	THOMAS
131	#1T7HT4V29V1148801	84	1997	THOMAS
132	#1T7HT4820V1148802	84	1996	THOMAS
133	#1HVBBABM4VH458569	35	1996	THOMAS
134	#1HVBBABM0VH458567	35	1997	THOMAS
136	#1HVBBABM9VH458566	45	1996	THOMAS
137	#1HVBJABM9WA081520	78	1997	AMTRAN
138	#1HVBJABN3WA081514	78	1997	AMTRAN
139	#1HVBJABN9WA081517	78	1997	AMTRAN
140	#1HVBJABNOWA081518	78	1997	AMTRAN
141	#1HVBJABN4WA081523	78	1997	AMTRAN
142	#1HVBJABN2WA081519	78	1997	AMTRAN
143	#1HVBJAB5WA0811515	78	1997	AMTRAN
144	#1HVBJABN7WA081516	78	1997	INTER
145	#1HVBJABN2WA081522	78	1997	AMTRAN
146	#1HVBJABNOWAZ81521	78	1997	AMTRAN
147	#1HVBBABM7VH471008	35	1997	AMTRAN
149	#1HVBBABM4VH471001	35	1997	AMTRAN
150	#1HVBBABM8VH471003	35	1997	AMTRAN
151	#1T7HT4B28Y1079474	78	1999	THOMAS
152	#1T7HT4B21Y1079476	84	2000	THOMAS
153	#1T7HT4B2XY1079475	84	1999	THOMAS
154	#1HVBBABL4XH209831	84	1999	INTER
155	#1HVBBABL6XH209832	84	1999	INTER
156	#1T88N4821V1078771	71	1999	THOMAS

157	#1T88N4B2XY1078770	71	1999	THOMAS
158	#1T7HT4B2511093399	84	1997	INTER
159	#1HVBBABLOYH311760	35	1997	INTER
160	#1HVBBABN6YH303096	77	2000	THOMAS
161	#1HVBBABN8YH303097	77	2000	THOMAS
162	#1HVBBABNXYH303098	77	2000	THOMAS
163	#1HVBBABN4YH303100	77	2000	THOMAS
164	#1HVBBABN4YH303095	77	2000	THOMAS
165	#1HVBBABN1YH303099	77	2000	THOMAS
166	#1HVBBABNXYH303103	77	2000	THOMAS
167	#4UZ6CFAA6XCA93416	77	2000	THOMAS
168	#1HVBBABN6YH303101	77	2000	THOMAS
169	#1HVBBABN8YH303102	77	2000	THOMAS
170	1GBJG31FSY1169011	29	2000	CHEVY
TO 1	GCGC24M7D1123533	1/2 Ton	1973	CHEV
TO 2	CGL3390158601/V8847	1 Ton	1979	CHEV
TO 3	1FDWF36FXyec40107	1 Ton	2000	FORD
TO 4	F25HKDJ8680	1/2 Ton	1978	FORD
TO 5	2B7JB21Y61K517589	3/4 Ton	2001	Dodge

Source: *DVISD Transportation Department.*

Exhibit 9-14 shows the capital outlay for buses 1996-97 through 1999-2000.

**Exhibit 9-14
Capital Outlay for Buses
1996-97 through 1999-2000**

	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	Percent Change
Capital Outlay	\$862,961	\$293,352	\$299,950	\$367,722	-57.4%
Total Annual Mileage*	984,318	879,713	990,985	1,169,259	18.8%
Total Annual Ridership**	678,420	498,240	826,200	916,560	35.1%

Source: Texas Education Agency, School Transportation Operation Reports and School Transportation Route Services Reports, 1996-97 through 1999-2000.

**Includes reimbursable route miles only.*

***Includes total annual riders for the regular education, special education and career and technology programs.*

As shown in **Exhibit 9-13**, DVISD has 12 buses less than one year old. DVISD has purchased more than 50 percent of the total bus fleet in the last five years.

School buses typically have a useful life between 10 and 15 years. TEA recommends a 10-year procurement cycle. Districts with good maintenance programs, however, can use buses for 10, 12 or even 15 years before they are replaced. The average age of DVISD's fleet is 2.63 years for regular education buses and 8.65 years for special education buses.

To maintain an efficient bus fleet, districts need to establish replacement and expansion plans based on an analysis of the fleet's age and condition, as well as the district's current and future capacity needs. The district also needs to budget for replacements and plan the timing of debt or other types of financing.

DVISD plans to purchase 10 new buses in 2000-01 as approved by the board in October 2000. The plan provides for the purchase of 10 buses each year to replace older buses and allow for growth. The district may need more buses to handle growth, but with only four buses more than 15 years old, it appears the district could reduce its planned annual bus purchases by three buses.

Recommendation 81:

Develop a formal school bus expansion and replacement cycle.

A plan to phase in new buses and replace old ones should be based on anticipated growth and an analysis of the age and condition of the fleet. This would allow the district to retire buses on a planned basis and expand the fleet to meet student growth demands. With a known replacement and expansion cycle, DVISD could develop a program to ensure that buses wear evenly. This can be achieved in a variety of ways. Some districts develop mileage targets for regular and special education buses as a tool to

assign buses so that mileage can be accumulated evenly among buses. Other districts rotate buses, using mileage targets to identify the route combinations that most evenly accrue mileage.

The plan should also be used as the basis for purchasing buses with the appropriate capacity. For example, smaller buses (55 passenger capacity) could be used on routes with fewer students rather than using the 72-passenger buses that make up a large part of DVISD's fleet.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Transportation inventories DVISD's bus fleet according to age, mileage and condition.	June 2001
2.	The director of Transportation prepares a cost-benefit analysis of the number and type of buses needed, incorporating ridership and routing information into the analysis.	June 2001
3.	The director of Transportation recommends a multi-year bus replacement policy, projects the number of buses to be replaced in the next five years and develops corresponding cost and savings estimates.	July 2001
4.	The director of Transportation presents the plan to the superintendent for review and approval.	July 2001
5.	The superintendent reviews the cost-benefit analysis of the number and type of buses needed and makes recommendations to the board for its approval.	July 2001
6.	The director of Finance incorporates budget estimates into the budget for the next fiscal year.	July 2001
7.	The board adopts the budget.	August 2001
8.	The director of Transportation implements the multi-year bus replacement plan and adjusts the fleet with respect to the number and sizes of buses through replacements and dispositions.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

A replacement and expansion plan should equalize the amount of capital funds in the annual budget required for purchasing school buses. To replace buses every 15 years, the district would need to purchase 15 buses the first two years, four buses the third year and five buses in each of the fourth and fifth years based on a fleet of 74 buses. Considering that the district has spent an average of \$456,000 for buses since 1996-97, a 15-year replacement plan could save the district more than \$100,000 in each

of the first two years, and more than \$200,000 annually beginning in the third year. This plan, however, would not allow the district to account for growth.

If the district purchased seven buses per year at an average cost of \$40,000*, the annual cost would be \$280,000 (\$40,000 average price per bus x 7 buses), which would net the district \$176,000 of annual savings (\$456,000 average annual expenditure minus \$280,000 for seven buses each year). Purchasing seven buses per year would allow the district to replace its older buses while expanding its fleet to account for growth, should growth continue at the current rate.

*The estimate is based on the prices of a 55-passenger capacity bus (\$35,000) and a 71-passenger capacity bus (\$45,000) per the Texas General Services Commission.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Develop a formal school bus expansion and replacement cycle.	\$176,000	\$176,000	\$176,000	\$176,000	\$176,000

Chapter 10

SAFETY AND SECURITY

This chapter examines Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) safety, security and student discipline management functions in two sections:

- A. Safety and Security
- B. Student Discipline Management

Traditionally, most school safety programs involved surrounding schools with fences and creating alternative education programs. Recent events, such as the 1999 tragedy in Littleton, Colorado, have prompted some to examine a more comprehensive approach that recognizes 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.

Chapter 10

SAFETY AND SECURITY

This chapter examines Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) safety, security and student discipline management functions in two sections:

A. SAFETY AND SECURITY

The Texas Legislature has revised several safety and security-related provisions in the Texas Education Code. **Exhibit 10-1** summarizes major legislation related to school safety and security for the past four legislative sessions.

Exhibit 10-1
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 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	Revises 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.
Senate 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: Texas Legislature Online.

At DVISD, responsibility for safety and security resides with each building principal. Those duties are based on the guidelines and requirements within the board policy, the student code of conduct and guidelines published in the crisis management plan. The resources that support safety and security vary depending on grade level and campus. **Exhibit 10-2** provides an overview of DVISD resources specifically dedicated to safety and security.

Exhibit 10-2
Summary of DVISD Safety and Security Resources
November 2000

Campus	Safety and Security Resources
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Elementary Campuses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Principal or Assistant Principal
Del Valle Junior High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistant Principal • Travis County Sheriff Officer • Two Hall Monitors
Del Valle High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistant Principal • Travis County Sheriff Officer • 1.5 Hall Monitors
All School Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracted Drug Detection Dog Services

Source: Compiled from interviews with DVISD building staff and Travis County Sheriff Officers.

An overview of the DVISD safety and security budget for the last three years is provided in **Exhibit 10-3**.

Exhibit 10-3
DVISD Safety and Security Budget and Expenditure Overview
1997-98 through 1999-2000

Year	Budget	Expense
1999-2000	\$56,004	NA
1998-99	\$0	\$64,576
1997-98	\$0	\$0

Source: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, 1997-2000

Building administrators have the primary responsibility for safety and security within their buildings. At the secondary level, principals delegate the responsibility to an assistant principal.

Primary school safety and security at the secondary buildings is provided through an interlocal cooperation agreement between DVISD and the Travis County Sheriff's Office (TCSO) for two sheriff deputies. A portion of the agreement is funded through the Universal Hiring Program sponsored by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), a federal grant awarded to TCSO as part of the federal initiative

to place more law enforcement officers in communities. The funding is provided to DVISD in the form of discounted rates for law enforcement services. COPS is a three year grant that expires in October 2001.

An overview of the TSCO responsibilities as stated in the general services section of the agreement is provided in **Exhibit 10-4**. The agreement expired on September 1999 but includes an automatic renewal period for subsequent one-year periods.

Exhibit 10-4
Overview of DVISD and TCSO Agreement

- Assign one deputy each for the Del Valle High School and Junior High campuses
- Provide for necessary deputy supervision and training
- Provide, if desired, law enforcement related training to students by the deputy in subjects agreed upon by TCSO and DVISD
- Engage in law enforcement activity pursuant to the role and duties of a Peace Officer
- Perform only the same duties and obligations as the deputy has to the general public

Source: Interlocal Cooperation Agreement between Travis County and DVISD.

Hall monitors provide additional security during periods between classes, during the school day and during auditorium programs. They help to deter improper behavior, serve as additional authority figures and assist in the disciplinary process. DVISD has contracted for drug detection dogs for unscheduled searches of classrooms, student lockers and student vehicles.

Data supporting violent and criminal incidents as well as violations of the DVISD student code of conduct are collected by the building assistant principals to comply with the requirements of Senate Bill 1724 and the district's Safe and Drug-Free Title 4 grant. Incident data is provided to the campus PEIMS clerk for input into PEIMS and is also used to satisfy grant reporting requirements. The district PEIMS coordinator is responsible for compiling and reporting incident related data to TEA.

Criminal incidents are also documented by the sheriff deputies at both the Del Valle Junior High and High School as part of their law enforcement duties. Reports generated by the officers are submitted to the Travis County Sheriff's office, and a summary of reported incidents is provided to the superintendent's office each month. The officer assigned to the Del

Valle Junior High School maintains detailed incident statistics to satisfy the requirements of the COPS grant.

FINDING

Each DVISD campus has an updated and comprehensive Crisis Management Plan, which provides standard guidelines to improve student and employee safety in the event of a crisis or emergency.

Per DVISD Board Policy, "Each school shall have effective emergency procedures that can be implemented on short notice and that will ensure safety for students and school personnel."

The plan includes:

- Plan rationale;
- Member and contact numbers for the Crisis Team;
- Guidelines for media and parent communications;
- Roles and Responsibilities;
- Chain of Command;
- Equipment/Supplies;
- Guidelines for specific crises such as fire, bomb threats, natural disasters, etc.;
- Emergency procedures;
- Crisis Day Checklists;
- Staff assignments for securing the building; and
- School map.

COMMENDATION

DVISD's Crisis Management Plan contains guidelines for implementing measures to ensure the safety of students and employees in the event of crises within the district.

FINDING

DVISD does not have a long-range security plan, creating a fragmented approach to district safety and security needs and a lack of defined roles and responsibilities. Some elements of safety and security are building specific, but building administrators said there was a lack of safety and security planning and that they were not aware of any district level planning.

The district's safety and security is treated as a site-based issue and primarily managed through board policy and guidelines stipulated in the student code of conduct and crisis management plans. Although these

documents provide detailed guidelines and information about district safety, security, student discipline and emergency situations, they lack specific strategies and programs focused on prevention, intervention and enforcement.

Based on a comparison with peer districts, DVISD ranks lowest in the amount budgeted for safety and security per student and significantly lower than the state average. DVISD is only one of two districts among the peer districts that did not have a safety and security budget for 1998-99. These indicators suggest limited focus and attention to the district's safety and security needs.

Exhibit 10-5 provides a comparison of DVISD's safety and security budget and cost per student with peer districts over the last three years.

Exhibit 10-5
DVISD Safety and Security Budget
Comparison with Peer Districts
1997-98 to 1999-2000

District	1997-98 Budget	\$ per Student	1998-99 Budget	\$ per Student	1999-2000 Budget	\$ per Student
Del Valle	\$0	NA	\$0	NA	\$56,004	\$9
Lockhart	\$0	NA	\$41,070	\$8	\$56,910	\$13
Hays	\$0	NA	\$81,492	\$13	\$57,789	\$9
Georgetown	\$10,000	\$1	\$36,160	\$5	\$85,521	\$11
Eanes	\$130,665	\$18	\$128,200	\$17	\$168,750	\$23
San Marcos	\$0	NA	\$0	NA	\$82,109	\$12
State Average	\$103,819,759	\$27	\$114,895,729	\$29	\$135,888,021	\$34

Source: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS.

Many peer district budgets reflect an increased awareness, focus and commitment to safety and security. Georgetown ISD established a district focus by hiring an external consultant to help the district develop and design the district's safety and security plan and strategies. Georgetown ISD in conjunction with Houston ISD was awarded a three-year \$1.2 million Safe and Drug Free School grant. The grant funding allowed Georgetown ISD to hire a full time Safe School Director, conduct a detailed safety and security assessment and implement a safety and security plan.

The San Marcos Consolidated School District has established strong community relationships to obtain federal and county grants, which fund additional law enforcement officers within district schools. The district's Community Services Director works with community leaders and agencies to leverage and create funding initiatives to improve school safety and security.

Through the federal Safe and Drug Free School Grant, Lockhart ISD purchased clear backpacks with school logos for all elementary students. In addition, through continued work with the city's proactive police department, the district funded three additional officers through the COPS in Schools grant.

Recommendation 82:

Develop a long -range safety and security plan.

The district's long-range security plan should clearly outline what it wants to accomplish in the areas of safety and security and delineate the expected responsibilities. It should contain a mission statement, long-term goals, measurable objectives and strategies to achieve goals. Stakeholders should be kept informed about safety and security initiatives through regular evaluations that compare actual performance to performance and cost-efficiency measures.

Plan development should be coordinated through a district safety and security committee chaired by a district-assigned safety and security coordinator. The committee should be empowered to assess the district's safety and security needs and develop a comprehensive safety and security plan. Specific responsibilities of the committee should include:

- Assessing the safety and security needs of each campus/building;
- Aligning and prioritizing safety and security needs against identified risks;
- Identifying funding sources such as grants, shared service agreements, etc.;
- Formulating objectives that describe the desired outcomes and impact of prevention efforts; and
- Developing strategies and specific tasks for accomplishing stated objectives.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent appoints a safety and security committee of district administrators, teachers, law enforcement agencies and parents.	June 2001
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2.	The superintendent instructs the safety and security committee to develop a long-range district security plan that includes prevention, intervention and enforcement components. The plan includes districtwide safety and security issues, staff expectations and long-term goals.	June 2001
3.	The safety and security committee develops a long-range district security plan.	July 2001
4.	The board reviews, modifies as necessary and approves the long-range safety and security plan.	August 2001
5.	The safety and security committee establishes performance and cost efficiency measures.	August 2001
6.	The superintendent publishes and implements the long-range safety and security plan.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

DVISD does not annually publish the district's violent and criminal incidents as required by Senate Bill 1724. Incident statistics are generated to satisfy PEIMS reporting requirements but are not published annually for the board or the community.

The Texas Legislature in 1999 amended the Education Code to require school districts to publish an annual report that includes the number, rate and type of violent or criminal incidents that occurred on each district campus. The annual report also must include information on school violence prevention and intervention policies and procedures the district uses to protect students.

Recommendation 83:

Develop an annual report of violent and criminal incidents occurring within DVISD schools and share the information with teachers, parents, administrators and the community.

DVISD should publish the number, rate and type of violent or criminal incidents that occur in the annual report and should distribute crime incident statistics to parents, teachers, school administrators and the community as required by law. The incident reports should be discussed with parents, teachers, school administrators and site-based committees.

This process will enable DVISD to obtain input from parents, teachers and school administrators on developing the district's safety and security plan.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The PEIMS coordinator generates a summary of violent and criminal incidents that occurred during the year and provides the summary to the superintendent.	June 2001
2.	The superintendent reviews and includes the summary in the annual board report and publishes the report on the DVISD Web site.	July 2001 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

DVISD staff and security personnel are unable to identify individuals who should not be on campus. In large schools particularly, it is difficult to determine if an unfamiliar adult on school grounds is a possible intruder or, for instance, a substitute teacher. Site visits to the junior high and high schools revealed visitors are rarely challenged and generally have access to most common areas of the schools.

Although the policy for visitors varies among the various Parent-Student Handbooks published and distributed by the district, all visitors are required to either report to the principals' office, sign in at the office or report to the main office. Texas Education Code 37.105 states "Identification may be required of any person on school property. The Board or its designee may refuse to allow persons having no legitimate business to enter school property, and may eject any undesirable person from the property upon his or her refusal to leave peaceably on request."

At the two schools visited (Del Valle Junior High and Del Valle High School), visitors signing in were not issued badges, nor asked for identification. The TSPR review team were issued DVISD visitor badges for access to district facilities, but this is not a practice normally used within district schools. The sheriff officer assigned at Del Valle High School was surprised, but happy to see team members wearing visitor badges.

Exhibit 10-6 provides an overview of the visitor procedures from each of the published handbooks.

Exhibit 10-6
Visitor Procedures from DVISD Student Handbooks
2000-01

DVISD Elementary Student and Parent Handbook 2000-01	DVISD Del Valle Junior High Student Handbook 2000-01	DVISD Del Valle High School Student Handbook 2000-01
For the safety of those within the school, all visitors must first report to the principal's office.	Parents/guardians must sign in at the office.	All visitors must check into the main office before entering any part of the school or be subject to trespassing violations.

Source: Compiled from DVISD Elementary, Junior High and High School Student Handbooks.

Recommendation 84:

Standardize and update the visitor procedures in the DVISD Parent-Student Handbooks.

The prescribed procedures should include the use of visitor badges for easy identification of unauthorized visitors on school property. School officials should strictly enforce the visitor badge policy.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The safety and security coordinator reviews the visitor procedures in each student handbook.	June 2001
2.	The safety and security coordinator standardizes the procedure.	June 2001
3.	The safety and security coordinator tells building administrators and staff about the standardized procedures.	July 2001
4.	The superintendent reprints and redistributes the revised handbooks.	August 2001
5.	The superintendent strictly enforces the new visitor procedures.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The sheriff deputy and administrators at Del Valle High School have identified a number of building areas or "blind spots" that have a high potential for criminal type activity but are difficult to constantly monitor. The "blind spots" identified include:

- Parking Lots;
- A number of building stairwells; and
- North and South sides of building.

Recommendation 85:

Install security cameras and monitor "blind spots" to reduce potential for criminal activity on campus.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the assistant principal of the high school and sheriff officer to meet to determine the number and location of security cameras needed.	June 2001
2.	The assistant principal, sheriff officer and director of Purchasing develop security camera and supporting equipment specifications and Request for Proposals for security camera procurement.	June 2001
3.	The assistant principal, sheriff officer and director of Purchasing select vendor.	July 2001
4.	The selected vendor installs the security cameras and supporting equipment.	July 2001
5.	The superintendent directs the sheriff officer to monitor the areas.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

Based on the initial blind spots identified, 2 security system units and required installation are needed to provide adequate coverage at the high school. Security systems would be installed both in the Sheriff Officer's office and in the Assistant Principals office. Security cameras, supporting equipment, installation and training could be purchased at a cost of \$4,620 to the district in the 2001-02 school year. Fiscal impact was calculated using the following estimates:

2 - Color C Mount System with 960 hour VCR at \$1,650 each = \$3,300

Includes:

- 2 - 960 Hour time lapse VCR
- 8 - Color C mount cameras with 4mm lens
- 8 - 12V dc power supplies
- 2 - 12" 800 line Color monitor
- 2 - full featured quad compressor
- 8 - 60ft Plug and play camera cables

1 - Installation estimated at 25% of system cost = \$825

1 - Training estimated at 15% of system cost = \$495

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Install security cameras and monitor "blind spots" to reduce potential for criminal activity on campus.	(\$4,620)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Chapter 10

SAFETY AND SECURITY

This chapter examines Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) safety, security and student discipline management functions in two sections:

B. STUDENT DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT

Under the Texas Education Code, each school district must adopt a student code of conduct establishing standards for student behavior. Student behavior often is measured by levels of offenses, which are typically outlined in a district's code of conduct. Depending on the type and level of offense, various discipline management techniques are suggested for teachers, campus administrators and district administrators. For example, minor offenses may require student-teacher conferences or detention; major offenses may require suspension or placement in alternative educational programs.

DVISD's discipline management program is coordinated through the executive directors of elementary and secondary instruction with significant involvement by campus administrators, hall monitors and sheriff officers at the junior high and high schools. School principals, assistant principals and teachers are responsible for enforcing the student code of conduct and tracking and reporting violations.

Student discipline management is a shared responsibility among school administrators, teachers and sheriff officers assigned to the secondary schools. Through the student code of conduct, teachers are provided in-class discipline strategies to handle minor student violations. DVISD uses an In School Suspension (ISS) program to manage discipline problems that cannot be resolved by classroom teachers. The ISS program is intended to continue the education process by placing students in a designated school classroom supervised by an administrator, aide or teacher. Students spend from 1 to 3 days in ISS depending on the nature of the violation, and they must continue to receive and complete their class assignments.

The district's Alternative Education Programs (AEPs) and services are provided through the Opportunity Center. The Opportunity Center, like other school buildings, has an assigned principal who reports to the executive director of Instruction and Curriculum. The Opportunity Center had an enrollment of 132 students and a budget of \$132,000 for 1999-2000. The two primary AEP programs provided by the Opportunity Center include Students Experiencing Academic Success (SEAS) and Alternative

Teaching and Learning for All Students (ATLAS). In addition to these programs, the Opportunity Center also serves as a service center for delivering:

- Teen parenting classes;
- Adult literacy curriculum (Project Life); and
- Child care services for students and district employees.

The SEAS program is an alternative discipline placement program for students in grades 7-12. The program is offered through the Department of Secondary Curriculum and Instruction and administered by the Opportunity Center principal. It can serve a maximum of 40 students at one time. Students are assigned for a minimum of one grading period (nine weeks) at which time their progress is reviewed to determine the appropriate academic setting for the student. With a budget of approximately \$14,000, the SEAS program achieved the results provided in **Exhibit 10-8**.

**Exhibit 10-8
SEAS 1998-1999
End of Year Statistics**

Program Indicator	Program Result
Students Enrolled	43
Rate of Attendance	84%
Percentage of students returned to the classroom	62.5%
Percentage of students withdrawing from SEAS	26%

Source: SEAS 1998-1999 End of Year Report.

The ATLAS program is the district's primary alternative diploma program that serves students who are unable to earn a degree in a traditional school setting, such as pregnant teens or students who have previously dropped out of school and wish to get their high school diplomas. Base indicators used to measure program effectiveness include attendance, dropout rate and Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) results. **Exhibits 10-9** and **10-10** provide an overview of the ATLAS base indicators for 1997-1998 and 1998-99.

**Exhibit 10-9
ATLAS Base Indicators Grades 7-12
1997-98 and 1998-99
Dropout Rate Comparison**

Student Groups	1997-98 Enrollment	Dropout Rate	1998-99 Attendance Rate	1998-99 Enrollment	Dropout Rate
All Students Served	242	1.7%	81.7%	295	1.0%
African American	25	0.0%	NA	32	3.1%
Hispanic	134	2.2%	NA	164	0.6%
White	81	1.2%	NA	92	1.1%
Economically Disadvantaged	98	3.1%	NA	95	2.1%

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 1997-98 - 1998-99.

**Exhibit 10-10
ATLAS Base Indicators
TAAS Results
1999 and 2000**

Student Groups	Spring 1999 Students Testing	Spring 1999 Students Passing	Percent Passing	Spring 2000 Students Testing	Spring 2000 Students Passing	Percent Passing
Reading - All Students	17	13	77%	11	11	100%
Mathematics - All Students	19	12	63%	13	10	77%
Writing - All Students	20	18	90%	12	10	83%

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS.

DVISD also uses the Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP) in Travis County for students that have committed criminal offenses.

FINDING

DVISD provides district students and parents a detailed and comprehensive student code of conduct. The Department of Curriculum and Instruction publishes and distributes DVISD's code to principals, teachers, students and parents at the beginning of each school year to

ensure everyone is familiar with the district's disciplinary process and the consequences for misbehavior. The code is printed in both English and Spanish. District students and parents are responsible for reading and understanding it and providing written confirmation of their commitment to the code.

The code includes:

- Letter to Parents and Students with agreement form
- Introduction
- Levels of Offense
- Definitions and Terminology
- Procedural Information
- Student Dress Code
- Discipline of a Student with a Disability

COMMENDATION

The DVISD student code of conduct is comprehensive and well written.

FINDING

The In School Suspension (ISS) Program is not being administered or used to reduce student discipline actions.

The program is poorly administered through bad record keeping and a lack of understanding by school staff and students on the program's intent and objectives. A building administrator stated during an interview, "The program is used as a "holding area" for truant or disruptive students who rarely are provided their class assignment while in the program."

A summary of disciplinary actions taken by DVISD officials is provided in **Exhibit 10-11**. The exhibit illustrates the high number of ISS actions received by DVISD students. The number of ISS disciplinary actions reported for the junior high school represented more than twice the school student population. As a percentage of student population, DVISD rank highest among peer districts for ISS actions.

**Exhibit 10-11
Discipline Action Summary
August 1999-June 2000**

Discipline Technique Applied				
Campus	Student	Placement	In School	Out of School

	Population	Into AEP	Suspension	Suspension
Elementary Campuses				
Baty	877	5	159	15
Hillcrest	920	0	74	14
Hornsby	732	1	186	5
Popham	789	6	201	29
Smith	806	1	114	51
Total Elementary	4,124	13	734	114
Secondary Campuses				
Del Valle Junior High	970	70	2,077	1,200
Del Valle High School	1,483	51	592	375
Del Valle Opportunity Center	103	NA	NA	16
Total Secondary	2,556	121	2,669	1,591

Source: DVISD Department of Instruction and Curriculum. The Opportunity Center is the AEP program.

A comparison of DVISD ISS actions with peer districts is provided in **Exhibit 10-12**.

Exhibit 10-12
In-School Suspension Actions
DVISD Comparison with Peer Districts
1999-2000

Peer District	Student Population	In School Suspension	Percent of Student Population
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Del Valle	6,680	3,403	51%
Lockhart	4,405	930	21%
San Marco Cons ISD	6,962	1,363	20%
Hays Cons ISD	6,707	921	14%
Manor ISD	2,484	584	24%
Eanes ISD	7,443	36	.5%
Bastrop	6,122	934	15%
Georgetown ISD	7,578	892	12%

Source: DVISD Department of Instruction and Curriculum and Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 1999-2000.

Of the disciplinary actions received during 1999-2000, approximately 80 percent were issued to students in grade 8 for violating the student code of conduct. From the report period 1998-99 to 1999-2000, DVISD experienced more than a 40-percent increase in the number of ISS disciplinary actions at the junior high level without a material increase in student population.

While a review of DVISD records failed to pinpoint the exact reasons why the number of DVISD disciplinary actions exceeded peer group comparisons, potential contributors to the large number of ISS disciplinary actions could include:

- Poor record keeping and/or interpretation of the data received;
- High turnover of building administrative leadership;
- Lack of adequate discipline/classroom management training or encouragement to apply techniques sufficiently;
- Limited interaction by teachers and administrators with student parents;
- Use of the ISS program for other than its stated intent and objective;
- Lack of monitoring or measurement to determine the impact of the ISS program and;
- Need for additional initiatives to curb student discipline problems.

Recommendation 86:

Conduct an audit of the In School Suspension (ISS) program.

A comprehensive audit of the ISS program is needed to determine the reasons for such large numbers of disciplinary actions within the district as well as the best solution to the problem. The audit should focus on ISS goals and objectives, qualifications of staff administering the program and whether program guidelines are followed. Audit results should be published as a way to reinforce program intent and objectives for students and staff.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director of Secondary Instruction assigns a department staff member to conduct the audit.	July 2001
2.	The executive director of Secondary Instruction and assigned staff member review the ISS program trends and develop audit guidelines.	July 2001
3.	The executive director of Secondary Instruction meets with the secondary principals and assistant principals to announce the ISS program audit.	August 2001
4.	The audit is conducted by the assigned staff member.	September 2001
5.	The executive director of Secondary Instruction and principals review and publish the audit results.	October 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 11

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

This chapter reviews Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) administrative and instructional technology in five sections:

- A. Systems Infrastructure
- B. Organization and Management
- C. Technical Support and Help Desk Operations
- D. Staff Development
- E. Technology Planning

The responsibilities of technology services operations in Texas public school districts vary. Some offices support administrative workers only, while others are responsible for supporting both administration and instruction either through a single or separate department.

Regardless of structure, a school district must be organized to attain the entire organization's instructional and administrative requirements for the planning, implementation, integration and support of existing and new technology.

Chapter 11

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

This chapter reviews Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) administrative and instructional technology in five sections:

A. SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE

Network infrastructure is the underlying system of cabling, phone lines, hubs, switches, routers and other devices that connect the various parts of an organization through a Wide Area Network (WAN). If a sound infrastructure is in place, most computer users can have access to people and information throughout their organization and beyond, greatly facilitating their ability to perform their jobs.

A WAN allows users to communicate with personnel within the organization through tools such as electronic mail systems. It also provides a bridge to the Internet, which allows anyone connected to the WAN to access information and people outside the organization. WANs are usually "closed," meaning that they include security measures to prevent unauthorized users from accessing information or people inside the organization.

While the infrastructure provides the connections that permit communications and includes the hardware for retrieval, processing and disseminating information, software applications make these tools truly powerful resources.

The district has established computer specifications and standards published and updated on the DVISD Web site. All purchases of computer hardware and software are reviewed by the department to ensure hardware configurations and software licensing are consistent with DVISD Technology Department policy and licensing requirements.

The district uses the Regional Service Center Computer Cooperative (RSCCC) and South Texas Multi-Regional Processing Center (STMRPC) administrative software applications from the Regional Education Service Center 13 (Region 13). STMRPC is a student and financial record keeping software that performs scheduling, grade reporting, attendance, registration and health services.

The software program also includes financial record keeping functions like financial accounting, payroll and personnel, budget development, check reconciliation and compilation of data for Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) reporting. A list of the primary

software used by DVISD for administrative and instructional purposes is provided in **Exhibits 11-1** and **11-2**.

Exhibit 11-1
DVISD Administrative Software 2000-01

Organization/Function/Department	Software
Business Office	RSCCC - Business Software WinStar - Time Clocks
PEIMS Department	RSCCC - Business Software STMRPC- Student demographics software
Transportation	Edulog - Bus Routing Software Trip Master - Field Trips Software Megatronics - Fuel pump control and fueling
Maintenance	A.C.T. for Windows - Work Orders
Technology	Talys Coordinator - Service Requests
Elementary Schools	STMRPC - Student demographics software Process Manager - Desegregates Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) data PDAS - Staff evaluation software
Junior High School	STMRPC - Student demographics software Process Manager - Desegregates TAAS data Grade Speed - Electronic grade book
High School	STMRPC - Student demographics software Process Manager - Desegregates TAAS data Grade Speed - Electronic grade book
Opportunity Center	STMRPC - Student demographics software Process Manager - Desegregates TAAS data
Food Services	C.A.F.S. - Cafeteria Automation Software
Electronic Mail	Microsoft Exchange

Source: DVISD Technology Department.

Exhibit 11-2
DVISD Instructional Software 2000-01

School Location	Software
Baty, Hillcrest and Popham Elementary Schools	Accelerated Reader
Hornsby-DunlapElementary School	Accelerated Reader Sleek
Smith Elementary School	Accelerated Reader Jostens
Del Valle Junior High School	Novanet
Del Valle High School	Novanet, Accelerated Reader Cisco Academy
Opportunity Center	Novanet
School Library - All Campuses	Follett

Source: DVISD Technology Department.

FINDING

A bond election in 1997 provided approximately \$2.7 million to fund the design and development of the DVISD network infrastructure. In addition, DVISD anticipates receiving more than \$780,000 in E-rate funding. E-rate funding is available for nonprofit, K-12 schools through the Telecommunications Act of 1996, and offers from 20-to 90-percent discounts on telecommunications services, Internet access and internal connections. The DVISD network includes:

- Local Area Networks (LANs) at each campus, the Transportation/Maintenance Department, Facilities Department and the administrative building;
- School LANs consist of a gigabit (gb) fiber backbone and Category 5e cabling, providing each classroom with a minimum of three 100 megabit (mb) network drops;
- Networked workstations are Intel-based PCs running Windows NT 4.0 operating system, virus protection software, Internet Explorer and Microsoft Office 2000;
- Stand-alone School instructional labs are comprised of Macintosh OS and networking using Macintosh servers and clients;
- A 3mb ATM backbone comprising two T1 phone lines connecting the five elementary schools to the DVISD Technology Center;
- T1 WAN connections for the Opportunity Center and Transportation/Maintenance Departments;
- ISDN WAN connection at the Facilities Department;
- Fiber Optic WAN connection for the high school and junior high;

- Two-hundred and ninety two Cisco switches and routers and 3com network interface cards as the district standard communication hardware;
- Twenty-five NT file servers for each school physically located in the Technology Center's server farm;
- T1 connection to Region 13; and
- Web server at the Technology Center to support the district's intranet.

The DVISD server is managed remotely from the Technology Center using the Microsoft System Management Server. This tool allows the department to monitor network utilization and performance. In addition, all district servers are located where they are easy to manage and troubleshoot.

COMMENDATION

DVISD has a state-of-the-art network infrastructure with high technology standards and appropriate network management tools and user service request systems.

Chapter 11

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

This chapter reviews Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) administrative and instructional technology in five sections:

B. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

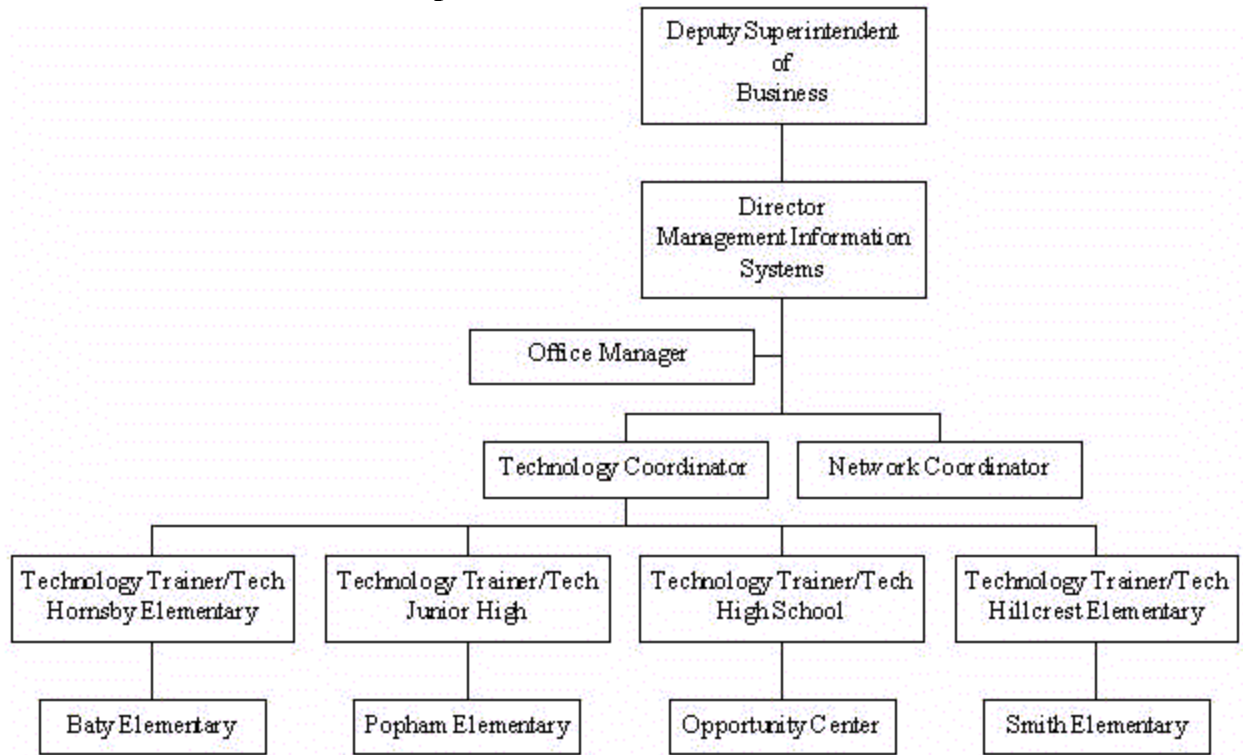
According to the DVISD's Technology Plan for 1999-2002, the department's mission is to perform the best implementation of technology to meet the district's mission. To achieve its technology-related goals, a school district must have an organizational structure that creates an environment for using and supporting new technologies and providing strong integration between instructional and technology resources.

The DVISD Technology Department reports directly to the deputy superintendent of Business and consists of 8 budgeted, full-time-equivalent positions. The department is responsible managing and supporting the district's infrastructure, administrative and instructional technology resources. The department, in conjunction with the DVISD technology committee and established campus technology committees, determines district technology needs, develops technology standards and plans the procurement and implementation of administrative and instructional technology resources.

The DVISD Technology Department organization is shown in **Exhibit 11-3**.

Exhibit 11-3 DVISD Technology Department

April 2001



Source: DVISD Technology Department.

The responsibilities for each of the department positions are presented in Exhibit 11-4.

**Exhibit 11-4
DVISD Technology Department Position Responsibilities
1999-2000**

Title	Responsibilities Highlights
Director of Management Information Systems	Leadership in the development, implementation and planning of technology for use within instructional curricula; implement existing instructional technology programs; facilitate the use of existing technology in the teaching/learning process; design, plan and implement an ongoing technology education program that enhances the district's instructional program, including staff development.
Technology Coordinator	Coordinate on-campus technology training and facilitate the effective use of technology; coordinate the installation of hardware and software; assist in network management; maintain technology inventories; coordinate repair orders, supplies and service for computer-related equipment; assist in district technology projects.

Network Coordinator	Wide Area Network (WAN), Local Area Networks (LAN) and wireless network management and troubleshooting; work with firewalls and network security; hardware maintenance and repair; develop and deliver technology training to school district employees.
Office Manager	Telephone and office receptionist; bookkeeping; open and process mail; assist with E-rate process; maintain filing system; maintain supplies inventory; maintain Web pages; maintain Department fixed asset inventory; manage district keyless entry system.
Campus Technologist	Workstation hardware and software maintenance; hardware and software installation; network management support; campus level computer training; maintain and operate "spare parts" equipment inventory; maintain and manage all services records; diagnose, troubleshoot and repair campus technology equipment.

Source: DVISD Technology Department Position Descriptions and Interviews.

FINDING

According to department staff, the director of Management Information Systems (MIS) resigned in September 2000, leaving the department in transition and without formal leadership and direction. In the interim, the DVISD network coordinator is the acting DVISD technology director responsible for both department and DVISD network management.

District management has been impressed with the performance of the acting director and has had some preliminary discussion regarding his role in managing the organization should the department undergo restructuring. The acting director has been an employee of the district for three years and has:

- a strong technical background;
- knowledge of district systems and infrastructure; and
- experience managing technical departments in three other school districts.

As of January 2001, the position has not been posted to the district's Web site, although the department's organizational chart has been revised to reflect a Management Information Systems (MIS) director position that is filled by the acting director.

Recommendation 87:

Fill the vacant technology director position.

The network coordinator responsibilities should be evaluated to determine what portion of the job can be transferred to the department's technology coordinator. The MIS director should retain those responsibilities that cannot be transferred due to lack of technical skills.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent of Business develops a job description for the MIS Director position.	June 2001
2.	The superintendent recommends the promotion of the Network Coordinator to MIS Director or the filling of the position by an external applicant.	June 2001
3.	The board approves the personnel action.	July 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be accomplished within existing budgets since both the director and coordinator positions are budgeted.

FINDING

There is no instructional technology component within the department's or the district's organizational structure. The DVISD director of MIS position job description states that the department director will report to the Department of Instruction and not the deputy superintendent of Business as reflected in the current structure. The primary link between the Technology and Instructional Department is through the campus and district technology committees, which have been inactive over the last year, and the campus technologist whose primary responsibility is computer repair and troubleshooting, not integrating technology and curriculum.

Effective instructional technology support personnel must be familiar with school operations and the technologies and materials used for instructional purposes; technology-oriented instructional materials; and technology-related training. To ensure an effective integration of technology and curriculum, the district's Technology Department must work closely with the Curriculum and Instruction Department to ensure that its initiatives support the learning process.

Technology infrastructures are huge investments for school districts. Establishing effective policies and associated standard operating procedures are integral to the successful use of technology. In times of increased competition for technical resources and resulting turnover, department-specific procedures are critical tools in the cross training of department staff and orientation of new employees.

Exhibit 11-5 describes the technology staffing levels of DVISD and its peer districts.

**Exhibit 11-5
DVISD and Peers, Technology Staffing Comparisons
1999-2000**

District	Administrative	Infrastructure & Support	Instructional
Del Valle Total Staff: 8	Director of MIS Office Manager	Network Coordinator Technology Coordinator Campus Technologists (4)	
Bastrop Total Staff: 10	Director	Network Manager Computer Repair Technicians (5) Help Desk/Secretary	Technology Trainers (2)
Georgetown Total Staff: 9	Director Secretary	Network Manager Network Assistant/Technician Webmaster Campus Technician	Instructional Technology Assistants (2) Trainer
Hays Total Staff: 7	Secretary (part- time)	Network Coordinator Network Assistant Coordinator Technicians (3) Delivery Support (1)	
Lockhart Total Staff: 8	Director of Technology	Technology Assistant Field Technicians (2) Campus Technology Assistant	Technology Integration Mentors (3)
San Marcos Total Staff: 9	Assistant Superintendent Secretary	Technicians (2) Database Specialists (2) Programmer	Administrative/Instructional Technologists (2)

Eanes Total Staff: 9	Technology Director Secretary	Network Manager/Technician Technician Webmaster Trainer (Macintosh/Windows)	Campus Technology Specialists (3)
Manor Total Staff: 5	MIS Director (part-time) Administrative Assistant (part- time)	Network Administrator Technology Assistant Technical Assistant	Curriculum/Technology Coordinator (2)

Source: Telephone Interviews with listed peer districts.

DVISD is one of two districts in its peer group that do not have a staff position responsible for coordinating instructional technology. As a result, there is no consistency in how technology is used or integrated into the classroom and curriculum.

Other districts, such as Lockhart, Eanes and Georgetown, use an instructional technology position or other employee to assist in the:

- Integration of technology into the curriculum;
- Evaluation and selection of effective instructional technology;
- Alignment of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills standards, curriculum and technology;
- Development of district and school technology strategies and plans; and
- Coordination of teacher technology training.

Under the current organization, instructional technology is a responsibility of the vacant technology director position.

The Network Coordinator position is budgeted at \$56,120 plus benefits of 15.4 percent (\$8,642) = \$64,762.

Recommendation 88:

Hire an instructional technology coordinator and fund the position using the budget for the network coordinator.

The instructional technology coordinator should have teaching experience and should be familiar with how software and technology can be used to enhance student learning. Creating and filling this position supports the MIS restructure by transferring the responsibility for instructional

technology from the current Technology Department to the Department of Instruction and Curriculum.

The instructional technology coordinator would be responsible for working with district teachers, DVISD staff responsible for designing and coordinating curriculum and the technology department to integrate technology into the curriculum and ensure standards are established in the selection and use of instructional software and supporting resources. The coordinator position should reside within the Department of Instruction and Curriculum and report to the department's executive directors.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive directors of Instruction, deputy superintendent of Business and the MIS director develop a position description for an instructional technology coordinator position.	June 2001
2.	The superintendent recommends developing an instructional technology coordinator using the existing budget network coordinator position.	June 2001
3.	The director of Human Resource Management posts the position.	June 2001
4.	The executive directors of Instruction form an interview team that interviews the candidates.	July 2001
5.	The district hires the instructional technology coordinator.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

The salary of the Instructional Technology coordinator would be \$50,000 plus benefits of 15.4 percent (\$7,700) = \$57,700. The Network Coordinator position is budgeted at \$56,120 plus benefits of 15.4 percent (\$8,642) = \$64,762. The net savings of the recommendation would be \$7,062 per year.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Hire an instructional technology coordinator and fund the position using the budget for the network coordinator.	\$7,062	\$7,062	\$7,062	\$7,062	\$7,062

FINDING

There are no formal procedures supporting the Technology Department's operations and management. Staff indicated that they worked closely together and were familiar with their roles and aware of how the department operated. For example, there is a practice that all district technology purchases must be reviewed and approved by the Technology Department, however, this practice is not documented and available for district and school staff. This is even more important when schools are using their technology allotment funds to procure technology in support of school requirements. Other than the current position descriptions, there are no documented procedures supporting the various responsibilities within the department. For example, the office manager is responsible for maintaining the department's fixed asset inventory, however, there are no procedures that describe how or when the inventory should be taken.

Many Texas school districts have learned that developing and implementing well-written and organized procedures helps:

- Implement and assure compliance with board policies as well as document the intent of those policies;
- protect the institutional knowledge of an organization, so that as experienced employees leave, new employees have the benefit of the others' years of experience;
- provide the basis for training new employees; and
- offer a tool for evaluating employees based on their adherence to procedures.

Many organizations, especially school districts, find it difficult to compete with businesses for employees with technical skills, creating a measurable level of turnover in technology jobs. These trends demand that organization establish departmental procedures providing guidelines for new employees and cross training.

The departure of the DVISD MIS director has shown the type of challenge created by a lack of detailed procedural instructions. On several occasions, the acting director stated the challenges specific to performing responsibilities when there is a lack of documented processes or instructions.

Recommendation 89:

Establish departmental procedures for the responsibilities of the Technology Department.

The district should develop procedures that document step-by-step methods for carrying out board and departmental policy.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The MIS director meets with department staff to identify policies specific to the Technology Department. The office manager documents the department policies.	June 2001
2.	The MIS director requests that department staff identify and document procedures specific to each of the ir department responsibilities and provides department staff with an outline and example of the end product.	July 2001
3.	The MIS director reviews the draft procedures with department staff for feedback, changes and clarification.	August 2001
4.	The MIS director presents documented policies and procedures to the deputy superintendent of Business for review and approval.	September 2001
5.	The office manager publishes the policies and procedures on the DVISD technology Web page.	September 2001
6.	The MIS director reports the results to the superintendent and board.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 11

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

This chapter reviews Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) administrative and instructional technology in five sections:

C. TECHNICAL SUPPORT AND HELP DESK OPERATIONS

Technical support significantly influences how effectively technology is used in the classroom and throughout the district. 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. Technical support is delivered to the district school by assigned campus technologists. Building users initiate a service request using the district's online service request tool, Tayls. Service requests are reviewed and managed by the department's technology coordinator. Requests are automatically routed and assigned to campus technologists based on their assigned schools. Requests requiring specialized technical experience are routed to the district's network coordinator.

FINDING

The department does not maintain historical service request data. The Technology Department does not use service request data captured by the department's online service request tool. Discussions with the acting director indicated that historical service request data is deleted from the system at the close of each school year.

Historical service request data can be an invaluable tool for efficient and effective delivery of technology support services. For example, service request data can be used as a tool in determining the training needs of district and school users by identifying trends in service request frequency and type. Service performance baselines and associated measurements can be used to determine service delivery efficiency and quality.

The department does not generate reports from the service request information collected from school users. The district's service request tool, Tayls Coordinator, is used to manage users' service requests, to assign technical resources to each district building and to monitor service request status. Typically, technical departments generate reports from these databases to develop performance baselines, monitor performance and communicate work order status and service efficiency to district management and users.

The version of Tayls Coordinator used by the district does not provide a report writer or a set of standard reports. This prevents the district from generating reports on service request status, and counts by location, and from determining if there are common problems or remedies for improving response times.

As of January 2001, the department has not designed or developed any reports for communicating service activities and performance. Another reason for lack of service request reporting is the district's lack of a formal performance measurement system. Since the Technology Department does not have formal performance measures and does not have to report on actual performance versus developed goals, there has been no pressure to use the features of the software.

Recommendation 90:

Design and develop standard service management reports to communicate department service activity, analyze service request data and develop performance standards and measures.

Using Microsoft Access would be an interim measure. A sales representative from Talys Systems Inc., stated that a new release of the product has been developed and is being tested. The new version will include a set of seven standard reports and additional request-tracking capabilities.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The MIS director and technology coordinator review the service request data currently collected by Tayls Coordinator and determine the information needed to measure and track service performance.	June 2001
2.	The technology coordinator contacts Tayls Systems Inc. to determine availability of the new release and request information and samples of standard reports and additional features.	June 2001
3.	The technology coordinator designs and develops service performance report templates using Microsoft Access.	June 2001
4.	The technology coordinator updates Tayls Coordinator to capture data needed to meet established reporting requirements and communicates changes to Campus Technologists and district users.	June 2001
5.	The MIS director and technology coordinator develop a procedure for importing Tayls data into Microsoft Access, report development and distribution.	July 2001
6.	The technology coordinator generates monthly service performance	July

reports and provides district stakeholders with report access via the district intranet.	2001
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FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

In comparison to the other campuses, Hornsby-Dunlap Elementary School is experiencing twice the number of service calls per computer as any other school. Without service request reports or an analysis regarding the nature of the service requests, the Technology Department does not know why the school has so many computer problems. Possible sources of the problem include aging or unreliable technology, the need for user-specific training or similar service requests initiated by multiple building users. Service requests-to-computer ratios were calculated for each school and are shown in **Exhibit 11-6**.

Exhibit 11-6
DVISD Service Requests-to-Computer Ratio

School Location	Total Service Requests 9/2000- 11/2000	Computers Per School	Service Requests-to- Computer Ratio
Hornsby-Dunlap Elementary	157	157	1:1
Baty Elementary	89	200	0.45:1
Popham Elementary	56	224	0.25:1
Hillcrest Elementary	71	166	0.43:1
Smith Elementary	57	193	0.30:1
Del Valle Junior HS	115	251	0.46:1
Del Valle High School	325	619	0.53:1
Opportunity Center	39	75	0.52:1
Total	909	1885	0.48:1

Source: DVISD Technology Department, Fall 2000 Update Presentation and Service Request Listing.

The department collects only basic information regarding a call, such as the requestor, school location, problem description, status and assigned coordinator. Expanding and better using service request information would allow the department to constantly monitor and analyze the frequency and nature of school service requests thereby improving the quality of service delivered. Many organizations with established help desks and tools are able to reduce the number of routine calls by analyzing the nature of services requested and posting frequent service requests and solutions to the department's Web page.

Recommendation 91:

Evaluate service requests to locate and address frequently occurring problems.

This is particularly important for Hornsby Elementary, but should be an ongoing activity throughout the year for all schools in the district.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The technology coordinator reviews service records for Hornsby Elementary School to determine trends or patterns specific to user service requests.	July 2001
2.	The technology coordinator and campus technologist review identified service request patterns, determine the factors supporting the patterns and develop an action plan to reduce factors contributing to service request volume.	August 2001
3.	The technology coordinator prepares reports and works with campus technologists on an ongoing basis.	September 2001 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 11

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

This chapter reviews Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) administrative and instructional technology in five sections:

D. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Training is one of the most effective ways of ensuring technology is used effectively. Teachers must be comfortable with instructional technology and must know not only how to operate it, but also how to integrate it effectively into their teaching. Studies indicate that it may take three to five years for a teacher to acquire the appropriate level of expertise. Planning and support for technology-related training must consider this time factor.

Technology-related training must be ongoing. Teachers need continuous opportunities to expand their technological skills and to interact with other teachers so they can share new strategies and techniques. Access to electronic mail and the Internet have proven valuable in allowing teachers to share ideas on classroom uses of technology.

Training is just as critical for technical support staff. Rapid technological change makes it easy for technology specialists to fall behind. Sufficient time and funding for continuing training is essential if technical support is to remain effective.

FINDING

The department's staff is not given the training necessary to expand their technical skills. The acting director stated that department staff has few opportunities to attend technical training classes and the technical curriculum offered by Region 13 does not completely address the department's needs for advanced technical training. With the exception of the acting technology director, all technical staff within the department has obtained technical skills through performing a technology-related duty within the district. The backgrounds for each of the technical staff prior to their current positions are provided in **Exhibit 11-7**. The technology coordinator and one campus technologist have attended a five-day basic trouble-shooting course offered jointly with Region 13 and Corby Systems. The campus technologist position was established during 1998-99.

Exhibit 11-7

Staff Experience Prior to Department Assignment

Position	District Experience Prior to Department Assignment
Campus Technologist 1	Elementary Lab Attendant - 1 year
Campus Technologist 2	Elementary Lab Attendant - 3 years
Campus Technologist 3	Junior High School Lab Attendant - 15 years
Campus Technologist 4	Lab Attendant - 8 years
Technology Coordinator	Various District Technology Positions - 16 years

Source: DVISD Technology Department.

Technical skills of the department staff reflect those obtained through their experience as a lab attendant or on the job as needed to support district users. Although the support staff are commended for their efforts in minimizing open service requests, they must rely on the acting director to review and resolve calls of a technical nature outside normal requests such as software installation, workstation diagnostics and failures, logon assistance and software assistance.

Region 13 provides a wide range of training classes primarily in support of instructional technology, state administrative systems and Microsoft Office products. A goal described by the acting technology director was to prepare staff members to take certification exams such as A+ or Microsoft Certification programs. According to the acting director, the technical training curriculum offered by Region 13 does not specifically address the department's need for a more advanced training nor support the department's training goals.

An overview of the technical workshops offered to DVISD staff and students through Region 13 is provided in **Exhibit 11-8**.

**Exhibit 11-8
Region 13 Technical Workshops 2000-2001**

Workshop/Training Description	Workshop Course #
STMRPC Student Microsoft Access	FA00435
STMRPC Student Microsoft Query/Excel Training	FA00434
Web Page Design	SU00411
Introduction to FileMaker Pro - Part I	FA00107
FileMaker Pro Intermediate, Part II	FA00126

Introduction to Integrating Databases into Web Pages	FA00159
Introduction to Microsoft Excel	FA00186
STMRPC Business Dataquery Basics	FA00426
Introduction to Microsoft PowerPoint	FA00190
STMRPC Business Dataquery Advanced	FA00428
STMRPC Student Dataquery Basic Training	FA00431
Introduction to the Microsoft Database - Access	FA00206
STMRPC Student Dataquery Advanced Training	FA00433
Introduction to the Internet	FA00208
STMRPC Business Microsoft Query/Excel	FA00430
STMRPC Business Microsoft Access	FA00432
Microsoft Word	SP01264
A+ Training (Grades 9-12)	FA00408

Source: Region 13 2000-01 Workshop Catalog.

Over the last three years, a majority of the training-related expenditures recorded by the district have been for mileage reimbursement for department staff. **Exhibit 11-9** provides a summary of budget and expenditure amounts posted to the department's travel and conferences budget over the last three fiscal years.

Exhibit 11-9
Department Technical Training Budget and Expenditures

Category	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Budget	\$3,000	\$4,400	\$5,000
Expense	\$1,683	\$5,008	\$7,772
<i>Expense Breakdown:</i>			
Training	\$600	\$1,100	\$2,150
Conference Fee	\$120	\$1,100	\$910
Travel/Mileage Expense	\$963	\$3,908	\$4,712

Source: DVISD deputy superintendent of Business.

Since 1999, DVISD has experienced a significant increase in the installation of technology infrastructure and resources. As an organization's technology environment changes, so too must the technical skills required for managing, operating and assisting district users.

Recommendation 92:

Develop a training plan for DVISD technology staff.

A technology skills assessment should include an overview of skill gaps for department staff based on their assigned responsibility and a professional development plan that addresses the gaps within the organization.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The MIS director and deputy superintendent of Business conduct a technology skills assessment.	June 2001
2.	The MIS director determines the skills the technology staff needs.	June 2001
3.	The MIS director researches available training.	July 2001
4.	The MIS director develops individual training plans for staff.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 11

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

This chapter reviews Del Valle Independent School District's (DVISD) administrative and instructional technology in five sections:

E. TECHNOLOGY PLANNING

Effective technology plans contain clear goals, objectives, and action plans for technology projects, assign individual responsibility for implementation steps and identify milestone dates for completion.

The technology planning and implementation model should include a board progress reporting process specific to the implementation of major technology projects and updates on performance measures. The reports would be used to hold managers accountable for technology implementation. Budgets must be tied to the technology plan. The district's technical personnel should develop the vision for the technology plan, but if it is not shared or understood by the board, it would likely remain 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.

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 plan three to five years ahead, 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; and
- **Training:** The adoption of new technologies requires effective and sufficient training.

To apply information technology 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 included in a district's technology plan.

During fiscal 1997, 1998 and 1999, DVISD experienced a significant increase in expenditures supporting technology. Payroll expenditures increased more than 70 percent, primarily due to the creation and staffing of campus technologist positions. Capital outlay expenditures have increased more than 280 percent to support the district's infrastructure implementation initiative and technology requirements at a new high school. From 1998-99 to 1999-2000, the district has experienced an increase in technology expenditures of more than 106 percent. **Exhibit 11-10** provides a detailed breakdown of technology expenditures over a three-year period.

**Exhibit 11-10
DVISD Technology Expenditures**

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Payroll	\$82,364	\$140,440	\$240,695
Contracted Services	\$246,797	\$144,377	\$162,487
Supplies Materials (Less than \$5,000)	\$60,772	\$112,907	\$143,202
Other Operating Expenses	\$1,683	\$5,474	\$9,084
Principle and Interest Payment	\$0	\$158,904	\$0
Capital Outlay	\$236,636	\$336,860	\$1,299,142
Total	\$628,252	\$898,962	\$1,854,610

Source: DVISD deputy superintendent of Business.

FINDING

DVISD district and Campus Technology Committees are inactive.

In the past, technology requirements were communicated through the district's Campus Technology Committees established for each district school and the District's Technology Committee, which includes technology professionals, instructional staff, parents, school and district administrators, and local business leaders. These committees have been inactive during the 2000 school year. Neither the superintendent nor the acting director could recall the last committee meeting.

Recommendation 93:

Activate the technology-user committees and ensure that they meet on a regular basis.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive directors of instruction, school principals, the instructional technology coordinator and the MIS director meet and review the current members of assigned to the District Technology and Campus Technology Committees and revise assignments are necessary.	June 2001
2.	The instructional technology coordinator documents the scope, responsibilities, decision-making process and membership of the committees.	July 2001
3.	The committee meeting schedules are published, the instructional technology coordinator and school principals ensure the committees meet on a regular basis.	August 2001
4.	Each campus technology committee prioritizes their building-level technology needs and provides requirements to the District Technology Committee.	September 2001
5.	The District Technology Committee provides input into the priority-setting and resource allocation process to help guide the district's investments in technology. Input from the committee is coordinated with the Technology Plan Update, District Improvement Plan and annual budget process.	October 2001 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The DVISD technology plan provides a general overview of the district's technology goals and objectives with little detail regarding implementation and measurement. The district has a technology plan, but it lacks clear and measurable objectives, implementation tasks and assignments and funding sources. The plan appears to have been developed to satisfy grant or E-Rate application requirements rather than to serve as a guiding document for the district's activities.

To be an effective tool, a technology plan must include a level of detail that supports the management of technology implementation and provides a means for measuring district progress against stated goals and

objectives. Although the existing technology plan covers a number of key elements, it falls short in providing:

- Specific goals for each stated objective;
- Activities and assigned responsibility for each objective;
- Funding sources tied to defined activities for each objective; and
- Evaluation measures for each activity.

Exhibit 11-11 describes the current technology plan for DVISD in support of technology hardware and software acquisition and implementation.

Exhibit 11-11
DVISD Technology Plan
Hardware and Software Acquisition and Implementation
1999-2002 Goals and Objectives

Goals and Objectives	Timeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use technology to improve data sharing, data reporting and communication internally and externally. • Coordinate the connection and sharing of education resources in the entire district. 	Spring 2000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the use of technology to facilitate the assessment of curriculum, instruction and learner performance. • Increase the availability of technology for all learners to access information from a variety of telecommunications resources including the Internet. • Provide troubleshooting, maintenance and repair of all equipment through an authorized service center. 	Fall 2001
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the use of technology to gather and share current education research and timely information for decision making. • Provide physical security for hardware, software and networking equipment as well as network security by using user identification and frequently changed passwords. 	Fall 1999
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance and upgrade telecommunications systems to facilitate exchanges between district professionals, parents, teachers, administrators and support personnel. • Provide appropriate and sufficient technology in every classroom, office, library and computer lab, including Internet connectivity. 	1999-2000 2000-2001

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace and upgrade out-of-date equipment as the budget permits, installing new equipment in areas where it is needed most and moving older equipment into areas where it can still be used, while providing equal access to equipment. • Encourage the use of electronic communication, especially the use of e-mail to reduce paper costs and waste. 	Continuing
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Source: DVISD Technology Plan 1999-2002.

An overview of the district's curriculum and instructional goals are provided in **Exhibit 11-12**.

Exhibit 11-12
DVISD Technology Plan
Curriculum and Instruction Goals and Objectives
1999-2002

Goals	Objective (Timeline)
Students develop the essential technology skills for using and understanding conventional and current tools, materials and processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Students will be able to utilize technology to improve their reading writing and communications skills. (Fall 2000) • The district will provide equal access to instructional uses of computers for all students. (Fall 2002)
Students know how to solve problems by using current technologies to conduct research, analyze solutions and present results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students will be able to use technology to access and analyze information, to enhance their presentation and production skills, and to enhance interpersonal skills for working both independently and in collaborative groups (Fall 2002) • Students will use technology in the design, building and testing of solutions to real-world problems. (Fall 2002) • Students and teachers will use databases, WANs and the Internet to access information for individual and group research projects and to enhance learning in the classroom.

	<p>(Fall 2000)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate hardware, software, on-line resources and other technologies into the curriculum and provide instruction to improve student achievement. (Spring 1999) • Students and teachers will use technology as a creative and problem-solving tool. (Fall 2000) • Use the Internet to locate online resources for student use in information resourcing, use and research. (Fall 1999)
<p>Students evaluate the impact of technology (e.g., benefits, costs and risks) on individuals, society and the environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will learn and practice the ethical use of technologies that will prepare them for the workplace. (Continuing) • Students will be subject to District's Student Acceptable Use Policy for Internet use. (Continuing)
<p>Teaching staff will have electronic curriculum available and collaborate with peers to develop effective curriculum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide classroom teachers with computers with curriculum software and the necessary training to encourage technological growth. (1999-2000 and 2000-2001)
<p>Teaching staff will be provided with technology training to adequately support the expectations put upon them by administration in the delivery of the electronic-based curriculum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff will receive specialized training in a computer-based curriculum and will have equipment on their desk configured to access the curriculum and the district's network. (1999-2000 and 2000-2001) • All staff will receive training in computer use and on the programs that are provided by the district. (1999-2000 and 2000-2001)

Source: DVISD Technology Plan 1999-2002.

The DVISD technology plan includes a budget section that provides the budget requirement to support stated technology goals and objectives. Budget requirements to support the technology plan are provided in **Exhibit 11-13**.

**Exhibit 11-13
DVISD Technology Budget**

	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Network of new high School (Bond Issue)	\$993,920	\$0	\$0
Classroom Curriculum Computers	\$541,942	\$444,000	\$444,000
District Wide Training	\$50,000	\$75,000	\$75,000
District Maintenance and Support	\$301,000	\$441,000	\$476,000
District Internet Access (Esconett as ISP)	\$29,400	\$35,000	\$35,000
Technology Allotment	\$155,000	\$160,000	\$165,000
4 Campus Technology Coordinator	\$140,000	\$35,000	\$70,000
Technology Technician	\$0	\$30,000	\$30,000
Total	\$2,211,262	\$1,220,000	\$1,295,000

Source: DVISD 1999 to 2002 Technology Plan Adopted by DVISD Board of Trustees July 20, 1999.

DVISD has received funding from various federal and state grants. The Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund (TIF) grant provides district staff the opportunity to learn how to maintain and use their telecommunications infrastructure.

As a result of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, and in particular, a section referred to as the Universal Service Fund, nonprofit K-12 schools and libraries can submit applications to receive from 20- to 90-percent discounts on telecommunications services, Internet access and internal connections. This funding, commonly referred to as E-Rate funding, is administered through the Federal Communications Commission.

The Technology Integration in Education (TIE) grant is a state program funded through the federal Technology Literacy Challenge Fund. TIE grants are awarded for projects that will actively promote online curriculum delivery, distance learning, technology professional development, enhanced administrative operations and other activities that use technology to improve education and increase student performance.

The grant funding received or anticipated by DVISD is provided in **Exhibit 11-14**.

**Exhibit 11-14
DVISD Grant Funding**

	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01
PS6 TIF Grant	\$79,364	\$0	\$0
PS8 TIF Grant	\$0	\$0	\$400,000
E-rate	\$17,766	\$671,203	\$176,382
TIE Grant	\$0	\$0	\$72,070
Totals		\$750,567	\$648,452

Source: Technology Department and Board Update - September 1999.

DVISD has technology goals and grant funding. It does not have evaluation measures to ensure it's goals are accomplished with the money it acquires through grants.

Recommendation 94:

Revise the existing Technology Plan to include specific activities and assignments, funding sources, timelines and measurable objectives.

The technology plan should include the steps or tasks for achieving each goal. For each task, the plan should include an estimated cost, a funding source, the person responsible for completing the task, its priority and the timeframe for completion. The technology plan should be developed with input from teachers and administrators, as well as students, parents and community members. The processes of identifying the tasks, cost estimates and timeframes for each goal would assist the director of Technology in developing a realistic plan. Once the plan is finalized, the district should identify the detailed steps required to accomplish the tasks and should enter them into the district's Microsoft Project computer software program. This would allow the director of Technology to track the implementation of the plan.

The Technology Department, in conjunction with the technology committee, should produce quarterly reports on the progress of the plan's implementation. These quarterly reports should be presented at board meetings so that the board, district employees and community members can be informed. Coordinating the goals, tasks and detailed steps may

make it easier for people in the district and the community to see that the district is accomplishing its goals.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The district technology committee works with the staff, campus technology committees, representatives from schools and administration to review, refine and identify goals and tasks for the technology plan.	June 2001
2.	The district technology committee works with the staff, campus technology committees and representatives from schools and administration to identify costs, sources of funds, the people responsible for them, and deadlines for each task.	July 2001
3.	The district technology committee updates the technology plan.	August 2001
4.	The district technology committee tracks detailed tasks in project tracking software.	September 2001
5.	The district technology committee presents the first quarterly progress report to the superintendent and the board.	October 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

DVISD's disaster recovery plan is inadequate and merely reflects the district's data backup and off-site storage procedures. The current plan consists of a single page describing backup procedures and rotation of media boxes (data backup tapes) between DVISD and the district's off-site storage vendor Iron Mountain Storage Center.

A disaster recovery plan is critical for any organization and should provide the information necessary to ensure all critical business operations can continue in the event of an emergency. DVISD's current disaster recovery plan does not include a:

- Disaster Recovery Team with list of names and contacts;
- List of critical business functions;
- List of required resources and staffing should a disaster occur; and
- Testing procedures.

Exhibit 11-15 summarizes the essential elements of a disaster recovery plan.

Exhibit 11-15
Key Elements of a Disaster Recovery Plan

Step	Details
Build the disaster recovery team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a disaster recovery team that includes key policy makers, building management, end-users, key outside contractors and technical staff.
Obtain and/or approximate key information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an exhaustive list of critical activities performed within the district. • Develop an estimate of the minimum space and equipment necessary for restoring essential operations. • Develop a timeframe for starting initial operations after a security incident. • Develop a list of key personnel and their responsibilities.
Perform and/or delegate key duties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an inventory of all computer technology assets, including data, software, hardware, documentation and supplies. • Set up a reciprocal agreement with comparable organizations to share each other's equipment or lease backup equipment to allow the district to operate critical functions in the event of a disaster. • Make plans to procure hardware, software and other equipment as necessary to ensure that critical operations are resumed as soon as possible. • Establish procedures for obtaining off-site backup records. • Locate support resources that might be needed, such as equipment repair, trucking and cleaning companies. • Arrange with vendors to provide priority delivery for emergency orders. • Identify data recovery specialists and establish emergency agreements.
Specify details within the plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify individual roles and responsibilities by name and job title so that everyone knows exactly what needs to be done. • Define actions to be taken in advance of an occurrence or undesirable event. • Define actions to be taken at the onset of a disaster

	<p>to limit damage, loss and compromised data integrity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify actions to be taken to restore critical functions • Define actions to be taken to re-establish normal operations.
Test the plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test the plan frequently and completely. • Analyze the results to improve the plan and identify further needs.
Deal with damage appropriately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a disaster occurs, document all costs and videotape the damage. • Be prepared to overcome downtime; insurance settlements can take time to resolve.
Give consideration to other significant issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not make a plan unnecessarily complicated. • Make one individual responsible for maintaining the plan, but have it structured so that others are authorized and prepared to implement if necessary. • Update the plan regularly and whenever changes are made.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, "Safeguarding Your Technology." (Modified by TSPR)

If a disaster strikes DVISD, a disaster response plan will help the district get back up and running quickly and efficiently, and at a much lower cost.

Recommendation 95

Develop a comprehensive disaster recovery plan and test it regularly.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The MIS director establishes a disaster recovery team, composed of department representatives from finance, payroll, purchasing, student accounting and technology.	July 2001
2.	The MIS director presents the plan to the superintendent and board for approval.	July 2001

3.	The MIS director communicates the plan to the appropriate personnel.	July 2001
4.	The MIS director runs a scheduled test of the plan.	August 2001
5.	The MIS director reports the results to the superintendent and board.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Appendix A

PUBLIC FORUM COMMENTS

PUBLIC FORUM COMMENTS (PART 1)

As part of del Valle Independent School District performance review, public forums were held in three schools. Public forums were held at Del Valle High School, Baty Elementary School and Hornsby-Dunlap Elementary School. The public forums were held on October 10. Members of the public were invited to record comments they have regarding the DVISD education system. Community members and school staff who participated in the public forums gave their comments about the 12 areas under review. These comments illustrated community perceptions of DVISD and do not reflect the findings or opinion of the Comptroller or review team. The following is a summary of comments received by focus area.

A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

- I realize board members are unpaid and I applaud their commitment to meetings; however, there are only a handful of board members that attend programs throughout the district to see what is going on and to talk to the public. Board members should not rely on the three minutes people have to speak at board meetings because: (1) people will usually only speak out if upset, and (2) people are not aware of when the meetings are and what is on the agenda or pending business.
- School management-strategic planning and site-based decision-making; there are teams that meet called the CAT (campus advisory team) and DAT (district advisory team.) These teams are supposed to be made up of a variety of people. They are, but what I see is the principal's plans are what gets pushed through.
- The management of schools is different. Some have everything and some have nothing. In some schools, kids work from copies because they have no books.
- Plans vary depending on the principals. Policy says one thing, but each campus does things different from the policy. Sometimes they make decisions that later they find erroneous.
- Dress code was not published prior to start of school. This is especially important for new students to the district.
- Dress code needs to be enforced for students as well as the staff.
- Board needs to become unified in dealing with past negative issues or personnel. They need to do what is best for students--not their own interest or loyalties.

- The high school needs to do away with the high school athletic coordinator positions. They do not have a master's degree nor have any administrative background to do proper evaluations or guide athletic programs as a whole. They are interested mostly in their sport.
- High school athletes need academic coordinators to guide them in TAAS, ACT, SAT, and Careers.
- High school athletic coordinators only teach class and coach one sport. Money could be better used if they coached two sports, taught two classes, and become athletic/academic coordinators without evaluations of staff.
- Athletic director needs a secretary.
- Better communication with the community about all events and decision making. Community input is a must.
- Third Tuesday of month are the board meetings. Hillcrest and Popom do not get Spanish language flyers (no translators.)
- There seems to be inequity in schools--who gets what. Favoritism is being played.
- District does not know where the money is. Parents do not know how to interpret the financial books. (It's abbreviated.)
- Communication is a problem among the district, parents, teachers and campus administrators. Board meetings are not publicized. Newsletters on special board meetings don't get out until after the meetings. One example is the board meeting on recent bond package.
- Teachers find out about their assignments through word of mouth. Recently, the district decided to open the library late one night a week for the community. Teachers were expected to take turns to stay in the library. Sign-up sheets appeared in teachers' lounges without any explanation or any prior memos.
- Parents with children going to school for the first time did not know about the dress code.
- The district has a lot of economically disadvantaged students. The community liaison officer is given a table and two chairs in the nurse's office to visit with parents and students. Most often, the conversation is sensitive (providing free services) and they have no privacy.
- Board members do not get involved in school activities and don't attend school functions. This makes it difficult for community to approach them.
- I know that the Board of Directors is selected by the parents or the community. I vote but think that sometimes they don't respect our voice, they do tricks and they select the ones they feel are better. When a candidate gets elected to a chair of the board they forget about the people that really need them and they help the people with money. The management of schools in my opinion is not

correct because every school does what the director and superintendent feel is better for them, but that is harming the kids. For example, in some schools they don't have the same instructional material as others. Some teachers spend more time teaching the TAAS and they don't teach the other areas that the kids need to know. Some other schools have good educational programs and others don't, especially if the kids are Hispanic. I feel they said it is a bilingual class and that is not the reality. They only teach in English.

- I have been here two months, but I like it better than Austin I.S.D.
- I believe that site-based management should be balanced with district policies and procedures that encourage accountability and helps to attain not only campus goals, but also district goals. I notice in our district we have blue ribbon school and low performing school. I find this reality unacceptable.

B. EDUCATION SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- In the Del Valle school district, the bilingual program should be reviewed because they are not conducting the program like it should be.
- Some teachers call themselves bilingual but they truly are not and this harms the students.
- The regular education program is not the same in all campuses.
- The gifted and talented program needs more materials and teachers who are trained for these types of students.
- In this district, there is only one level of learning and if a child surpasses that level, the district does not know what to do with them.
- In my point of view, the TAAS exam should be obsolete because it does not truly demonstrate the actual capacity of a student because it is too easy for some and too difficult for others. Additionally, throughout the entire year they do not learn other things except TAAS.
- Some schools do not follow the district's plan because the district makes certain decisions, yet the schools follow a different direction all under the same general theme. They carry these decisions out without prior notice to the parents.
- Many times school employees do not respect parents' opinions. We need a quick change.
- I've been in this school for only four weeks and I think it's very supportive. Teachers are very helpful in everything. This school has many programs to choose from. I'm in ROTC and I like it there. We do many things with the community.

- Like everywhere else, we teach to the TAAS, we do have some excellent and innovative teachers that try to enrich all students and teach above and beyond.
- Gifted and talented students are not identified early enough.
- Our resource classes are full, with some classes as large as regular classes making it almost impossible to teach with results. Our LifeSkills classes should be on more than one campus. Yes, our children are with a regular education campus but not with the kids that live near them. This also requires prolonged bus rides for more medically fragile students. The classrooms for LifeSkills are just regular room, very little has been done to the rooms to make them Lifeskills rooms. For example, no kitchen or laundry facilities to work on cooking, cleaning, motor skills, etc.
- The Focus program (a proactive support program for students with emotional and behavioral problems) has been changed and altered and/or disbanded according to the wishes of the principals. This was supposed to be a consistent district-wide program available from elementary through high school. This year that has all changed without warning or prior notice.
- Performance and evaluation-while administrators have certain guidelines they are supposed to go to for the evaluation, it is still very subjective. Basically, if the principal or assistant principal like you, you do well. If not, (no matter how good you are) you are scored very low.
- Programs for gifted and talented and special education have not been implemented for students to perform to their potential.
- Educational service delivered for special education needs to be improved, especially the inclusion students.
- The education services of the gifted and talented and special education programs need to be looked into. These programs are not being implemented the way they are supposed to be.
- District does not have an established policy or procedure on identifying talented and gifted students. (Testing prior to second or third grade.)
- Soccer and other sports are not as recognizable as football and I believe all athletic programs should be treated equal.
- Practice fields are not good and are dangerous because they are too hazardous with all the ditches there are.
- I need more time between classes.
- Bilingual teachers are a handful. Only three or four have bilingual teachers. District uses teacher aides to translate instructions to students.
- Bilingual students don't have sufficient supplies. They do most of their work from copies.
- Too many levels of bilingual being taught in one room.

- Most of the Hispanic kids wind up in resource classes. (Look at Special Ed.)
- Small numbers of bilingual students are allowed into gifted and talented programs. Kids are getting discouraged even though sometimes bilingual children are being recommended by teacher into the program.
- Minority kids are sent to ISS or AEP programs more frequently than others. If kids get sent once or twice to ISS, they are labeled.
- Some special needs kids (dyslexia) do not progress out of the program as there is a turnover in teachers; then child has to start again.
- Sometimes there are too many kids in some of these special classes. Instead of only six kids there might be eleven.
- Teachers do not have input. When programs don't work they are afraid to give comments for fear of their jobs. Evaluation of programs.
- ESL program- most teachers not Hispanic. Too much coloring, no academics.
- Bilingual students are moved around from regular to ESL to regular or from ISS to AEP and parents are not notified.
- Kids are sent to "Focus"-a diffusion room. They spend a lot of time, sometimes all day.
- Training for Crisis Prevention Programs are only for special ed and teacher aides in those special ed classes, but is not open to all teachers.
- Why is it that only the same schools always get "Recognized" and not others?
- Too many kids are being exempt. Some sent home. They say they're sick or have lice so that they do not have to take TAAS.
- No curriculum guides for special education programs.
- Special education program is having difficulty- lack of resources, no consistency within the district, teachers don't have a clue on how many funds are available to spend, special education program was demoted and has no authority to support the program. The LifeSkills class that is taught to all special ed students is offered on only one campus. This causes all special ed students to be bused to that campus. Bus ride is long, kids are not in school with their neighborhood kids. Same situation with bilingual students also.
- Process for identifying G/T students is not adequate.
- We need programs for the gifted and talented kids. I said this because it happened to us. In the school they have a top level and they don't know how to teach past that top level. One of my kids in this district of Del Valle at that time our son was in Third Grade. The teacher told us that he had a learning disability and the results were the opposite. Later they realized that he was gifted. They should have a department for these students.

- I don't agree with TAAS because they interrupt the kids in the learning process so they could learn and practice the TAAS. It's sometimes unnecessary and a waste of time.
- Del Valle district is better than Round Rock in many ways. We just moved our kids to this district and we are very happy with the education.
- I believe that the district should actively seek to develop a strategy for service delivery that does not penalize students doing well. My daughter was involved in a class where most of the students struggled academically. Ninety percent of the class instruction was geared to these students.
- After school enrichment programs beyond tutoring. Let's go after funds for this for music, art, gymnastics, basketball, academically related fun courses, and cooking classes. These have proved to keep latch-key kids safe. We have none of these available to even parents who can pay in the Del Valle area.

C. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Parent participation at schools is limited because sometimes schools do not communicate with parents.
- Parents are not notified with enough time and sometimes notice to Spanish speaking parents is in English only.
- Translations are poor especially in board meetings.
- Bilingual parents don't have translators to make their case when they want their concerns met.
- We need for the schools to place more emphasis on parents that can only speak Spanish.
- Parental involvement varies from school to school. Some schools actively work on getting parents involved where some schools say they are trying to involve parents but don't follow through.
- Community relations-this is getting better, but the community could be more involved.
- Parents do not always get informed about meetings and events.
- Business school partnerships- there are some really good associations with Adopt-a-School. There is also a program pairing ACC with seniors for dual credit courses. Students and parents have not be informed or in advance to prepare for this.
- Internal and external communications- This is most lacking area. Parents are not informed, teachers are not informed, the community is not informed. For example, parents are not informed about the high school open house, ribbon-cutting ceremony, schedule problems, schedule changes, etc. Teachers are not informed about activities happening throughout the district. One teacher had her program changed over the summer, she was unaware of this change. She was not made aware of this change

until a teacher assistant told her after teachers came back from summer break. Another teacher was told she was to move in front of a class she was teaching. So not only is there a problem with a lack of communication, it is how the communication is handled.

- Special board meetings are not posted with notice for people to attend, dates and times are not updated on the district's website.
- Would like to see more parents involved with their children from grades 9-12. This would help students understand the need for education/school/extracurricular activities.
- Teachers would be more involved if parents were more involved in grades 9-12.
- Parents feel that kids are labeled and therefore don't come to events.
- No communication to parents. People have to read it in the newspaper.
- No way for parents to communicate their concerns.
- Large dropout rates, at-risk coordinator is trying but does not try to come to parents for help; parents have to go to him.
- Some campus principals are not active in building community relations. For example, some schools did well in approaching high tech businesses in the area such as AMD to sponsor Adopt-a-School program, which helped improve student tutorial services, while other schools did nothing.
- The district has a lot of parents with no cars and no phones at home. In the past, the community liaison was able to bring parents to school in her personal car for conferences with teachers. The district put an end to that but does not provide a district vehicle either. These parents have no way to meet and talk to teachers.
- The parents should participate more often and participate in more topics, so they could be better informed. Also, the schools need to commit to inform parents because they are not doing it. The parents are the first ones that need to know about a change for a student. The collaboration of business with the schools is excellent. Various shops and associations are working well and they are committed. The communications should improve, so the parents can get involved on behalf of the student.
- I would like to see more parental involvement. If more activities were done on a Saturday or Sunday, that just might improve. It's better for our children. It would bring out more positive attitudes in them.
- I believe parental involvement is extremely important. I don't feel all Del Valle schools strategize well. I've heard many teachers and staff members say parents don't care to be involved. I'm a parent. I'm very involved. I care. I participate with the school to strengthen parent involvement. Attitude and communication are keys to successful parental involvement.

Appendix A

PUBLIC FORUM COMMENTS

PUBLIC FORUM COMMENTS (PART 2)

D. PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

- Recruitment, hiring practices, salaries and staffing need to improve. We need more Hispanics. The district is 60% Hispanic.
- Need to be able to hire sooner in school year- i.e., hire all needed or anticipated by May 15 to get/attract quality. Waiting until June or July is too late for quality.
- Sexual harassment needs to be dealt with and excuses not made.
- Have in-service training on what sexual harassment between employees is.
- Del Valle has a lot of first year teachers in our district. A lot of turnover.
- Bilingual teachers get a stipend (\$2,000) but Special Ed teachers do not. (Teachers' aides do not get stipend yet they are used as translators. They get paid by the hour.)
- Teachers and staff are great.
- Teachers' training program lacks special education programs and bilingual programs.
- About the personnel management--I think that we need more Hispanics and more African-Americans. Especially in the counselors area and in the special education classes.
- Salaries need to be more competitive.
- State needs to pay more after 20 years. Who would take a job knowing they get no raise after 20 years?

E. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

- Facilities planning-very poor, not planning for growth.
- Building capacity-there are too many students in too small a space.
- Maintenance-very slow.
- Custodial services-varies from school to school. Some schools are very clean, some are not.
- Energy use-unknown, hopefully, these new schools are energy efficient.
- Need second Junior High with complete facilities for extracurricular activities- band, athletics.
- Need to upgrade existing Junior High to meet needs of expanding Junior High extracurricular activities-band, athletics.

- The school needs better practice fields. The students at this school are not pleased with the fields we are practicing on. I know. I play on the field every day.
- I think that the practice fields should be better; we cannot perform if we don't have good facilities.
- Well for one thing, I'm a soccer player and our practice fields are not good at all and football get a good field and all and we know that coaches and the school have the money to fix them. That's the only problem with it.
- Practice fields are too dangerous to be running around on with all the bumps that are around. They need to be better maintained by putting a bit more dirt on all uneven spots.
- The custodial services are the best overall.
- The dance team and drill team at DVHS still need a dance room. We have been to three school board meetings last year. We are using the choir room. The choir should be using their room. My students and I are very unhappy that in this beautiful new school we have no place. I have 30 students in Pre-Drill, 20 in Dance I and 32 in Drill Team. I will have more in the spring. Do we not matter?
- This school is in need of better practice field. I think they need to be fixed immediately. The fields are like so messed up. That's all I can say. We need better practice fields in order to have a good soccer team. We need to have good fields so we can do things right.
- The persons who clean our schools are the best. They do a great job.
- Custodians do a lot. Most of them are Hispanic. Buildings are clean.
- The new high school is only three months old. Only one bathroom is functional for the boys. The others are vandalized.
- Hornsby-Dunlap needs a water fountain on the playground.
- We need the same "stuff" other schools have-asphalt/concrete play space, more water fountains, more adult bathrooms, and storage areas for every wing.
- Help. Our school is too small. Parking is practically non-existent.
- We got the scraps of this building project.
- Check our water! Black things are floating in our glasses. My kids bring bottled water every day.

F. ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- Health insurance has been poorly handled.
- The district needs to know what kind of cash and investment practices are being made.

- Cash and investment practices-I have no idea what the district's practices are.
- Health insurance-this has been very poorly handled.
- Workers compensation-I know people who have been covered under this, but don't know specifics.
- Bond issuance-the district is currently working on a bond proposal but the only way I know this is I have been to the last board meeting.
- Health insurance is a nightmare.
- Why do so many carriers refuse to insure Del Valle in health care?
- Need more insurance.
- Health insurance is handled by the Business Office. They lack expertise. Until the end of October 2000, the district is self-funded. The district is in the hole for \$1 million. That money has to be made up from some where.

G. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- Financial budget is well spent on student needs. No cuts needed in instruction or extracurricular.
- Financial report needs to be accessible to the community. The taxpayers have the right to know.
- Financial reporting needs to be made accessible to the district taxpayers.
- The taxes are going up every year. Internal censure is in the entire district. You just need to investigate.

H. PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSE SERVICES

- We need a lot of materials, especially bilingual material.
- We need bilingual materials, books and the entire bilingual program needs reinforcement because a lot of Hispanic kids need it.
- Textbook process was a mess for last 2 years. Seems to be better. We still need a more competent custodian of books than we have had. Hoarding at some campuses needs to stop!

I. FOOD SERVICES

- This year it appears that the food tastes better than in previous years, but sometimes they serve the milk frozen.
- My child has indicated several times that she received spoiled milk or in instances such as today, no milk at all.
- Quality of food needs to improve.

- Cafeteria facilities and equipment- at Hillcrest we are still eating on paper trays and using plastic utensils because of a problem with the dishwasher and the hook-up. (This is after a year and a half.)
- Food service is better now, but in past prisoners ate better.
- Cafeteria lines are too long. Portions are too small. Kids do not have enough time to finish their lunch. Not enough staff on serving lines. Staff monitors kids' trays...kids are told to put back items if they had more than four items on their tray, including milk.
- The food has improved a little because last year it was terrible. Maybe the prisoners eat better. My son told me that last year.
- I would like to see the unopened milk and juice containers that are thrown away, collected for a food pantry or for the needy somehow.
- I think breakfast should be available before 7:00 a.m.. Some children are not finished eating by 7:45 class time.
- There should be more/better communication between the food management and the parents.
- My kids bring lunch a lot. I wonder why they insist?

J. TRANSPORTATION

- In general we need better service.
- The district has been investing in new buses-some of them air-conditioned. This is positive.
- Bus routing and scheduling-I'm sure this is a nightmare, but what happened when the new schools opened is that rides for bilingual and special needs (the most fragile students in the district) got longer. These two programs are not neighborhood programs-bilingual is offered on two elementary campuses and LifeSkills (severe/profound) is only at one campus.
- Bilingual students are bused across town when they're right next to a school.
- Bus maintenance- I hear about few problems and maintenance personnel that I know are well qualified.
- Bus safety-our drivers seem to be very well trained.
- Bilingual programs are not offered to some neighborhoods. All students are bused for a long ride to other neighborhoods.
- Bus safety-most drivers are well trained.
- We need our buses to be in good condition because sometimes it is obvious that when some of our buses brake you can hear that they are in need of repair.
- Transportation may be an area to look at if students spend too much time being transported. Bilingual students use to spend over an hour on the bus to get to their bilingual schools.
- Transportation-well trained- district has been buying new buses. They maintain their buses well.

- Need some vans to transport special education students for community based outings. Right now, even for trips half mile from the school, they have to fill out a form for a field trip two weeks in advance and get approval.
- The road that goes to the elementary school is two lane and very busy. District may need to offer transportation to those students who are within the two-mile radius to school.
- The school needs better buses for the passengers and kids.
- The routes and schedules need to be revised because a lot of kids spend more than one hour in the bus and that is a time the lost. They need to pay attention to all the buses' maintenance. They should add a video camera at each bus in addition to the monitor that helps the bus driver. Because the bus driver can't drive and take care of kids.
- Buses are late too often.
- Buses come way too early for our elementary students.
- My child does not ride buses due to poor supervision. For instance, elementary students should be assigned front seats, closer to the driver. Not assigned to sit with middle school or high school student in the back!
- Transportation has improved, but student behavior is a real challenge.
- I refuse to allow my children to ride the bus. I drop them off. They were afraid of the undisciplined kids. I don't expect the bus driver to handle discipline issues and drive safely. I suggest an adult monitor apart from the driver.

K. Safety and Security

- We need a closed circuit television camera to protect our children. With what has happened in schools across the country, you never know when you send your child to school in the morning if you will be seeing him that afternoon when he returns from school.
- Student discipline-I know there are some scattered problems, overall this does not seem to be a real issue. The new principal at the Junior High has instituted some policies that have enhanced discipline.
- Safety and Security programs-I am aware there has been some vandalism at the new schools, there have also been threats and incidents with weapons (knives, etc.) As far as I know, these incidents have been dealt with on a timely basis.
- Relations with local law enforcement- we have had good relations with Travis County Sheriff's Department.
- Alternative Education-from what I hear the alternative education program is effective.

- The district is really good enforcing the no backpacks in the school. We like that very much.
- Student discipline policies are not enforced at the elementary level.
- Safety and security programs at the elementary level need to be enforced.
- Discipline policies at high school are not consistent. Assistant principals vary discipline consequences for same offenses. Need uniform policy-consistently enforced by Assistant Principals and Principal. Zero tolerance needed. Secondary not willing to crack down on gangs, fights, threats, drugs.
- Need drug testing of students.
- Need a boot camp for offenders.
- District may not have a good system on criminal checks for employees.
- Lot more violence and sexual harassment incidences in schools. Parents don't know and they are not informed. There is gang activity and vandalism in the district.

L. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

- Can someone tell me if a child does not have a computer at home how he can do his homework?
- They need to be given sufficient time when they are using a computer.
- Our technology is in the building stage, with the new schools all classrooms are to have one Internet connected computer. Teachers need more meaningful training that would actually help them teach using computers. We do have some excellent computer personnel (except for our technology director.) Hardware is adequate, software needs boosting since we are switching from Mac's to PC's.
- Computer accessibility for kids is not equal. A lot of kids don't have computers at home and the only time they access one is at school but not all schools have the same number of computers in the classroom. Some schools have computer labs.
- All schools are supposed to be wired for PCs and Internet accessible. All software they have is for MACs. They are in transition.
- Teachers' training in technology is not adequate.
- Acquire better computers because they break down constantly.
- Digital divide- we need better resources for identifying accessing and acquiring funds for construction, wiring, hardware, and other technology resources. Need a better-qualified director.
- Need a better system of communication to identify educational needs and wishes at the campus level.

- More equity in all campuses in attaining technology grants and funds.
- Need more staff development time (training and planning time.)
- Servers and services are inconsistent.

Appendix B

TEACHER SURVEY

- A. Overview
- B. Tables (Survey Results)
- C. Verbatim Comments

Demographic Data

TOTAL RESPONSES AS OF JANUARY 5, 2001	183
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Note: *Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Circle Answer

1. Gender (Optional)	Male	Female				
	13%	87%				
2. Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	
	55%	3%	41%	0%	2%	
3. How long have you been employed by Del Valle ISD?	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	
	29%	35%	13%	14%	10%	
4. What grades are taught in your school?						
	Pre-Kindergarten	Kindergarten	First	Second	Third	
	3%	9%	18%	8%	10%	
	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth	
	17%	11%	9%	15%	17%	
	Ninth	Tenth	Eleventh	Twelfth		
	18%	14%	21%	25%		

Appendix B

TEACHER SURVEY

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.	8%	41%	25%	19%	7%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	6%	28%	20%	32%	14%
3.	School board members work well with the superintendent.	8%	23%	30%	35%	4%
4.	The school board has a good image in the community.	9%	18%	15%	48%	10%
5.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	8%	33%	14%	26%	19%
6.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	12%	29%	23%	27%	9%
7.	Central administration is efficient.	6%	25%	27%	38%	4%
8.	Central administration supports the educational process.	3%	36%	32%	25%	4%
9.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	5%	16%	56%	22%	1%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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10.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	15%	56%	16%	12%	1%
11.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	8%	31%	16%	41%	4%
12.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	6%	29%	18%	32%	15%
13.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	4%	65%	11%	15%	5%
14.	The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	11%	44%	25%	20%	0%
15.	The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	9%	39%	24%	25%	3%
16.	The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	8%	44%	15%	24%	9%
17.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
	a) Reading	10%	46%	19%	15%	11%
	b) Writing	9%	50%	20%	17%	4%
	c) Mathematics	8%	55%	16%	14%	7%
	d) Science	6%	60%	20%	12%	2%
	e) English or Language Arts	8%	53%	14%	21%	5%
	f) Computer Instruction	6%	53%	8%	25%	9%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	9%	62%	14%	13%	3%
	h) Fine Arts	8%	39%	18%	18%	18%

	i) Physical Education	7%	48%	12%	15%	18%
	j) Business Education	12%	44%	13%	13%	19%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	19%	36%	13%	26%	6%
	l) Foreign Language	2%	37%	24%	26%	11%
18.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a) Library Service	6%	52%	16%	18%	8%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	4%	52%	11%	17%	16%
	c) Special Education	5%	53%	17%	11%	15%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	5%	44%	20%	20%	12%
	e) Dyslexia program	2%	51%	28%	18%	1%
	f) Student mentoring program	3%	65%	24%	7%	2%
	g) Advanced placement program	8%	47%	18%	24%	4%
	h) Literacy program	3%	37%	22%	18%	21%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	5%	51%	18%	23%	3%
	j) Summer school programs	5%	60%	21%	13%	2%
	k) Alternative education programs	6%	58%	17%	16%	4%
	l) "English as a second language" program	1%	36%	20%	40%	3%
	m) Career counseling program	5%	40%	34%	12%	10%
	n) College counseling program	2%	30%	35%	27%	6%

	o) Counseling the parents of students	1%	26%	33%	24%	16%
	p) Drop out prevention program	5%	35%	22%	22%	16%
19.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	12%	37%	15%	19%	18%
20.	Teacher turnover is low.	5%	28%	27%	27%	14%
21.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	4%	26%	27%	23%	20%
22.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	3%	38%	25%	21%	14%
23.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	1%	30%	20%	42%	7%
24.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	3%	39%	12%	46%	0%
25.	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	11%	60%	18%	9%	3%
26.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	5%	45%	14%	31%	6%
27.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	4%	35%	16%	43%	3%
28.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	16%	44%	22%	13%	5%

C. Personnel

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
29.	District salaries are	9%	25%	21%	41%	4%

	competitive with similar positions in the job market.					
30.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	5%	33%	14%	44%	4%
31.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	3%	55%	19%	23%	0%
32.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	2%	48%	23%	22%	5%
33.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	3%	61%	13%	23%	0%
34.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	5%	56%	19%	19%	2%
35.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	21%	48%	18%	5%	8%
36.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	3%	40%	14%	28%	15%
37.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	5%	50%	15%	21%	9%
38.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	6%	46%	20%	21%	7%
39.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	5%	46%	18%	21%	10%

D. Community Involvement

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
40.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	9%	39%	21%	24%	7%
41.	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	1%	37%	26%	33%	3%
42.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	15%	40%	12%	29%	4%
43.	District facilities are open for community use.	6%	54%	18%	14%	9%

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.	8%	38%	12%	42%	0%
45.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	3%	47%	12%	33%	5%
46.	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	5%	46%	29%	19%	1%
47.	The quality of new construction is excellent.	12%	58%	12%	14%	4%
48.	Schools are clean.	12%	42%	12%	26%	8%

49.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	7%	49%	11%	28%	5%
50.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	8%	46%	14%	24%	8%
51.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	9%	68%	12%	8%	3%

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.	6%	12%	6%	64%	12%
53.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	6%	15%	28%	49%	2%
54.	Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	2%	40%	11%	38%	9%

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.	3%	48%	15%	31%	3%
56.	Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	4%	65%	9%	22%	0%
57.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	4%	13%	14%	44%	25%

58.	Vendors are selected competitively.	9%	47%	26%	16%	2%
59.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	6%	43%	25%	22%	4%
60.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	14%	57%	17%	6%	7%
61.	Textbooks are in good shape.	18%	41%	12%	21%	8%
62.	The school library meets the student needs for books and other resources.	9%	61%	7%	21%	3%

H. Food Services

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
63.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	6%	29%	42%	23%	0%
64.	Food is served warm.	5%	24%	33%	29%	9%
65.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	14%	55%	21%	10%	0%
66.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	8%	26%	41%	21%	5%
67.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	21%	52%	19%	8%	0%
68.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	1%	59%	19%	17%	4%
69.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	22%	33%	32%	12%	1%

I. Safety and Security

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
70.	School disturbances are infrequent.	17%	38%	18%	22%	5%
71.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	10%	24%	35%	25%	6%
72.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	1%	9%	24%	48%	18%
73.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	5%	44%	19%	16%	16%
74.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	21%	52%	15%	12%	0%
75.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	18%	51%	16%	15%	0%
76.	A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	15%	49%	12%	23%	1%
77.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	16%	45%	15%	20%	4%
78.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	8%	53%	21%	15%	3%

J. Computers and Technology

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
79.	Students regularly use computers.	28%	59%	6%	7%	0%
80.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	30%	56%	8%	6%	0%

81.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	22%	42%	5%	31%	4%
82.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	11%	51%	26%	5%	7%
83.	The district meets student needs in classes in computer fundamentals.	21%	45%	13%	21%	0%
84.	The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.	18%	38%	26%	18%	0%
85.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	28%	38%	12%	22%	0%

Appendix B

TEACHER SURVEY

VERBATIM COMMENTS (Part 1)

- With seven years experience in private schools, I have found it almost impossible to acclimate to a TAAS driven environment. The children are as eager to learn as they were in the private sector but I cannot shake the feeling that they are shackled by TAAS. State standardized testing is essential but the unbalanced emphasis placed on teaching how to take the test as opposed to the "good old" fundamentals is doing our children a disservice.
- Friendly, well organized, excellent orientation and in-house training programs. Administration (all levels) and the board are accessible to all staff. I left and went elsewhere but I came back - other districts do less with more money.
- The Special Education Department at the High School is not in compliance with the laws. ARDs were done and students had modifications checked to attend CMC! CMC was dropped! Students have no support. This is not legal and these students have no support. ARDs done in the spring have this on the modification page. Some of the students are not making it without this help. Please interview all the Special Education teachers.
- It's a shame that fundamental supplies are difficult to get (staplers, chart paper, manila folders, red pens, rings, sentence strips, tag board, dry erase markers, pencil sharpeners, etc.)
- The board does not listen to people of the Del Valle community or its teachers. The board has its mind made up on issues and operates under the guise of listening at Board Meetings when we all know they will act in their own best interests. The Board is not concerned with retaining quality teachers or principals and does not have a clear idea (based in reality) of the growth on which our district is involved.
- As I stated on the front page, my comments are necessarily confined to the 1998-2000 term of Stewart/Bragg. Both of those administrators were fined as they should have been. There is a new high school now and more access to technology. However, at the high school, the fundamental problem was/is lack of student discipline. The discipline burden has been placed in the teacher's lap, and the teachers are given no authority to carry out this mission. I no longer work at the high school campus, but my colleagues there report that the situation is worsening. There can be no learning without order in the classroom.
- TAAS - TAAS - TAAS!! The end...period... This is all that matters. This is all we do.

- I feel our elementary schools do an outstanding job of caring and educating our at-risk students. Schools have support personnel to help these children.
- Why do we test on what students have NOT yet been taught? It tends to make them feel inferior and inadequate. It also undermines the district in the parent's eyes. Please make up your mind about penmanship. Stay consistent and don't change once books have been purchased, visual aids bought and lessons prepared.
- Teachers cannot provide various resources when the school does not have the appropriate equipment or materials. Students are served items that are not appealing. I have seen trash cans full of wasted food. Pizza and burgers seem to be the only things that they choose to eat. The hot meals are not being eaten. The choices of sides are very limited. Kids will eat chips, candy bars and drink coke because these are the items that appeal to them. Breakfast is an essential meal for Del Valle Junior High kids. By 2nd period my students are hungry. I feel that kids are not given enough to eat. Some of our kids need special programs to meet their physical and emotional needs. Some of our kids are ED and need people to talk to. Recently kids are learning to take care of their body and health. I wish this was a required course.
- The state requirements may have something to do with all the "programs" we have at Del Valle High School. We do them to look good, not to be good. Some of our situation is caused by Del Valle being many small communities rather than a town. Community involvement is lacking and I feel the district employees have tried all we know to involve families. Any help in this area would be welcome. We are top-heavy in administration. Management and instructional leadership needs to be from the teacher level. Teachers are in touch with students and need to tell principals and curriculum directors what is needed in terms of materials and professional development. TAAS and other AEIS indicators dictate much of what we do as we are "low" for continually improving if our history is examined. NOTE: Much damage was done by previous Superintendent and Principal. Current Superintendent and Principal are doing a great job and I am optimistic. Your first two objectives listed on the front page could be achieved through teacher leadership. Teachers cost less and know what is happening at "ground zero" in order to more effectively and efficiently problem-solve and intervene as well as prevent. Look at schools across the country who don't use administrators but have teachers and teams of teachers/parents/students taking care of business. Involvement = Investment.

- Clerks in business office are rude to the public. I have waited 3 weeks plus for a return call from the business office and I am still waiting for an answer. This is not acceptable.
- Answers were based on previous district management and leadership in my school. Changes in district administrators and campus principal seem to be very positive. I feel that we try to help kids in all areas, but we've had to curb some of that due to TAAS. I like the challenges this district offers me and know that our "bad reputation" is untrue.
- Del Valle is an up and coming district. I am proud to be one of its employees.
- I have enjoyed my time spent at Del Valle ISD. My first few years of employment as a teacher have been pleasant. The only thing I do not like is the new insurance plan. Especially how the teachers were treated rudely in registering.
- Del Valle only cares about TAAS. Getting what you need takes forever.....if it ever comes. It makes it very difficult to be a teacher.
- I enjoy teaching at Del Valle ISD. The new buildings are well-equipped to help teachers provide a better education for all students. I believe we are going to see less teacher turnover in the future. The educational performance of Del Valle ISD has improved each year. Our main problem has been student absenteeism. This is improving now.
- The administration at Del Valle ISD does not show teachers enough respect for our positions. We are often treated as children and yet we are expected to act "professionally". Time is not taken for explanation of insurance. We do not have adequate parking space for teachers and staff. Adults have poor restroom facilities and are often forced to use student restrooms. These may not be important to the "education" of Del Valle ISD students, but in order to educate them the teachers must be able to have their basic needs met. Happy employees always make better business and anybody who believes that education is not business needs to wake up! Teachers at Del Valle ISD are not happy.
- Physical education classes are too big. Our 6th graders don't have computers in their classrooms (10/4/00) because high school was the top priority. We need a Head Start program for 3 to 4 year olds. Our elementary school needs security and/or full-time hall monitors. Our new computers are slow and have too many glitches. The district needs to focus on keeping good teachers instead of recruiting new ones. And, of course, we are ALL underpaid with most of us working very hard.
- We need more computers! Elementary needs a full-time GT program. We need to figure out a way to reduce class size. TAAS prep. minimized the teacher's ability to make time for science and social studies.

- Overall, the district effectively educates its students, many of whom are at-risk and deprived of cultural opportunities. Under a new school board and district administrator, I expect the district to continue to improve. I am only involved at the elementary level and I see one instance in which financial responsibility could improve. Several teachers tutor 1st graders for half a day and teach very small groups; the other half, using a program that research has found to be ineffective (Reading Recovery). We cannot afford the luxury of one teacher per one student for half day and such a small case load at that.
- Communication is an issue at Del Valle ISD. There is a lack of communication from top to bottom. Central Administration - schools (personnel, other than administrators) Campus administration - school personnel; campus - student; campus - parents; Central Administration - parents. Lack of planning to address the growth in student population is an issue - we need more room now! There are a lot of good things going on at Del Valle ISD, some great teachers/staff, some good innovative programs at the campus levels, students willing to learn. Some of our administrators are tops, some need help in dealing with people.
- Although I have only been with the district a couple of years, I feel the district is doing a great job. We have recently gained a new superintendent and he is respected both by the faculty and community. At the beginning of the year we had a faculty breakfast and when the superintendent was announced, he received a standing ovation! Being a Special Education Teacher, I will always advocate for small class size and teacher aides. I do feel we need inclusion staff for our campus.
- As with most schools serving low-income, low-performing students, ignores the needs of any child who is not at-risk of failing TAAS. No attention or concern is given to high-performing students.
- Richardson ISD (Dallas starting salary is \$33,000 first year. Dallas ISD starting is \$34,500. Del Valle first year - \$30,000. The cost of living in Austin is much higher than Dallas. If I wasn't married, I wouldn't be able to support myself.
- I am very pleased to be a part of the Del Valle district. I have a child with special needs. I removed the child from A.I.S.D. and enrolled him in our district because I see day after day the outstanding job the teachers do for all the children. I am very proud of the district and the work we do for the community.
- I have taught in Del Valle ISD for 28 years. We've grown and changed so very much. Our district still tries to maintain a close working relationship with staff, administration and parents.
- I have found the faculty, staff and administrators excellent communicators and excelling willing workers. The principal and

assistant principal are always willing to listen, share and support all employees.

- I am a brand-new teacher with Del Valle so I am not yet able to comment on many of your statements. I have been very impressed with the closeness and availability of the administrators to all of us. Their enthusiasm is wonderful.
- I don't feel one computer per classroom is an effective way to utilize technology. It is akin to sharing textbooks and pencils to teach reading and writing - the more cumbersome the task the more ineffective the educational experience becomes. At the very least, link our computers to our wall-mounted televisions for whole group instruction.
- Cafeteria personnel are a big problem. They need to be paid more so that children have quality meals served much more timely.
- I don't know about high school or junior high but elementary really tries to educate its students to the highest level possible.
- The district is finally turning around. We have a very strong leader of curriculum for the elementary grades and we are striving to improve the secondary grades as well.
- Del Valle ISD is still in a transition period. I have seen districts that were caught in the expansion of a large city. Some, like Del Valle, saw the changes coming and adjusted their small town/community ideas to prepare for the future. Others did not. The latter districts ended up with overcrowded schools and a lower quality of education. The former districts are now some of the state leaders in education. Keep looking to the future - don't let it catch up with us.
- Many classes on our campus have not enough textbooks, furniture is old - desks and chairs have not been replaced in over 12 years. Some teachers do not have enough furniture. Staff development - conferences are not offered to the people who need to go. Example: Special Education teachers could not go to a Learning Disabilities Conference. Dyslexia teachers are not going to the National Dyslexia Conference. Music teachers can only go to National Conference every 2 years. Many teachers are unable to keep up with latest research in their field, particularly Special Service personnel and special are - Physical Ed., Art and Music Counselors and Special Service people are not willing to do the paperwork for 504s. Consequently these duties fall on a teacher to handle on several campuses. Most are not paid extra for handling these duties. This takes away teaching/instructional time from students.
- Our business office has had many problems in the past.
- I FEEL PRETTY PROUD OF WHAT WE DO AT OUR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL I don't have any experience with the

High School and it has been years since I worked at the Junior High.

- I have worked at Baty for all 5 years of my teaching experience. The philosophy is whatever works to make kids and teachers successful.
- I feel the students exceed in educational performance at my school due to high expectations.
- Counselors at secondary need to do more counseling of students one-on-one or groups and less paperwork, master scheduling. Assistant principals should do master schedules. Too many football coaches at High School. Poor/losing record. Consolidate High School Athletic Coordinators - have them do academics - teach more classes and coach a second sport. Waste of money to have them not coach and teach like others.
- As a speech therapist I work at one elementary school and the high school. The atmosphere at the elementary school is very positive and focused and high standards are expected of teachers and students. The teachers are helpful to each other in sharing skills, ideas and materials. However, there is not enough training of the regular teachers to deal effectively with slow learners that do not qualify for special education services, so there is a tendency to try to channel these students into resource classes, making the resource classes too large. This is probably a fault of teacher training in general and needs to be addressed. At the high school I see a lot of time wasted in some classes. However, I don't go into the honors and AP classes and they are probably more on-task. For the most part, I find it a friendly and supportive district to work in where education is taken seriously.
- There are a lot of good teachers who care about the students. The teachers are on their own with discipline problems. There is no unified plan with predetermined consequences. Students are passed even if they haven't learned the material. Teachers are compelled to pass 80 percent of a class. We don't have enough money in the science budget to buy supplies we need for labs.
- Del Valle is a great district to work for. They are correcting several problems that they have had. The Central Office is always very helpful whenever I have needed them. I will not be returning next year because my career takes me elsewhere. If it weren't for that, I would become a longtime employee. Thank you for your help.
- Students are below level and are not college bound. They have no skills for higher learning.
- Our high school staff is reeling from the most aggressive administration I have ever seen - public or private. We have had extremely high turnover in the past 2 years. There is hope for the new superintendent and his principal but not seeing any real progress except teachers are not being run off left and right. There

is little, if any, student discipline. The enclosed letter(*) says better than I can (it is from a parent - name withheld). The letter is from a frustrated parent concerning conditions here. The administration seems to have removed themselves from disciplinary involvement except in the most extreme cases. The inmates are running the place. (*) My daughter is in the 9th grade at your school. I have some concerns that I am hoping you can help me understand. She tells me, and I have observed, that the dress code does not appear to be enforced at the high school. I have been there many times this year and have observed girls wearing tank tops with way too much cleavage exposed, boys and girls wearing head coverings (particularly those bandana type head coverings for girls) and at the band practices, I have observed girls wearing nothing but sport bras and shorts. In addition, I have walked the hallways and have seen boys and girls kissing and students openly using cell phones and pagers. I have been there during the lunch hour and I have also observed students at their cars (or friends cars) smoking. The other day I came to get my daughter for a doctor's appointment at 2:25 P.M. I had to wait at the front while the lady at the desk finished filing her nails to be waited on. I learned that she was in Coach's class. The schedule was looked up and she sent a student to get my daughter. I told her that Coach's class had moved at least once and I thought it was about three times since school started and he was no longer in the room where she sent the student. She sent him anyway. It took over 30 minutes for someone to locate his class. I asked if she could page and she said that the principal didn't allow interruptions. However, I was in a training there a few weeks ago for three days and I heard a multitude of interruptions all day long. As a result of this, we were an hour late for her appointment (due to traffic increases at that time of day and the 30 minute delay). As a parent, I am extremely frustrated in what is going on at the high school and as a district employee I am frustrated that we have a district-wide dress code that is apparently unimportant at the high school. I know that things are not always as they appear, but I wanted to let you know how they appear from my view.

- I have been really disappointed in the availability of basic supplies (paint, construction paper, etc.). Whenever I need something I have to beg and plead for it and then usually I don't get it. How do I provide quality instruction if supplies are not accessible?
- I believe our district has great potential, but our administration is afraid to handle problems of discipline in our school. They are inconsistent in dealing with enforcement of board guidelines in regard to student discipline. They expect teachers to discipline students but then the principals do not back the teachers. Our tardies, cussing, fighting and skipping is out of control. Most teachers have stopped trying to follow discipline guidelines; except

in their own classrooms. Certain administrators and board members are afraid of lawsuits and upsetting parents more than a safe and good education for our students. If we had about 40 or 50 students in alternative education or at least suspended our school would be great.

- I enjoy working for Del Valle. I do wish we had more and updated computers for the classroom. I do hope the budget audit clears up lots of questions and evens out money distributed to each campus. I also hope teachers receive funds they need for the classroom more readily. I teach kindergarten and I have 22 kids in my class. I could be a more effective teacher if I had a fewer number of 5 year olds at one time. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this survey.
- TAAS does not demonstrate a student's ability. It demonstrates how well a child can pass the TAAS format. Think about: reasons why a child would not perform well on the TAAS test (besides not knowing the skill. I can think of at least 30). (Their pet died the night before, they didn't sleep well, they don't feel well, they just aren't test takers, Mom/Dad were arrested again, Mom/Dad beat them again, They didn't eat breakfast). What about a child's progress? What about a child's self-esteem? ("Do your best!", "Keep trying!", "I'm sorry you didn't pass the test and can't go on to the next grade!").
- Popham Elementary. The Resource classes are very full. I am concerned that no inclusion services are offered. Content Mastery is only available for 1/2 a day to the 5th and 6th graders. A Chapter One teacher is in the computer lab (?). Our principal tries to get the staff. We have too many students not able to remain in the regular classroom due to no inclusion support. I worry about the at-risk students (not special ed.) - no support in the classrooms. Perhaps a recommendation can be made to the board about this. Our principal tries to get the staff but it takes weeks and months. It happens yearly. At the Del Valle Junior High, all of the Special Education teachers did not return!
- Del Valle ISD does many things right in educating our children. However, the insensitivity of the administration in dealing with the teachers' problems causes low teacher morale and high teacher turnover. Teachers are required to do much more than average, including many night/evening activities - a minimum of once a month.
- The Special Education program needs looking into. Paperwork is poorly kept, files are outdated, ARD paperwork is up to 2 years out of compliance and money is being received by Del Valle for students who should have been disqualified from special education services but were not even though the testing individual "does not quality".

- While performance is good, it could be a lot better. Better and more fair enforcement of policies by administrators would be beneficial. When administration fails to enforce regulations and ruling, they model poor behavior to teachers and students. The reading ability of our students is far below what it should be. A lot of students in my class (Grades 9-12) read at about a 6th-7th grade level. This is unacceptable and leaves our students unprepared for college.
- No curriculum guides are available to teachers. New teachers orientation is a joke and opportunities for good in-service and staff development is extremely poor.
- After teaching in AISD I feel blessed to be in Del Valle. The administrators and teachers are extremely dedicated and caring. We never have to beg for paper and we always have a room to teach in! The administration is small and effective and friendly. Too bad they aren't competitive with AISD's salaries. My only complaint is the insurance.

Appendix B

TEACHER SURVEY

VERBATIM COMMENTS (Part 2)

- The majority of this district's administrators and teachers are totally focused and dedicated to quality education and yearly growth (educationally). I think that with the change of superintendents, there is higher morale among the teachers and administrators, thus the educational growth will be greater.
- Overall, I am pleased with the performance of Del Valle ISD. A new superintendent was recently hired. The Board listened to teachers and community, resulting in the hiring of a man experienced in the district's schools and committed to them. Some of the negative opinions you find when tabulating these surveys may quickly change with the new leadership.
- Getting textbooks is a real problem. There are not enough. There are not enough teacher editions. Special Ed. is not provided with textbooks, even though they are desperately needed. Overcrowding is a terrible problem. We do not have sufficient classroom space. Classes have to divide up or use storerooms as classrooms. Special Ed. does not have enough aids. They have too many students per teacher and no help with the overflow. How can you teach effectively under these conditions? Students are placed in Special Ed. to get individualized attention. How can you give individualized attention to 13 Special Ed. Students in 1 hour? Special Ed. Teachers have to teach full classes all day just like regular ed. teachers. They have lesson plans, grading and preparation too. However, they also have a lot of Special paperwork to do on each student. Sufficient time is not allotted for all this work. Salaries do not reflect the extra demands placed on Special Ed. Teachers or the extra training they have to have.
- There are not enough textbooks. Teachers are not rewarded for the superior performance. The cafeteria's food is cold, not enough and does not taste or look good. Teachers do not get a teacher's plate. We get the same portion as the child and we pay the same. The Fire Drill Escape Route is extremely dangerous. Everyone evacuates through one set of doors and it bottlenecks.
- I based my answers on the current administration, not last year's.
- I have only been employed since August, 2000. My knowledge on most of the questions is limited. Sorry I could not have been of more help.
- I feel the district is lacking in the instruction of gifted and talented in the elementary schools. I also see a strong need to create methods and special personnel to work with kids that are 2 grades

behind and yet do not qualify for special education. These kids will not pass TAAS, will not graduate and are our future dropouts. They can learn but at a much slower pace. Special Ed. Classes would help but they can't get in.

- Del Valle ISD does an exemplary job of educating the youth of Del Valle. We are always on the cutting edge of implementing new educational advancements. The commitment of our administrators and teachers in providing the best and expecting the best is very high. We are recuperating from our health insurance fiasco (a \$1 million loss) of last year as best we can.
- Smith is being put to the test due to a new principal and undergoing rapid growth (Deerwood Subdivision). Subs are not readily available due to a variety of reasons. The GT program must be addressed at the elementary level. GT students' needs are not being met. The principal needs to allow adequate feedback and suggestions from staff without the staff member fearing repercussions. Overall, Smith is an excellent school and place of employment. The question is can it remain that way under the new leadership and with the booming population.
- Discipline and communication continues to be major problems at our school. Students are allowed to get away with totally inappropriate language when reported to AP. Students are interfering (on a daily basis) with the educational process and have very little respect for authority. The district bends over backwards to keep these disruptions in the classroom and the "good" kids have to put up with this (zero tolerance is a joke). We're all hopeful our change in administration will be an improvement. There has been slight improvement in the communication.
- Del Valle is being led by a new superintendent whom I respect. However, he can only do so much. For us to advance to a nationally acknowledged competency level, the state must fund education better. We need more teachers who are paid well and more personnel to help with the types of problems that students have from the moment they enter school.
- I have been very impressed with the overall growth Del Valle has made. They never stop striving for the best.
- The district has been able to accurately project the growth of the district since the building of the new airport. This sudden growth has led to an increase in enrollment, which has resulted in a shortage of textbooks, a shortage of teachers and not enough classrooms. Hopefully the upcoming bond issue will relieve long term problems, but the immediate overcrowding of schools needs to be addressed now. Discipline at the high school needs to be closely examined! Very chaotic at times! Need tougher standards.
- In regards to questions 74 and 75, I have not met any security personnel. I think they call the Sheriff's office.

- Teachers don't have enough time for conference planning. School year should start later. We have a copy budget yet we continue to have instructional material that has to be copied. Also there are some materials that have to be copied because there aren't enough copies for every child. Less paperwork, lesson plans have to be copied - a waste.
- Elementary students would benefit more from Saturday morning tutoring more than after-school tutoring. After school activities at the elementary school level should address fine arts and clubs, none of which exist at my school. The children need enrichment and variety, which can and should be addressed after school with busses provided for late shifts.
- Del Valle provides a supportive and friendly learning environment. My opinion for all of Texas - not just Del Valle - is to reduce class size to 15 to 1 for K-2nd grades. This will go further in helping give students a solid foundation for learning than all the teacher training, student tutoring and standardized testing being done at this time.
- I feel that we have a good campus that continues to get better and I am proud to be a member of this district. We are continuing our efforts to improve on a daily basis so that all of our students are successful in life, not just in school or just on TAAS.
- The educational performance at Del Valle ISD is satisfactory. However, students are not reaping the full benefits that they are offered. Our district is staffed with highly competent instructors. The "real" issues are student motivation and personal values of education. We completed a survey during the summer. The Number 1 issue that needed to be addressed was student discipline. Laws make it extremely difficult to expel students who have no business being in a regular classroom. Texas should develop a strong vocational program for Junior High students as well as High School. This is sorely needed. I need more room and I could go on and on.....
- The school and teachers need to be given more power to discipline. All the sugar and processed food that our students eat is interfering with their ability to learn and to concentrate. The cost increase in health insurance ate up all of my pay increase. Teachers should be paid more for all the overtime they put in.
- With 76 new staff over the past 2 years, there is an obvious problem with administrative policies and personnel (High School). Discipline is lax and many teachers have problems because consequences for students are vague and not uniformly administered.
- Our district was once a wonderful one - where the emphasis was on the student and his/her progress. Now the district has moved from being child-centered to one which seeks monies, publicity

and political clout rather than celebrating individual success/growth. A generation of our students are learning to take TAAS - not getting an education. How good can an education be when elementary teachers are encouraged to forget about science, social studies and other content area subjects and to focus on the test. Individual student progress is based on passing TAAS. This is a poor gauge of actual student and teacher achievement. Students (perceived by administrators as "at risk for not passing TAAS") are quickly tested and labeled as having language problems (receptive/expressive language/speech) or having learning disabilities. These labels mark unprofessional, unethical and perhaps criminal behavior by administrators in order to get a good school rating. This is done so that marginal students don't have to take TAAS.

- This is an excellent place to work. I enjoy working with Mr. Macais and his staff.
- Without fail, students who transfer into Del Valle ISD are behind in knowledge and skills they bring. We, therefore, are required to do "catch-up" for other districts' shortcomings. Why were no questions asked about the quality of supervision and instructional leadership at each individual campus? How about excessive absences of an administrator?
- I feel that there needs to be more guidelines on how to conduct a LPAC meeting. I also feel that the district could benefit from having a bilingual education coordinator who could monitor the progress of those in bilingual programs as well as have research available on topics surrounding bilingual education.
- I am especially distressed about the quality and quantity of instruction that is available for advanced students. While the majority of students seem to receive a suitable education, the advanced students' choices are limited (last year we had NO Advanced Placement Science classes) and the challenges they encounter are weak, usually. Strong students deserve a strong education, even when they are in the minority.
- More computers in the classroom for student use are needed. G.T. students are not given enough time to be properly served by the program. Rising cost of living in Austin forces teachers to move, or leave the profession or work 2 plus jobs.
- There is a need for more student monitoring. The discipline has been too lax and continues to be. Dress code is not being followed and students are not respectful of teachers, administration or parents. We are getting too little help from parents and, therefore, this a big problem. Parents take up for the kids instead of trying to help administration. Parents are as bad as the students in just not caring.

- Del Valle ISD provides teachers with many opportunities: to attend workshops, provides mentors for new teachers, programs to help students excel especially at the elementary level. High teacher and student expectations are expressed by administrators. Parent and community involvement is welcomed and volunteers are often recruited to help meet the needs of students.
- The ratio of teacher to students is not conducive to learning. Our schools are very overcrowded, which contributes to discipline problems. Not much is done about problems, Discipline. Our schools, though new, are filled way beyond capacity. A new school or two would really help this problem.
- Teachers do the best they can with the support they get.
- There is a discipline problem in the secondary schools. Teachers are generally made to feel inadequate if they are unable to control an emotionally disturbed student in class - or one that has ADA, drug use or some other problem that might cause disturbances and keep the teacher from instructing the other students. There is a new administration in both the secondary schools and the central office so perhaps things will get better.
- The portable I am in does not have a working telephone or working air conditioner. We do not have a computer in our portable. We are four portables on hill (small) by ourselves. We do not have rest rooms for our portables, we have to use the rest rooms reserved for second graders. The second grade teachers are constantly complaining about the sixth graders using the rest room. This is very inconvenient and troublesome. When it rains the students get wet because they have to travel to the rest rooms or to the school building. The building is a little way away from the portables. There is not any cover from the portables to the building.
- There seems to be programs that could be after school events instead of taking up the students' academic time. Assistants should not be used for substitutes. Textbooks for Resource students should be allotted for in some way. (On their level) Also, the water tastes terrible! It may need to be tested.
- I can speak only for my school - Hornsby Dunlap Elementary. Overall the district has very effective TAAS-oriented training, strategies and curriculum. Hornsby has been left behind in terms of volunteers, computers, software, parking, landscaping, adopters, etc. We need money to enlarge the dyslexia program - there are too many students to be served effectively. We desperately need reading volunteers, mentors for our many students with low self esteem, etc. (We have a few - just not enough.)
- We have a new administration for the school district. I feel they are getting off to a great start and that the district is in the process of turning things around. The Junior High has a new principal and attitude and is also off to a great start.

- This district may be competitive in teacher pay but other districts provide sign on bonuses and stipends for critical areas which raises the annual amount by 10-15 percent. Additionally, there are districts that provide teacher aides for classes above a certain size or certain number of E.D. or LD students.
- I have been in the district for a few years (5). From what I have seen over the years, this year has been the best one discipline-wise. The problems that have occurred in the physical education program have come from mismanagement by the Athletic Director. There have been many financial and policy discrepancies that have come from the District Athletic Director. Discipline and classroom instruction have been much better this year than the previous four.
- As a new teacher, I received very poor mentoring last year. New teachers this year have the same complaint. Have not received new supplies (basics) since March, 2000. Few teachers have. Some department heads put a great deal of energy into making new, intelligent and competent teachers look bad. The subject of education (and quality of) is rarely mentioned. Teachers are required to stand in the halls the duration of all passing periods while intercom messages are given that can only be heard in the classroom Teachers in general are not respected by the powers that be. Counselors in a big power struggle over teachers. Teachers are inundated with memos and forms with incorrect dates, less than 8 hours notice, often with no information of the forms, source or telling them where to return the forms. Teacher workdays are spent in meetings that accomplish little. Teachers are talked "at", not with. The old powers remain in power and little will change so long as it remains that way. Department of Curriculum and Instruction initiates and supports favoritism and exclusion based on things other than child welfare. Most of all, good teachers need freedom and support for being creative, especially with sparse curriculum and inadequate textbooks. Creative teachers are necessary. Teachers need time to interact and share, make lesson plans (not be lectured on how).
- I enjoy working at Del Valle.
- The academic and behavioral expectations of the students far exceeds the districts and schools in the surrounding area, especially when the demographics of Del Valle students are compared to the other districts. The district provides excellent working conditions and great administrative support.
- The major problem Del Valle High has is discipline and the fact that for years and continuing this year with the new administration that the principals do not do anything to the students when they are sent to the office. The students know this and feel that they can do or not do anything they want all day long - and they can. There is no penalty for disrupting class. It becomes difficult to teach with

children continually acting out without fear of reprisal and even telling the teachers that if they write too many referrals they could get them fired because the principals would just know they couldn't conduct class. This goes on all of the time. Education suffers and young teachers leave after one or two years in the business forever, if they stay that long.

- I am in a portable for the second year and it was not ready to be used the first day of school. It is still not complete. Once or twice a week I have workmen in my room drilling and running wires. The school district knew last year they were going to have to bring in new portables. Why didn't they start the process earlier so I would not be without a phone and computer for the first nine weeks!
- The past two years have been difficult. I was very disappointed in the past school board's search for a new superintendent. They didn't want any input from the faculty.
- I think Del Valle listens to the needs of the parents, students and staff. I love working at Smith because the staff and students are like a large family. Most parents want to be included but a few are so busy. Our standards are high and parents and students realize we want them to succeed. The cafeteria must become more "earth-friendly".
- The greatest concern I have for the educational performance of Del Valle ISD is the lack of effective programs for students who chronically misbehave and disrupt the classroom. About 5-10 percent take up 20-30 percent of my time, energy and effort. They inhibit the learning of others in the classroom. We need to remove the chronically misbehaving student from a regular class and place them in an effective intervention program. All of our current "answers" for these students are based on punitive consequences, which doesn't effect any change in their behavior. Another area of concern (frustration) I have is how quickly this district adopts then abandons a new program or strategy. We go all out for something (Boystown, Lee Carter, Socratic questioning Texas School Steps, etc.) curriculum or management programs. Then the next year it's "fizzled" out! This seems like such a waste of time and money and certainly adds to teacher frustration.
- Teacher to student ratio should be no more than 23 to 1. All disciplines need to be systemic and weighted equally. Math and L.A. should not be prioritized above Social Studies and Science. G.T. and A.P. classes should not be the venue of one teacher or team. Athletics budget and time allotted should be equalized with academics. Athletics has too much of both. Science classes should have a 4-1 student to computer ratio and technology should be properly installed and implemented with forethought. I love my kids and what I do, but I really believe I should be paid more.

- I do not feel comfortable with our lunch food being brought to us in an employee's car (usually the trunk) because we're not at the main campus. As a teacher in the drop-out recovery program (the Alternative High School) I feel like we have a very qualified staff and an excellent program. It is a much needed service in this community.
- Teachers are given ample opportunity for growth and enrichment. The students always come first with the teachers in this district. We are in a Title 1 district but still have a very high success rate on TAAS scores and student successes in UIL performances. Much is due to the curriculum and our administration providing us with a "menu " of sources and programs to facilitate that curriculum.
- Del Valle students do receive a quality education. However, there is an extreme shortage of basic teacher supplies at my school. I don't understand that at all. Such things like staples, file folders, chart paper, construction paper, etc. are hard to come by. Also, we desperately need another copier. One copier for teacher use at a large campus is really ridiculous.
- Morale and turnover employment was very low during the past few years. It may take a year or two to get back in shape. Our biggest problem is salary incentives for experienced teachers, overcrowded elementary schools and health insurance.
- These answers - about the board and superintendent are based on the current board and superintendent. Answers for the previous board (except for one person) and for the previous superintendent would all be very negative. Although somewhat better, our district has a history of competing elementary schools - some get more than others. There is some effort of equity now, but "technology and facilities" is still not equal. Hornsby is like a "step-child" at times. Previous two years - coordinator for books was totally inept. That is now better. The previous superintendent and his staff were incompetent in the move. If I did my job that poorly, I would be fired. The principals (Elementary School) are a very strong part of our problem overall. Bottom Line: Our current superintendent is great. We have an extremely hard-working staff in this district. We do a remarkable job of meeting the needs of our students (from emotional, physical, to academic). We have very challenging students with limited resources and should get credit for the progress students make (most come 2-4 years developmentally behind), how far we "stretch" our budget dollar and the dedication which is our strength. The board (1998-2000) allowed cheap/inferior workmanship at Hornsby and cut classroom construction by four classrooms. The change in personnel at all levels makes answering very timely and subjective. Teachers are not given the opportunity to give information, insights and opinions on school programs. Often, the most vocal people have

little information, experience or few ideas yet their persistence and the "in group" atmosphere has caused many ineffective and useless programs to be started and dropped. Some decisions are obviously made to support "in group" "whims and fancies". A lot of posturing occurs frequently for "whoever's" benefit. Many teachers fail to follow the reasonable policies because we see and feel the lack of administrative support and some teachers who spoke opinions honestly were tender handedly or overtly punished or harassed. Often I feel administration does not want to be bothered by students' needs. Many of the behavior problems at the high school can be attributed to the students' perception that "Daddy is not home". They do not believe that at any point they will be accountable for their actions or inaction's both in the school at large and in the classrooms. In my opinion, the remedy is for administrations to become involved with teachers and students in the classroom modeling collaboration, cooperation and support for each one another and create a real sense of involvement from the school board down. Get the bosses involved in the students' education - don't leave it up to undermined teachers.

- Del Valle works extremely hard to try to meet the needs of all children and to make every student as successful as possible.
- Many things marked "No Opinion" are indicative of the fact that I have only been employed at Del Valle for three months. I am enjoying my job and I really like my kids and co-workers.
- I feel that the district focuses too strongly on TAAS performance at the exclusion of higher order on "non-TAAS" subjects. The at-risk students who "fall through the cracks" still influence opinion of the administration on those teachers who "draw" these students. Being a creative and inventive educator is not encouraged unless it helps or ties into TAAS. The needs of the high or even "regular" students aren't responded to because we spend so much time trying to get students to pass "The Test". There are so many other things about teaching that are being excluded or pushed aside. I believe that many excellent teachers are leaving the district and profession because TAAS stress and focus doesn't leave time to have those AHHA teaching moments. I won't go to my grave with a headstone that says, "he was a great TAAS teacher".
- Teachers hired before 1986 will receive no type of security benefits because no social security is taken from our salary, and our retirement benefits are insufficient for some teachers.
- How can Hillcrest be a blue ribbon school when those same students go to middle school they can't read and write? Terrible! Can't exempt everyone for the TAAS every year.
- Have only been in area two months. Cannot comment.
- Del Valle is one of the most innovative districts in the state of Texas. They do an excellent job of training teachers and providing

meaningful in-services. Our teacher turnover rate is high partly because of the population we serve. Our school district has many at-risk students. We consistently have recognized campuses on TAAS as well as two national blue ribbon elementary schools. I am proud of what we do for the students at Del Valle.

- I believe we should have a computer skills class started in elementary school. At least by 3rd Grade.

Appendix C

PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SURVEY

- A. Overview
- B. Tables (Survey Results)
- C. Verbatim Comments

Demographic Data

TOTAL RESPONSES AS OF JANUARY 5, 2001	11
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Note: *Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Circle Answer

1. Gender (Optional)	Male	Female				
	45%	55%				
2. Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	
	82%	9%	9%	0%	0%	
3. How long have you been employed by Del Valle ISD?	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	
	18%	18%	73%	0%	0%	
4. What grades are taught in your school?	Pre-Kindergarten	Kindergarten	First	Second	Third	
	26%	55%	55%	55%	55%	
	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth	
	55%	55%	55%	27%	27%	
	Ninth	Tenth	Eleventh	Twelfth		
	27%	27%	27%	27%		

Appendix C

PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SURVEY

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.	25%	40%	22%	8%	4%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	14%	40%	19%	20%	7%
3.	School board members understand their role as policymakers and stay out of the day-to-day management of the district.	22%	19%	30%	23%	6%
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	14%	18%	25%	29%	14%
5.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	22%	42%	10%	18%	8%
6.	Central administration is efficient.	23%	33%	17%	19%	9%
7.	Central administration supports the educational process.	25%	23%	28%	22%	2%
8.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	19%	36%	18%	20%	6%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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9.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	20%	42%	20%	18%	0%
10.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	23%	56%	10%	11%	1%
11.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	18%	47%	10%	20%	6%
12.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	18%	46%	14%	13%	8%
13.	The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	19%	56%	14%	9%	2%
14.	The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	24%	42%	19%	13%	2%
15.	The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	25%	41%	19%	13%	2%
16.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:	18%	51%	15%	13%	3%
	a) Reading	24%	45%	20%	8%	4%
	b) Writing	29%	35%	21%	10%	4%
	c) Mathematics	23%	48%	15%	9%	5%
	d) Science	12%	53%	20%	13%	2%
	e) English or Language Arts	29%	47%	14%	9%	2%
	f) Computer Instruction	17%	48%	18%	12%	5%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	20%	59%	12%	8%	2%
	h) Fine Arts	23%	47%	14%	9%	8%

	i) Physical Education	22%	44%	14%	11%	9%
	j) Business Education	15%	46%	%21	11%	7%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	17%	41%	22%	14%	5%
	l) Foreign Language	10%	45%	19%	20%	6%
17.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a) Library Service	16%	49%	18%	15%	3%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	10%	52%	17%	16%	5%
	c) Special Education	15%	50%	14%	16%	5%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	12%	53%	20%	12%	4%
	e) Dyslexia program	11%	52%	24%	11%	2%
	f) Student mentoring program	14%	50%	22%	12%	2%
	g) Advanced placement program	15%	46%	22%	16%	2%
	h) Literacy program	12%	41%	19%	21%	8%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	22%	37%	16%	15%	11%
	j) Summer school programs	16%	37%	21%	13%	13%
	k) Alternative education programs	10%	44%	19%	16%	13%
	l) "English as a second language" program	8%	37%	20%	25%	10%
	m) Career counseling program	10%	38%	38%	9%	5%
	n) College counseling program	11%	28%	38%	17%	5%
	o) Counseling the	17%	31%	26%	14%	12%

	parents of students					
	p) Drop out prevention program	17%	38%	22%	17%	7%
18.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	18%	42%	14%	17%	9%
19.	Teacher turnover is low.	17%	34%	24%	18%	6%
20.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	18%	42%	14%	17%	9%
21.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	9%	37%	18%	25%	10%
22.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	12%	35%	15%	28%	11%
23.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	12%	37%	17%	29%	4%
24.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	9%	37%	17%	28%	9%
25.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	12%	42%	19%	14%	13%

C. Personnel

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
26.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	13%	43%	15%	18%	11%
27.	The district has a good and timely program for	15%	33%	17%	30%	4%

	orienting new employees.					
28.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	9%	25%	22%	28%	16%
29.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	7%	37%	24%	23%	9%
30.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	12%	32%	16%	33%	7%
31.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	3%	39%	15%	27%	16%
32.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	6%	32%	18%	29%	15%
33.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	4%	36%	27%	26%	8%
34.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	6%	43%	19%	29%	3%
35.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	15%	42%	24%	11%	8%
36.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	17%	43%	15%	17%	7%

D. Community Involvement

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
37. The district regularly	9%	38%	14%	19%	20%

	communicates with parents.					
38.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	14%	47%	13%	21%	4%
39.	District facilities are open for community use.	19%	45%	14%	15%	7%

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.	20%	46%	17%	11%	6%
41.	Schools are clean.	14%	37%	15%	20%	14%
42.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	14%	32%	21%	24%	9%
43.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	8%	32%	43%	14%	4%
44.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	9%	37%	42%	9%	3%

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.	7%	34%	21%	29%	10%
46.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal	8%	29%	18%	40%	5%

	management techniques.					
47.	Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	5%	29%	13%	47%	6%

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.	10%	35%	29%	22%	4%
49.	Purchasing acquires high quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	9%	47%	27%	18%	0%
50.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	6%	33%	22%	29%	9%
51.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	10%	39%	30%	19%	2%
52.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	17%	52%	17%	9%	5%
53.	Textbooks are in good shape.	20%	45%	18%	13%	4%
54.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	10%	51%	15%	20%	4%

H. Food Services

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
55.	The cafeteria's food	13%	34%	25%	23%	5%

	looks and tastes good.					
56.	Food is served warm.	10%	32%	17%	21%	20%
57.	Students have enough time to eat.	22%	41%	17%	12%	8%
58.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	14%	47%	13%	21%	4%
59.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	21%	37%	29%	12%	2%
60.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	22%	61%	10%	6%	1%
61.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	15%	47%	15%	21%	2%
62.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	10%	42%	21%	19%	8%

I. Transportation

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
63.	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	14%	18%	25%	29%	14%
64.	The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	19%	36%	20%	18%	6%
65.	Buses arrive and leave on time.	22%	44%	14%	11%	9%
66.	Adding or modifying a route for a student is easy to accomplish.	3%	34%	15%	32%	16%

J. Safety and Security

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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67.	Students feel safe and secure at school.	5%	45%	15%	32%	6%
68.	School disturbances are infrequent.	17%	39%	15%	25%	4%
69.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	15%	24%	8%	39%	14%
70.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	11%	17%	15%	50%	7%
71.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	5%	41%	13%	29%	12%
72.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	18%	55%	15%	7%	4%
73.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	17%	56%	14%	9%	4%
74.	A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	18%	61%	12%	9%	2%
75.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	28%	59%	5%	7%	1%
76.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	27%	48%	8%	16%	1%

K. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
77.	Students regularly use computers.	48%	45%	2%	5%	0%
78.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	50%	46%	1%	3%	0%

79.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	38%	33%	11%	16%	2%
80.	The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	44%	41%	4%	11%	0%
81.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	32%	49%	9%	10%	0%
82.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	52%	35%	4%	9%	0%
83.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	56%	39%	4%	1%	0%

Appendix C

PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SURVEY

VERBATIM COMMENTS

- Del Valle schools are presently coming from under a cloud with the new School Board, new Superintendent and new Central Office leadership. As campus administrators we are presently empowered to meet the district's goals through our individual Campus Plans using proven strategies and research which have resulted in two National Blue Ribbon Schools, Three Texas Blue Ribbon Schools and all five elementary schools commended by the Greater Austin Quality Council. The secondary schools, each having new leadership are improving in a positive and promising direction for the district's future.
- Elementary schools receive priority. Secondary levels receive less fiscal and staffing considerations. Secondary foundation courses have high teacher-pupil ratio.
- We are moving in the right direction and as Del Valle continues to grow, it is imperative to attract and retain quality educators. The district administration and board are very supportive. They have the task to project for the future and adequately prepare this district for the coming growth and development. It is a very critical time and the decisions being made will make or break this district.
- We have had a change of leadership which has been positive. Our central office staff are program and student friendly. I get the support I need to lead my school. Materials and supplies are abundant. Staff development for teachers is excellent.
- The district is facing growth. Hopefully we can manage the system and change those processes which are out dated and have not kept up with the growth of the district.

Appendix D

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY

- A. Overview
- B. Tables (Survey Results)
- C. Verbatim Comments

Demographic Data

TOTAL RESPONSES AS OF January 5, 2001	47
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Note: *Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Circle Answer

1. Gender (Optional)	Male	Female				
	38%	62%				
2. Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	
	65%	10%	21%	0%	2%	
3. How long have you been employed by Del Valle ISD?	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	
	53%	13%	17%	6%	11%	
4. Are you a(n)	Administrator	Clerical Staffer	Support Staffer (i.e. transportation, food services, etc.)			
	26%	28%	46%			
5. How long have you been employed in this capacity by Del Valle ISD?	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	
	61%	11%	17%	2%	9%	

Appendix D

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY

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.	38%	24%	12%	6%	2%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	22%	57%	10%	11%	0%
3.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	45%	18%	8%	18%	11%
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	25%	20%	11%	14%	30%
5.	Central administration is efficient.	31%	45%	8%	12%	4%
6.	Central administration supports the educational process.	42%	27%	1%	18%	12%
7.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	51%	22%	15%	10%	2%

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.	40%	25%	8%	18%	0%
9.	Teachers are given an	15%	50%	4%	31%	0%

	opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.					
10.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	29%	53%	8%	8%	0%
11.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	20%	55%	8%	17%	0%
12.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
	a) Reading	20%	49%	8%	8%	0%
	b) Writing	21%	39%	21%	3%	0%
	c) Mathematics	28%	27%	28%	5%	0%
	d) Science	38%	27%	26%	9%	0%
	e) English or Language Arts	41%	29%	25%	5%	0%
	f) Computer Instruction	19%	51%	26%	4%	0%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	28%	32%	31%	9%	0%
	h) Fine Arts	31%	26%	38%	5%	0%
	i) Physical Education	41%	27%	29%	3%	0%
	j) Business Education	19%	58%	22%	1%	0%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	20%	56%	22%	2%	0%
	l) Foreign Language	27%	40%	28%	5%	0%
13.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a) Library Service	24%	35%	31%	6%	4%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	26%	59%	8%	7%	0%

	c) Special Education	37%	53%	5%	5%	0%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	41%	42%	6%	8%	3%
	e) Dyslexia program	19%	51%	21%	9%	0%
	f) Student mentoring program	18%	48%	25%	4%	5%
	g) Advanced placement program	17%	55%	17%	5%	6%
	h) Literacy program	22%	57%	14%	7%	0%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	27%	52%	12%	9%	0%
	j) Summer school programs	9%	65%	15%	11%	0%
	k) Alternative education programs	26%	55%	10%	9%	0%
	l) "English as a second language" program	16%	66%	6%	12%	0%
	m) Career counseling program	15%	59%	15%	11%	0%
	n) College counseling program	25%	57%	13%	5%	0%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	24%	59%	12%	5%	0%
	p) Drop out prevention program	18%	62%	16%	4%	0%
14.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	25%	34%	15%	3%	23%
15.	Teacher turnover is low.	28%	22%	16%	2%	32%
16.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	7%	41%	8%	16%	28%
17.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	4%	40%	8%	26%	22%
18.	Teachers are rewarded	4%	31%	50%	12%	3%

	for superior performance.					
19.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	7%	25%	51%	8%	9%
20.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	11%	19%	32%	18%	20%
21.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	19%	36%	28%	15%	2%
22.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	22%	49%	12%	8%	9%
23.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	29%	26%	28%	15%	2%

C. Personnel

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
24.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	2%	50%	12%	32%	4%
25.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	5%	33%	8%	41%	13%
26.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	11%	54%	16%	14%	5%
27.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	8%	26%	20%	25%	21%
28.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	1%	16%	21%	26%	36%

29.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	12%	32%	10%	18%	28%
30.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	16%	23%	18%	40%	3%
31.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	5%	20%	29%	28%	18%
32.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	0%	33%	26%	18%	23%
33.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	12%	25%	18%	31%	14%
34.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	0%	34%	8%	29%	29%

D. Community Involvement

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
35.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	11%	31%	15%	18%	25%
36.	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	2%	36%	15%	29%	18%
37.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	4%	45%	27%	24%	0%

38.	District facilities are open for community use.	17%	65%	18%	0%	0%
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E. Facilities Use and Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
39.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	28%	27%	20%	18%	7%
40.	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	5%	21%	16%	17%	41%
41.	Schools are clean.	12%	45%	11%	28%	4%
42.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	15%	61%	15%	6%	3%
43.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	16%	57%	18%	3%	6%
44.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	22%	61%	7%	5%	5%

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.	0%	28%	39%	19%	14%
46.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	0%	21%	41%	31%	7%

47.	The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	0%	12%	31%	27%	30%
48.	Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	4%	13%	25%	29%	29%

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.	6%	32%	14%	20%	28%
50.	Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	12%	11%	27%	28%	22%
51.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	0%	18%	22%	26%	34%
52.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	7%	21%	17%	32%	23%
53.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	5%	28%	60%	7%	0%
54.	Textbooks are in good shape.	12%	18%	64%	6%	0%
55.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources for students.	11%	52%	22%	11%	4%

H. Safety and Security

Survey Questions	Strongly	Agree	No	Disagree	Strongly
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		Agree		Opinion		Disagree
56.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	0%	29%	12%	50%	9%
57.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	0%	18%	15%	62%	5%
58.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	13%	41%	26%	12%	8%
59.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	9%	56%	26%	8%	1%
60.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	8%	53%	15%	22%	2%
61.	A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	12%	52%	22%	14%	0%
62.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	9%	50%	28%	11%	2%

I. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
63.	Students regularly use computers.	22%	72%	6%	0%	0%
64.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	18%	60%	16%	3%	3%
65.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	5%	54%	18%	14%	9%
66.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	25%	48%	11%	11%	5%

67.	The district meets students needs in computer fundamentals.	22%	46%	5%	9%	18%
68.	The district meets students needs in advanced computer skills.	31%	36%	14%	8%	11%
69.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	40%	33%	19%	8%	0%

Appendix D

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY

VERBATIM COMMENTS

- Administrators salaries are very, very high. Too high per student for this small district. Too many coaches, assistant coaches, etc. For this small district. Money used for hiring TASB, for salaries, etc. and then advice not followed. Too many "trips" by administrators. Not enough clerical staff to manage offices and do work required.
- Morale, working atmosphere and communication have improved 100% with the new administration. Trust is being restored in the community and finances are now being managed correctly and effectively. Hopefully we can entice the American Statesman to print some of the district's good news.
- My daughter goes to Smith Elementary. She is a kindergarten student. I believe her teacher is great and my daughter has a great rapport with her. I believe she is learning a lot. Please give this district more money.
- Del Valle has made tremendous strides over the last several years, in terms of academic performance - two national blue ribbon winners and one Texas blue ribbon winner; as well as the incredible new facilities.
- We have moved from caring about our students and families to how much money we can save, who has the biggest office, who has the best desk or the biggest desk. When equipment is removed that has been used to protect and care for the district to save a buck, then we have set ourselves up to fail. District wide we have lost our goals and our way. No leadership, no plan. It's about whose salary do we share when they leave. Most will not say unless they know they will not be fired. The new management will not even meet with employees with concerns. What a poor turn of events. I fear for the children and families if we as employees cannot even have input.
- In the previous 5 years I have witnessed occurrences that were suspect to my professional ethics. To the best of my recollection these responses are from my gut and subjective experiences are valid from my point of view.
- I work for transportation. We are yet to get the raise promised to us. On the 15th of September no one's check in transportation was right.
- We don't know from pay check to pay check what we will make. There is a big turnover in our department. Check it out.

- Two (2) Blue Ribbon schools. Working for more! What else can I say.
- I have been employed by the district for 2 months and therefore have no opinion on many of the areas in question.
- This district is in trouble re: overcrowding. We are now told only one health insurance firm would take us. Our new board has many fine new community leaders. The secondary schools are where the excellent elementary education dissolves. We graduated 160 kids out of a class of 400. We have a new strong leader at the Junior High and positive changes are evident. The new High School is in chaos. Discipline is non-existent. Help!
- I work at Del Valle. My child attends Del Valle High. The schools my child attended have been good for him. He is in AP classes. Reading is very highly stressed which I think is excellent.
- I am very satisfied. I have a Del Valle graduate and a Junior at High School and my grandchildren are also enrolled. To this point the educational performance of Del Valle ISD is excellent.
- Not enough computers.
- No effective leadership. Business Manager controls district. Superintendent selected by popularity rather than ability. Business Manager often overrides decisions and directives of Superintendent. District often violates purchasing and bidding procedures and laws and allows principals and athletic director to purchase items over budgeted amounts. Support staff is offered little input into operations and receives virtually no training or support from Administration.
- The Junior High School is overcrowded. I've heard that there are 25-30 students in a classroom. More teachers need to be hired so that classes are smaller in size. The Elementary Schools have between 20-25 students in a classroom. This is too many at this age. I am strongly debating whether to put my grandson in private school where classes are smaller and the curriculum is more challenging. I feel that the High School has very low expectations of the students.
- The last construction projects were questionable as to the objective selection. Elementary has more involvement than secondary./ It seems that secondary teachers are uncomfortable with parent volunteers. There is little room for advancement in public education for support staff. Previous administration removed "SOPS" without implementing new "SOPS. Current administration is rebuilding. Efficiency is still good but increasing. We've gone through radical changes since June, 1998. Previous administration's policy of favoritism damaged morale. Now rapid growth is generating more work. Money is used for the goal of educating students. Good, but central office must have support

staff to meet the increased demand of increased staff and student population.

- I think we're doing as good a job as we can, given the rapid growth and the pains that go with it.
- Too much focus on TAAS. Elementary favored over secondary openly. Superintendent not for all programs or levels; favors Elementary and does not consider Secondary worthy of his time or attention. Not willing to listen to Secondary concerns as they relate to lack of alignment with Elementary. Some board members too involved in Administration and openly pro-elementary and critical of secondary. Definitely two districts in one - Elementary and Secondary. Great students - very grateful for what is done for them. Students work hard. Majority of teachers are quality and care for students.
- There are so many ways we could save money in transportation alone that could buy more computers so kids can get on them and not have to wait 1-1/2 weeks or train with qualified people instead of using unqualified people to train with. Stop the wants and go with need only for 1 or 2 years. You could have a lot for these kids and programs to set them in their dreams. Bored kids turn to drugs, violence and parenthood. Give and show them that light at the end of the tunnel and help educate them to leave the tunnel and choose and know which light to go to. Not all kids are into sports or can manage the grade to be in it and still play. Instead of turning away and ignoring those, there are things they can look forward to and still reach a goal in life. Two of your problem kids are now turned around and hold their head up again and they let me know their attitude changed with their grades. Their parents are proud, relieved and grateful. If I can do this as a simple bus driver wanting nothing but a hug and smile, why can't the rest of you. All day I hear I want from adults, employees, employers. You forget the needs of kids.
- Overall, the staff at Del Valle ISP are involved and dedicated to meeting the needs of the students. The elementary campuses are academically focused and aim to have high standards for all students. The superintendent and board tries to involve community and staff in decision making process for the district.
- I have been in Del Valle for 20 years. I think it is a much better school district than the press has made us out to be. They report the bad and seldom the good. We are a minority low income district, which generates specific problems. I think our school board and administrators have done an excellent job under these circumstances. I wouldn't work in any other district.
- Del Valle has one of the best educational backgrounds. The students are offered all the necessities. It's up to them to acquire it.

- I wouldn't work anywhere else. Del Valle is the best kept secret in Travis County.
- I have been in Del Valle for 20 years. I think it is a much better school district than the press has made us out to be. They report the bad and seldom the good. We are a minority low income district which generates specific problems. I think our school board and administrators have done an excellent job under these circumstances. I wouldn't work in any other district.
- Del Valle has one of the best educational backgrounds. The students are offered all the necessities. It's up to them to acquire it.
- I wouldn't work anywhere else. Del Valle is the best kept secret in Travis County.
- A great deal of money is spent taking children from one campus to another so that they can be taught in Spanish. Our country has many cultures and to keep it strong it should have only one language. The language of the majority is English. We could make better use of the money by teaching children near their homes and in one language. Education is about more than money, it is about helping people to live good lives in harmony so that America can continue to be great.

Appendix E

PARENT SURVEY

- A. Overview
- B. Tables (Survey Results)
- C. Verbatim Comments

Demographic Data

TOTAL RESPONSES AS OF January 5, 2001	142
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Note: *Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

1. Gender (Optional)	Male	Female
	38%	62%

2. Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
	34%	16%	47%	1%	2%

3. How long have you lived in Del Valle ISD?	0-5 years	6-10 years	11 or more years
	33%	30%	37%

4. What grades level(s) does you child(ren) attend (circle all that apply)?	Pre-K	K	1	2	3	4	5		
		11%	7%	8%	4%	9%	4%	10%	
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12
			2%	10%	8%	2%	11%	6%	8%

Appendix E

PARENT SURVEY

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.	12%	56%	29%	0%	3%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	15%	34%	27%	18%	6%
3.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	12%	15%	52%	17%	4%
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	9%	16%	48%	24%	3%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5.	The district provides a high quality of services.	26%	48%	9%	15%	2%
6.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	14%	42%	28%	11%	5%
7.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	18%	22%	42%	17%	1%
8.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	13%	48%	15%	18%	6%
9.	The district has effective					

	educational programs for the following:					
	a) Reading	24%	58%	5%	12%	1%
	b) Writing	25%	54%	5%	11%	5%
	c) Mathematics	26%	61%	4%	5%	4%
	d) Science	24%	65%	3%	6%	2%
	e) English or Language Arts	22%	55%	7%	11%	5%
	f) Computer Instruction	25%	55%	8%	8%	4%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	26%	58%	5%	11%	0%
	h) Fine Arts	18%	41%	15%	11%	15%
	i) Physical Education	32%	62%	3%	3%	0%
	j) Business Education	38%	29%	15%	9%	9%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	41%	31%	8%	12%	8%
	l) Foreign Language	11%	43%	18%	24%	4%
10.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a) Library Service	22%	57%	14%	5%	2%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	24%	55%	14%	4%	3%
	c) Special Education	24%	50%	18%	3%	5%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	18%	42%	25%	10%	5%
	e) Dyslexia program	15%	43%	28%	12%	2%
	f) Student mentoring program	15%	39%	29%	13%	4%
	g) Advanced placement program	12%	44%	15%	29%	0%
	h) Literacy program	12%	42%	28%	18%	0%
	i) Programs for students	14%	42%	25%	17%	2%

	at risk of dropping out of school					
	j) Summer school programs	17%	38%	26%	19%	0%
	k) Alternative education programs	14%	40%	16%	28%	1%
	l) "English as a second language" program	4%	38%	12%	21%	25%
	m) Career counseling program	16%	47%	28%	4%	5%
	n) College counseling program	15%	29%	29%	23%	4%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	12%	31%	35%	20%	2%
	p) Drop out prevention program	14%	25%	18%	40%	3%
11.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	35%	25%	15%	18%	7%
12.	Teacher turnover is low.	16%	28%	26%	25%	5%
13.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	16%	32%	31%	15%	6%
14.	A substitute teacher rarely teaches my child.	18%	36%	33%	9%	4%
15.	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	21%	43%	29%	4%	3%
16.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	25%	30%	28%	17%	0%
17.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	38%	48%	13%	0%	1%
18.	Classrooms are seldom	26%	44%	15%	13%	2%

	left unattended.					
19.	The district provides a high quality education.	21%	39%	16%	23%	1%
20.	The district has a high quality of teachers.	18%	49%	18%	13%	2%

C. Community Involvement

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
21.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	21%	35%	16%	21%	7%
22.	District facilities are open for community use.	28%	33%	12%	21%	6%
23.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help students and school programs.	25%	28%	16%	31%	0%

D. Facilities Use and Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
24.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff, and the board provide input into facility planning.	17%	46%	18%	12%	7%
25.	Schools are clean.	23%	50%	19%	8%	0%
26.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	21%	51%	22%	6%	0%
27.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	25%	42%	18%	8%	7%
28.	The district uses very few portable buildings.	5%	11%	15%	44%	25%

29.	Emergency maintenance is handled expeditiously.	11%	54%	25%	10%	0%
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E. Asset and Risk Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
30.	My property tax bill is reasonable for the educational services delivered.	18%	38%	16%	25%	3%
31.	Board members and administrators do a good job explaining the use of tax dollars.	5%	29%	17%	29%	20%

F. Financial Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
32.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	5%	18%	15%	48%	14%
33.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	6%	12%	52%	25%	5%
34.	The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	8%	28%	11%	45%	8%
35.	Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	8%	12%	35%	28%	17%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

Survey Questions	Strongly	Agree	No	Disagree	Strongly
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		Agree		Opinion		Disagree
36.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	21%	61%	12%	6%	0%
37.	Textbooks are in good shape.	18%	42%	12%	19%	9%
38.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	23%	51%	9%	15%	2%

H. Food Services

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
39.	My child regularly purchases his/her meal from the cafeteria.	38%	29%	8%	18%	7%
40.	The school breakfast program is available to all children.	35%	42%	12%	5%	6%
41.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	11%	42%	11%	26%	10%
42.	Food is served warm.	18%	32%	10%	24%	16%
43.	Students have enough time to eat.	16%	61%	9%	8%	6%
44.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	28%	45%	11%	12%	4%
45.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	19%	30%	10%	38%	3%
46.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	25%	48%	14%	10%	3%
47.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	19%	49%	15%	12%	5%

48.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	29%	51%	12%	8%	0%
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I. Transportation

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
49.	My child regularly rides the bus.	28%	25%	35%	12%	0%
50.	The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	11%	21%	54%	11%	3%
51.	The length of the student's bus ride is reasonable.	5%	26%	50%	12%	7%
52.	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	3%	38%	35%	11%	13%
53.	The bus stop near my house is safe.	18%	42%	15%	22%	3%
54.	The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	12%	28%	14%	41%	5%
55.	Buses arrive and depart on time.	15%	16%	45%	24%	0%
56.	Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	13%	19%	45%	23%	0%
57.	Buses seldom break down.	5%	34%	38%	22%	0%
58.	Buses are clean.	8%	21%	21%	41%	9%
59.	Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	15%	24%	38%	23%	0%
60.	The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	15%	28%	28%	21%	8%

J. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
61.	Students feel safe and secure at school.	25%	34%	25%	15%	1%
62.	School disturbances are infrequent.	16%	39%	20%	25%	0%
63.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	8%	25%	21%	35%	11%
64.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	4%	25%	14%	25%	32%
65.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	21%	32%	15%	18%	14%
66.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	15%	51%	26%	8%	0%
67.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	32%	45%	12%	11%	0%
68.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	19%	53%	18%	8%	2%
69.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	21%	42%	13%	16%	8%
70.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	15%	45%	14%	20%	6%

K. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
71.	Teachers know how to teach computer science	21%	52%	12%	15%	0%

	and other technology-related courses.					
72.	Computers are new enough to be useful to teach students.	25%	42%	20%	12%	1%
73.	The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	18%	42%	21%	11%	8%
74.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	21%	41%	15%	10%	13%
75.	Students have easy access to the internet.	18%	46%	18%	18%	0%

Appendix E

PARENT SURVEY

VERBATIM COMMENTS

- Volunteerism for parents is not encouraged. When parents want to volunteer, school seems to have excuse why they can't.
- A student is judged by their last name. Younger students - ones with older sisters or brothers who went to Del Valle - are judged by what others did!!!. BE FAIR!
- My family has been a part of the Del Valle ISD for 19 years. I've seen a huge improvement in the elementary level. They have been the best. When it comes to the High School level I am very angered and sad. The teachers do not care or love what they do. They even tell the students how much they hate their jobs. They don't answer the student's questions or especially help when they need it. This is in both Junior High and High School.
- Del Valle ISD has more education teachers than other Austin school district. They also have been around longer than other schools. The educational performance meets high standards. I really do like the transportation area. Buses seldom break down. Bus stops are right near the house so the kids don't have to walk far. Best of all the computer and technology area has taught the kids a lot in so many areas.
- Boy and Girl Scouts have a hard time getting into some of our schools. This should be encouraged. Hornsby, just this year, allowed G.S. to offer Girl Scouts at a rally for open house. They won't let Girl Scouts have meetings. Smith just this year lets these groups in. Scouting shouldn't be having a hard time with this. Scouting is very important.
- Not enough parking at Hill Crest Elementary. Longer lunch hour.
- Schools need to be better equipped for the handicapped - visually impaired or blind students. They need to become independent also. This has to be out there. Let's bring it to our schools.
- I am a parent who also works to make a living. I have gone off to walk my kids to the cafeteria. I drop them off and go to work. The staff and faculty who watch the children are very "RUDE" to the kids. Twice was more than enough for me to see this. The bus is supposed to arrive at 6:30 A.M.. He arrives too early (6:15-6:20) and stays till 6:30 then leaves.
- I feel the educational performance at Del Valle ISD is superior compared to other ISD schools. I also feel there is too much of a time lapse between testing of children that are failing in certain subjects if not all for dyslexia, learning disability or scotopic sensitivity syndrome. I say this because I am a parent of a child

that struggled during 2nd grade even though I worked with him. My son was placed in 3rd grade because I fought tooth and nail with him, i.e. tutoring and summer school. He is in the process of being tested. He's actually 1st on the list but there is a 60-day process before testing is begun. I thank you for allowing me to share by comments. A concerned mother of 3 children.

- One summer, the drop part and time for the summer school bus was changed without us being notified. The result was a 6 year old girl was left out on the street and lost. Luckily, Travis County Sheriffs picked her up and brought her home.
- High School children do not get books. They have one set that stays in the classroom. If they have homework and need a book to do it they are just out of luck.
- My child is only 4 years. I don't know too much about what goes on there at school. She is always happy when we pick her up.
- My child attends Smith, which is an excellent school currently going through rapid growth. The rapid growth is taking a toll on the school's performance. Two years ago, the GT pullout program was done away with. MOST IMPORTANT: My GT child would benefit from this program and it needs to be implemented again. This GT is a great shortcoming on Smith's and Del Valle's part. The computer lab could be improved by putting a certified teacher in there. Library should be more user-friendly (students should be allowed ready access independently). Small group counseling should be offered. My overall rating is excellent with mostly excellent staff.
- I am very concerned with the amount of violence in the schools. Hardly a day goes by that my child doesn't talk about a fight that broke out in school. The bus driver continually cuts down the kids. It's obvious that she doesn't like her job. She needs to quit or be fired. The school could use more structure. We came from the Lockhart ISD and Del Valle could certainly learn from this fine school district.
- Two of my children have graduated from Del Valle High School. One is in Junior High. All of my children are individuals. My first is very conservative and stayed in the Honors and AP classes. She has excelled academically and is now graduating from college. Her Del Valle education prepared her well for college. My second child started out in all honors classes. In high school she decided that she did not want to go to college and dropped all honors against my will but you can only walk a horse to water. She proceeded to slip and slide through Del Valle without effort, always receiving B's and C's. I thought that even though she had dropped to a regular degree plan and passed TAAS on her first she would be prepared to attend ACC if she decided to go to college so I was not worried. I was furious one night when she tried to help her little sister with

7th grade math homework and could not do a very simple algebra problem. Her little sister is bad in math and just takes basic math, not honors. She had just received her Algebra 1 and Geometry credits. How could she not do this simple basic 7th grade problem? On talking to a long time Del Valle honors math teacher that I had known for years she said, " In Del Valle, if you pass TASS, and are not in Honors, the classes are simply babysitting. The kids are just passed through". I was furious and am still furious. My second daughter is currently taking Developmental Algebra at ACC. She did come around and decide to attend college. She realized this in her junior year. She also realized that she couldn't just pop back into honors classes so when she saw her scores on the PSAT she quit Del Valle High School, attend ATLAS (which is a great program) and started college in developmental classes, but a year ahead of her classmates. This was extremely painful for her as she was very active in extracurricular activities at the high school and left her lifelong friends in her graduating class. This would not have happened if the regular teachers had taught their courses properly. This would not have happened if they had given her the grades she deserved instead of sliding her through. My daughter would never fail a class. She was in the "do the bare minimum mode" of her life but she would never have failed. I was unaware because her grades, although not exceptional, were B's and C's which I thought would put her at ACC. I want children in any degree plan to fail if they don't learn the material. This will force children to learn. This will also alert parents that there is a problem. My child is not learning. Many, some disillusioned, teachers (or teachers who just simply lack professionalism) realize that with the large population of low income students, few parents are involved and they act unprofessionally towards students knowing that parents will not back up their children or complain. This attitude, behavior, stops immediately towards children whose parents "show up" at the school. Unfortunately, in our district most parents don't. Therefore a lot of yelling, insults, etc. occurs from teachers towards children, which is only going to cause society more trouble in the future.

- We called to inform elementary school that my child was ill and they just said to send a note. The high school absences were never reported to me. My child was there - maybe tardy or should have had an excused absence for an extra-curricular activity. Those weren't corrected. My child had a sub for an extended time due to maternity leave but I believe the teacher was employed full-time with the district because he has filled in again. I like that idea that the students know him. I think the junior and senior high need work. The elementary are wonderful. I understand that the Cardinal Belles didn't get their own locker room facilities at the

new school. I think they share with the band. This can create problems. Many parents were very angry that when the new Hillcrest opened that their children were already in portables on the first day the school opened. Poor planning - building only what they had money for? We were never told why. Hillcrest is 5 miles closer to our home than Smith was, but the bus ride is still an hour. I would like it to be shorter but we'll deal with it. I was very upset when my elementary children were not home at 5:01 P.M. one day. My concern turned to ANGER when I called transportation and got a rude voice mail. A person should answer that phone whenever busses are rolling. The high school bus arrived before the elementary kids. I spoke with the elementary principal and she helped in the matter. I then called transportation and discussed it with them. My child, who recently graduated, didn't hang around problem kids. I'm not aware of problems personally.

- I am the parent of child who has had to deal with her education being hampered, any of her problems with the Special Education Department. No child in Texas or anywhere else deserves neglect in their safety and educational needs. I am very frustrated with Del Valle ISD and how they (the staff) disrespect a parent's right and the child who is in need.
- I am extremely concerned for the safety of my children at Del Valle High School. I have taken my children out of the school district and have them in another school due to the fact that each of my children have been hurt many times. My oldest was almost killed by another student two years in a row in high school. I will never let my children go back to that school. I have to work overtime to afford another school but I feel their safety is most important.
- Need more G/T programs with mandatory testing and placement in ALL schools within Del Valle district. College preparation and help is minimal to non-existent. Three daughters graduated from Del Valle High School and all have struggled because the level of education they received was not adequate for college-level work.
- My opinion of the Del Valle ISD performance is as follows: Del Valle ISD has displayed several episodes of racial prejudice. Parents are treated like children and ignored often. Teachers are rude and evasive about issues. Administrative personnel could care less (some of them). Parents are not contacted about disciplinary issues. Students are often harassed about certain issues. Del Valle sometimes uses biased approaches to resolve teacher/kid issues. Administrative personnel are inefficient with paper work, forms, etc.
- The Del Valle Elementary School is very evasive about parental issues. Del Valle ISD has proven to me that they are really not concerned with teacher/student confrontations because the student

(no matter what) has always been labeled the bad guy, no matter what!.

- Overall, I think Del Valle ISD does the best that it can with what it has and I am encouraged by that. But I would like to see the district hire more African American, Hispanic and male teachers (not just a P.E. teacher or a coach). Our students need role models, too. Del Valle has a large number of minority students, but its diversity is not represented in its teaching staff. I had a child graduate from Del Valle ISD and he never had one single African American teacher in a classroom setting. I think this is very disturbing to students as well as parents.
- The overall performance is great!! I think that "young" teachers need more hands-on with young kids. They are coming into a field that teaches young kids but do they really know how to react to a child's needs. It is very hard on some of them because they are very young and probably have no kids of their own. Can they really handle an active kid?
- I feel as though there should be some other action taken when a student skips school, other than suspension. What we want is our children in school, not out; often three days because he/she decided to skip a day unexcused.
- Smith Elementary is a great school but the teachers (5th grade in particular) need to lay off the detentions. It is ridiculous and actually funny the reasons they give for detention. I wouldn't even punish kids for some of the silly reasons are given. Maybe we as parents should be allowed to give the teachers a detention every time they give a child detention for some silly reason. The kids don't get scared go to detention anymore. From listening to several, they find it amusing. Something they can think back to one day and laugh at the teachers. I know parents are laughing at them as well.
- I am very pleased with the bus driver my children have at this time. The bus driver is a very strict and friendly person. The teachers are excellent. They give 100%. They go way beyond their duties. My children are so lucky to be attending Smith. Thank you so much for giving my children your all. Keep up the good work. We as parents sometimes forget to tell everyone who helps our children out. Thanks.
- More articulation between schools as well as more curriculum alignment. The school district has made some good starts on programs but they need to be expanded and improved. Teachers need to be a part of the decision-making process as well as parents --not all administration.
- Del Valle substitute teachers in elementary are not even high school grads, let alone college grads. They have teachers tutoring math that aren't even qualified.

- It's not so much about the educational performance I'm worried about. I'm worried about the lack of supervision of the children. Also, the lack of discipline. The things that have been happening at the High School and the Junior High. I have kids in 3 different schools in the Del Valle ISD. The high school's lack of supervision in the cafeteria has amounted to chaotic food fights in which full 20-ounce cokes were being thrown around and also the sexual harassment of students versus student.
- Del Valle ISD seems to work hard on getting students to graduate from high school forgetting that there are students that are headed for college. These are students that would like to attend Ivy League colleges but are poorly prepared to compete with schools with strong academic background. The school district should identify those students that are college bound and try harder to offer those advanced classes that they will need. Not all seniors want to end up in ACC. It would be an honor for the school district to have a good number of students that are admitted to top colleges.
- For the most part, you can receive a good education at Del Valle ISD. It requires a lot of work on the part of the student, parent and teachers. I will say that teachers are easy to talk to about concerns and problems concerning students. I am disturbed by the large turnover in personnel from year to year. I think we need to find out why this happens. I am also concerned with the discipline problems on campus. We have a small group of students who are constantly in trouble and disrupting the campus. We obviously cannot serve them and they need to be placed elsewhere. Right now we have classes for Special Education, Regular Students and Gifted Students. I would like to see more classes set aside for those students who fall between the regular student and the gifted student.
- I feel the TAAS program has taken priority over teaching the real things - mostly what is being taught is how to take and pass the TAAS test. Children can pass (with no problem) a TAAS test, but talk basic grammar; English - they haven't a clue!! Too much emphasis on passing the TAAS test is ruining our children's' education. This is not learning. The computerized reading program has replaced the standard book report. This is not good. The questions they ask do not reflect whether the child has read the book. A book report does, however. It also promotes writing reports. Too much computerizing and technology takes away from the basic education. Need to get back to the basics.
- School needs more fair tactics when dealing with students.
- Overall, the school is okay.
- I feel the district is meeting the needs of my children. My children have been fortunate enough to have teachers that challenge them. They are both in the G.T. Program. My high school student is

involved in band and athletics. I attend all of his games and performances and it is sad that not more parent support their children.

- Del Valle is an excellent district but some of the teachers are so rude and cruel they make the children act out. Sometimes it seems safe and then again one of the bad students make it unsafe QUICKLY. I have not heard or noticed problems at the High School but many at the Junior High regarding certified teachers and students., The superintendent is AWESOME and CARING. There are many changes at the Junior High so in time hopefully it gets better.
- I'm not sure how helpful I will be as we've only been in Del Valle ISD for 3 months. But I can tell you that in those 3 months I am more impressed with our Del Valle ISD school (Hornsby) than I ever was with our AISD school. The enforcement of parent I.D. tags general security issues, parent sign out at dismissal and especially the on-site nurse. The staff has been friendly and helpful and my kids love their teachers. Del Valle ISD is wonderful. Computers and T.V. in every room and mandatory A.R. program (this was voluntary at AISD).
- I filled this paper out as the mother of both a Popham student and a Junior High student. I hope my answers were clear. While our district needs improvement in some areas it excels in others.
- The district has improved greatly over the last few years. Horizon GT program is wonderful with an outstanding amount of high school teachers. New schools are well planned and attractive.
- I personally think the elementary schools are pretty good. I do have a problem with junior high and high schools. The fighting that goes on is scary. I fear for my children's' safety. I do not think the punishment is severe enough. I should rephrase that - the punishment is probably okay but it's not enforced the way it should be. Also, I have personally called the school and reported drugs that my kids have told me about and nothing has been done because a few days later my child came home and told me more stories (nightmares).
- I feel my school is understaffed. Even though we're small, we still need those extra bodies. The office staff can be very unfriendly either on the phone or in person. I feel you should be professional no matter who you are speaking to. Cafeteria is not organized well and should be worked on.
- The schools are overcrowded and the lunch situation needs to be addressed at the junior high. The scheduling for the seniors was ridiculous and many very unhappy parents and students were, because of the classes some kids could not get. Mass chaos. Special Education support lacking at High School. Career counseling is invisible.

- The school bus stop is too far for young ones to work, especially in winter. A mother in the area attempted for some time to have this remedied, only to be given the run-around. To be fair, the county needs to place a cul-de-sac at the end of the street, but it's been a problem since I was a kid. Why can't the county and the district do something? I'm very disappointed with the Gifted and Talented program and have talked with the teachers and principal about it. They admitted they have no actual program in place except placing them with teachers who have had G.T. training. I have witnessed poor grammar displayed by teachers and staff (i.e., "We wear red on Friday's" on a computer print-out; "No put-downs: Your stupid, Your ugly..." on a poster in a classroom. When I pointed out to the principal that there shouldn't be an apostrophe in "Friday's" he argued with me then angrily walked around tearing them off the walls.
- It seems to me that students at Del Valle are punished until proven innocent. Treated as if they are doing time in prison. They are not treated as individuals and taught as such but are punished if they do not fit into the school's idea of what is normal childhood behavior. They are not encouraged to enjoy a learning experience. Instead, they are tossed to the dogs if they don't fit into the school's idea of what a child/student is. If I could do one thing for my son I would move from this district and get him into a school where his needs would be met. It breaks my heart every day that I cannot.
- The bus system needs a lot of improvement and more drivers as we live on Highway 183 South. Bus #2 is usually late and I end up having to drive my kids to school. They never get there in time to eat breakfast and they're usually to 1st class. They need to figure something else out there. Bringing them home is usually about 6:00 P.M. to 6:15 P.M. so I usually, more often than not, pick them up from school myself. Also, the cafeteria needs more serving lines and check-out counters so the kids don't have to rush eating.
- Elementary school is so TAAS oriented that K-2 grades are not given the same services (i.e.: no tutors) as the 3rd-6th. If TAAS is so important, the time to give help is as early as K-2 so ALL students can be successful when test (TAAS) time comes.
- I only have one chief complaint. This is with the pick up of my children. I've tried to get it changed with no success.
- Great district - awesome teachers.
- All schools need to notify parents of failing grades before the end of semester or report card time. My son was failing all year last year and they called me 2 weeks before school let out to let me know. They could have prevented it and tried to help him prior to the end of school. I think that this is a good school but with a lot of problems. I think I would feel safer if the school day was shorter by one hour or one and one half hours because there are a lot of

gangs in the school. This is only my opinion but I think it counts. I would feel safer if the school was shorter. I also say if the day is shorter it would save a lot of money this school year.

- We have students enrolled at Atlas who are trying to graduate but are not allowed to go to Del Valle school functions. We are trying to keep a low drop-out rate but yet the ones that are having the hardest time graduating are being punished. If some of these kids have never been in trouble except for the fact that they lost credits should not be barred from school functions. I truly believe that some of these children will just give up because they are treated differently.
- I had lunch with my son today. The carrots and celery were brown and dry. Another time the oranges were dry. Usually the entrees look good but fruits and vegetables look bad. Classes are too big. Some classes hold 22 students or more. The junior high is overcrowded - 30 students in classes. Need to hire more teachers to reduce class size. According to other parents with high school children, the teachers have very low expectations of the students. Students need to be told that they can still attend college even if their grades aren't so good. High educational expectations need to be set for every student no matter what their economic status is.
- The Dyslexia program needs work. Some of the math and reading classes need a little work. Also, some of the classes need more teaching skills with helping children with dyslexia. The children need more time allowance on subjects. Special needs on assignments and some oral tests when possible. The Special Education and Dyslexia programs needs for our children must be met. As for safety, our school buses need to be equipped with seat belt restraints for their safety on the school bus. My children have expressed their concerns for their safety while traveling to and from school in the A.M. and P.M. hours.
- The new high school is awesome. I love the Del Valle school district.
- The bus leaves the children on the other side of the apartments. There have been 2 children almost run over. Children need more time to eat and people to make sure they eat. Try to supervise the children in the lunch line. The smaller children are being left behind by the bigger kids.
- The teaching at Popham Elementary is very good. The parking arrangement is terrible. There are 10 visitor parking spaces and they are always full morning and afternoon. A lot of parents, including myself, take the younger kids to school. We have to park out on the street. That is very annoying to a lot of people who are complaining about this parking situation.
- Bus transportation is a BIG concern. I wish something in the school budget could be done to have a bus drive to drive only, and

a front monitor and a rear monitor for all buses. The every other buses have a camera monitor is not good enough. It would be great to have a camera in every bus for the safety of the children as well as the drivers and monitors.

- The classes in Del Valle High School are not good. They don't let the students ask for the classes that they want to study. They always say that they are all full. Another thing about the school is the parking space. The visitor parking space is always full with the cars of the people who work in the school. The parents who pick up kids from school have to park in front of the houses or we have to park in the fire lanes.
- Great school district. I only wish they would communicate attendance or discipline problems with parents in a more timely manner.
- As a child, I attended the Del Valle ISD school and I feel they are great schools for my children to attend. I have two children in Baty Elementary and they are happy at that school. The only problem there is at that school is that the children in Pre-K and Kindergarten don't get enough time to eat their lunch. I think it is important that the children get enough time to eat in order to be able to concentrate in class and learn.
- My son has used the Dyslexia Program. It seemed to be slow, but did work. Our taxes have gone out of sight due to the City of Austin moving the airport to our district and not paying enough money to replace the existing schools.
- I think that the educational performance is great because in the past few years Del Valle has been getting high TAAS scores.
- I have checked several "no opinions" mainly because my children are elementary age and we have not had to use these services yet. I do not feel comfortable about answering questions with the idea that it pertains to the whole district. To be honest, I have no clue what goes on at the other schools. I have answered these questions based on Hillcrest Elementary. I am very pleased with our new superintendent. I do feel it will take time to fix past problems and mistakes. I know for a fact that he is very approachable and that is very comforting. My biggest complaint is the lack of opportunities for gifted and talented in the elementary schools. I feel strongly that my children are just as much "at-risk" as a learning disabled child, but the deciding factor is funding. This is not right and I have heard this about other districts as well. Texas needs to step up and quit worrying about "offending" people and group kids together so that ALL kids have the best opportunity to learn. I feel Hillcrest has tried very hard to correct some of these problems but I know they are limited (staff, room and funding). On a better note, as my child nears Junior High age I have been hearing lots of good things about the programs they offer. Del Valle offers a fantastic

summer school program for elementary aged kids. It is wonderful. Hillcrest has an excellent library program. Both of my kids enjoy reading (thank goodness) and since moving to Hillcrest that interest has definitely been encouraged. Also, I strongly disagree that the drop off area at our school is safe. In fact, I would call it a nightmare. It is really crowded with too many people trying to do too many things at once. Hillcrest has implemented a radio program that has helped - but parents are still parking in the pick-up area and this causes crowding and confusion. This could use some work. Finally, with the addition of all new schools, I along with many others, were disappointed with the many portables. I know they are working with an amazing growth rate but never the less it is disappointing. Also, with these beautiful new schools I am very disappointed with the vandalism problems that we have. As someone who has been in this district my entire life, I am saddened that the kids don't know how long we have needed new schools and take pride in them by respecting the properties. Thanks for allowing me to voice my opinion.