

# Katy Independent School District

# Review of the CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Conducted by Resources for Learning, LLC for the Legislative Budget Board

February 2009



#### LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD

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February 11,2009

Mr. Alton Frailey
Superintendent
Katy Independent School District

Dear Mr. Frailey:

The attached report reviews the management and performance of the Katy Independent School District's (KISD) curriculum management system.

The report's recommendations will help Katy ISD improve its overall performance as it provides services to district students and staff. The report also highlights model practices and programs being provided by KISD's curriculum management system.

The Legislative Budget Board engaged Resources for Learning, LLC, to conduct and produce this review, with LBB staff working in a contract oversight role.

The report is available on the LBB website at http://www.lbb.state.tx.us.

Respectfully submitted,

Jøhn O'Brien

Director

Legislative Budget Board

cc: Mr. Eric M. Duhon

Mr. Joe M. Adarns

Ms. Rebecca Fox

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#### KATY ISD

#### A. SITE HISTORY

This section provides contextual information about the district, including recent trends in student demographics and performance and a general comparison of property wealth with the state. This information is based on Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) reports and interview data. Historical information about curriculum use in the district and the impetus and processes for adopting the current curriculum were gathered through interviews, focus groups, and a review of relevant documents.

#### 1. STARTING POINTS

Katy Independent School District (KISD) is located in the suburban city of Katy, approximately 30 miles west of Houston. The district comprises 47 campuses, including 27 elementary schools, 10 junior high schools, six high schools, and four alternative or transitional schools. KISD is growing at a fast pace due to the westward expansion of the Houston metropolitan area. Student enrollment has increased over 30 percent since 2003–04, with growth among the African American,

Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, economically disadvantaged, and limited English proficient (LEP) student groups. White student enrollment declined approximately 12 percent over this same period. KISD systematically holds bond elections to build new schools for the nearly 3,000 new students it serves each year. A new high school is slated to open in 2010. **Exhibit 1** provides KISD enrollment and demographic data for the period from 2003–04 through 2007–08.

This report uses district performance indicators under the federal and state accountability systems. Under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), federal accountability provisions that formerly applied only to districts and campuses receiving Title I, Part A funds now apply to all districts and campuses. All public school districts, campuses, and the state are evaluated annually for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). In terms of federal accountability standards, 42 campuses in KISD *Met AYP* in 2007. One campus, Katy High School, *Missed AYP* due to mathematics performance. The remaining campuses were *Not Rated*.

EXHIBIT 1
KISD ENROLLMENT AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE
2003-04 THROUGH 2007-08

SCHOOL	TOTAL	STUDENT GROUPS†											
YEAR	STUDENTS	AA	Н	W	NA	A/PI	ED	LEP					
2007–08	54,402	9.6%	30.0%	51.0%	0.2%	9.7%	25.0%	13.2%					
2006-07	50,725	9.3%	28.0%	53.4%	0.2%	9.0%	24.3%	12.1%					
2005-06	47,808	9.2%	25.7%	56.8%	0.2%	8.2%	23.4%	11.3%					
2004-05	44,212	7.5%	23.8%	60.6%	0.2%	8.0%	20.3%	10.6%					
2003-04	41,690	6.7%	22.1%	63.5%	0.2%	7.5%	17.3%	9.6%					

†Indicates AA = African American; H = Hispanic; W = White; NA = Native American; A/PI = Asian/Pacific Islander; ED = Economically Disadvantaged; LEP = Limited English Proficient

Source: Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) District Reports, 2003–04 through 2006–07; Texas Education Agency, Student Enrollment and Standard Reports and Core Products, 2007–08.

Under the Texas Accountability Rating System, KISD was rated *Academically Acceptable* in 2006–07, *Recognized* in 2005–06, and *Academically Acceptable* in both 2004–05 and 2003–04. In 2006–07, of the 43 nonalternative campuses in KISD, 13 campuses were rated *Exemplary*, 19 campuses were rated *Recognized*, and 11 campuses were rated *Academically Acceptable*.

The performance indicators of particular interest for this report are results on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). TAKS performance data are reported in AEIS by grade, by subject, and by all grades tested and are disaggregated by student groups: ethnicity, gender, special education, economically disadvantaged status, LEP status, and at-risk status.

**Exhibits 2 through 5** provide data on state and KISD student performance on TAKS from 2004–05 through 2006–07.

In mathematics, district performance improved from 2004–05 through 2006–07 and was consistently higher than the state average. Performance for all student groups remained stable or improved over the three-year period with the exception of Native American students, who constitute 0.2 percent of all students and saw a

slight decrease in performance from 2005–06 to 2006–07. In a comparison of state and district averages among student groups, all student groups performed above their state peers. (See **Exhibit 2**)

From 2004–05 through 2006–07, district performance in science improved or saw a slight decrease, remaining above the state average for the three-year period. In a comparison of state and district averages among student groups, all student groups performed above their state peers during this period. (See **Exhibit 3**)

**Exhibit 4** shows district performance in English language arts and reading (ELA/reading) improved from 2004–05 through 2006–07 and was above the state average. All student groups performed above their state peers and showed either stable or improved performance over the three-year period.

In social studies, district performance was stable and higher than the state average from 2004–05 through 2006–07. Additionally, during this three-year period all student groups performed above their state peers. (See **Exhibit 5**)

EXHIBIT 2
TAKS PERFORMANCE HISTORY—MATHEMATICS
STATE AND KISD AVERAGES
2004-05 THROUGH 2006-07

	AVE	RAGES	STUDENT GROUP† COMPARISONS STATE AND DISTRICT AVERAGES													
SCHOOL			А	AA H				W NA		A/PI		ED		LEP		
YEAR	STATE	DISTRICT	S	D	S	D	S	D	S	D	S	D	S	D	S	D
2006–07	77%	88%	64%	76%	71%	81%	87%	92%	79%	89%	93%	96%	69%	77%	62%	70%
2005–06	75%	87%	61%	74%	68%	77%	86%	92%	79%	90%	92%	96%	66%	74%	58%	64%
2004–05	72%	86%	57%	71%	64%	74%	84%	90%	76%	81%	90%	95%	62%	71%	54%	62%

†Indicates AA = African American; H = Hispanic; W = White; NA = Native American; A/PI = Asian/Pacific Islander; ED = Economically Disadvantaged; LEP = Limited English Proficient

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS District and State Reports, 2004-05 through 2006-07.

## EXHIBIT 3 TAKS PERFORMANCE HISTORY—SCIENCE STATE AND KISD AVERAGES 2004-05 THROUGH 2006-07

	AVE	RAGES		STUDENT GROUP† COMPARISONS STATE AND DISTRICT AVERAGES												
SCHOOL			А	Α	н		W		NA		A/PI		ED		LEP	
YEAR	STATE	DISTRICT	S	D	S	D	S	D	S	D	S	D	S	D	S	D
2006–07	71%	84%	56%	69%	61%	70%	85%	90%	77%	80%	88%	92%	60%	66%	39%	47%
2005-06	70%	85%	54%	68%	59%	69%	85%	91%	79%	91%	86%	91%	58%	66%	35%	46%
2004–05	66%	81%	49%	64%	53%	61%	81%	88%	73%	90%	83%	89%	51%	56%	28%	31%

†Indicates AA = African American; H = Hispanic; W = White; NA = Native American; A/PI = Asian/Pacific Islander; ED = Economically Disadvantaged; LEP = Limited English Proficient

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS District and State Reports, 2004-05 through 2006-07.

## EXHIBIT 4 TAKS PERFORMANCE HISTORY—ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/READING STATE AND KISD AVERAGES 2004-05 THROUGH 2006-07

	AVE	RAGES								•	PARISO VERAG					
SCHOOL			А	AA		1	W		NA		A/PI		ED		LEP	
YEAR	STATE	DISTRICT	S	D	S	D	S	D	S	D	S	D	S	D	S	D
2006–07	89%	95%	84%	90%	84%	90%	95%	97%	91%	98%	95%	98%	83%	88%	67%	76%
2005–06	87%	94%	82%	90%	82%	88%	94%	96%	90%	98%	94%	97%	81%	86%	63%	70%
2004–05	83%	91%	76%	86%	77%	84%	91%	94%	87%	91%	92%	94%	76%	81%	58%	66%

†Indicates AA = African American; H = Hispanic; W = White; NA = Native American; A/PI = Asian/Pacific Islander; ED = Economically Disadvantaged; LEP = Limited English Proficient

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS District and State Reports, 2004-05 through 2006-07.

## EXHIBIT 5 TAKS PERFORMANCE HISTORY—SOCIAL STUDIES STATE AND KISD AVERAGES 2004-05 THROUGH 2006-07

	STUDENT GROUP† COMPARISONS AVERAGES STATE AND DISTRICT AVERAGES															
SCHOOL			Α	Α	ŀ	+	V	W NA			A/PI		ED		LEP	
YEAR	STATE	DISTRICT	S	D	S	D	S	D	S	D	S	D	S	D	S	D
2006–07	89%	95%	84%	89%	84%	89%	95%	97%	93%	95%	96%	98%	83%	87%	53%	67%
2005–06	87%	95%	81%	91%	80%	88%	94%	97%	91%	>99%	95%	97%	79%	86%	49%	62%
2004–05	88%	95%	82%	90%	82%	88%	94%	97%	92%	94%	95%	97%	80%	85%	52%	62%

†Indicates AA = African American; H = Hispanic; W = White; NA = Native American; A/PI = Asian/Pacific Islander; ED = Economically Disadvantaged; LEP = Limited English Proficient

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS District and State Reports, 2004-05 through 2006-07.

Across the four core subject areas, district performance generally remained stable or improved in all areas. In a comparison of state and district averages among student groups, KISD students generally performed above their state peers across all subject areas.

To provide a measure of school district property value, the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts (Comptroller) conducts a study each year that uniformly evaluates the property values within school district boundaries. Locally assessed values may vary from the Comptroller's study values. The values certified by the Comptroller's Property Tax Division are standardized in that they are deemed to be comparable across the state. Note that the values shown are final for tax year 2006. This is not the property value used for school funding calculations. Using the Value per Student measure from AEIS reports provides one definition of "wealth." This calculation refers to school district property value, or Standardized Local Tax Base, divided by the total number of students. At the state level, the per-pupil amount is created by dividing by the total number of students in districts with property value. Some districts do not have property value; their students are not included. For KISD, the standardized local tax base per-pupil value is \$269,230 compared to the state per-pupil value of \$305,208.

#### 2. CURRICULUM HISTORY

Katy ISD relied on an internally developed curriculum in each of the core subject areas in the early 1990s. Curriculum documents were organized in binders for each subject with occasional revisions made to the material. While scope and sequence documents existed, district staff and administrators indicated that these were superficially aligned and lacked sufficient depth

and utility. The curriculum also lacked common assessments, multiple instructional strategies, and sample lesson plans.

## 3. IMPETUS FOR CHANGE/DATA-DRIVEN ADOPTION AND DEVELOPMENT

With the arrival of the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) in KISD in 1998–99, the district's curriculum became decentralized, in that each school had great latitude in the implementation of the overall curriculum framework adopted districtwide. At the same time, the State Board of Education (SBOE) had changed its approach to a standards based system with the adoption of statewide learning standards, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

In addition to the adoption of statewide learning standards, the SBOE also adopted a new statewide assessment, the TAKS, for which the TEKS provided the framework. KISD could no longer rely on its decentralized approach to delivering its curriculum as a result of the changes made at the state level. The CAO's training and experience with the curriculum management audit process was then implemented in order to improve the quality of KISD schools.

During the CAO's first year, district needs were evaluated and support was built for the vision of an integrated online curriculum management system that would include the capability for teacher-developed curriculum and collaboration.

To begin this effort, the CAO trained all curriculum staff in curriculum auditing processes and led the district in developing an internal process to vertically and horizontally align core curricula and create a standardized scope and sequence to be implemented by each school in the district. Each KISD core curriculum teacher was issued a

curriculum binder containing the relevant subject area scope and sequence guidelines and resources for lesson development. According to teaching staff, the binders were cumbersome and difficult to manage but were an improvement over the previous curriculum.

As part of this curriculum effort, the district also created Curriculum Specialist positions in the core subject areas and promoted master teachers within the district to these positions. Staff said the district viewed the expertise of master teachers as a critical component in developing a deeper, more responsive curriculum. In addition, curriculum teams were created at each campus to ensure uniform implementation. Campus administrators were trained in the curriculum management process and conducted frequent walkthroughs to assess delivery and monitor implementation.

The decision to move to an automated curriculum system was influenced by the following factors: the CAO's prior work with an automated curriculum management system; the difficulty of ensuring consistency in the application of the curriculum without automation in a district of KISD's size; limited central office resources to ensure campus-to-campus consistency; and the ease in improving curriculum and providing resources to all teachers.

In 2001, the district purchased Abacus curriculum management software; however, KISD did not implement the system, preferring to develop one customized to the specific needs of the district. The district established a steering committee to design standards for a customized curriculum management system that involved close collaboration with administrators and teachers.

## B. DESCRIPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF CURRICULUM

This section describes the curriculum and curriculum management system implemented in the district, the implementation plan and process, and staff reactions to implementation. Costs, technical assistance, and additional resources used in the district are also described. Data was collected from district documents, a review of curriculum documents, interviews, and focus groups.

## 1. DEVELOPMENT OF CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

KISD utilizes a proprietary curriculum management system called Centralized Management of Automated Curriculum (CMAC). Internal development of the system was based on foundational principles adapted from the research of Dr. Fenwick English, Dr. Robert Marzano, and Dr. Rick DuFour, among others. Additionally, KISD's curriculum development plan is aligned with the auditing methodology developed by Dr. Fenwick English. Each Curriculum Specialist and all central office administrators have received training in standardized curriculum auditing procedures to ensure that a common language and philosophy are integrated into curriculum development.

The common language approach, a Dr. Robert Marzano strategy, influenced the creation of common vocabularies at each grade level in each core subject across the district. This strategy is essential for facilitating the district's "systems-thinking" model which district staff described repeatedly during onsite work. A common language provides shared definitions of concepts; staff reported the implementation of this approach changed the dialogue across the

district. The instructional language is consistent across the district, across grade levels, and across subject areas. While this work is based on the research of Dr. Robert Marzano, the language was developed by the district. For example, Structure and Strategy (SAS) connected through an activity provides teachers with a model to guide lesson planning. Another example is the training required for all new teachers, Project Creating Independence through Student Owned Strategies (Project CRISS), which is a metacognition model for student learning. Based on research by Dr. Rick DuFour, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) also were implemented to provide a system for communication, collaboration, and professional development to support curriculum implementation and an environment of continuous improvement.

Staff members characterize the KISD school board and district administration as forward thinking in their approach to curriculum development. Respect for teachers as content experts is at the foundation of KISD's approach to curriculum development. Early in the curriculum development process, teachers were involved in developing the scope and sequence and common assessments. Currently, the curriculum is developed and revised by an in-house staff of 15 Curriculum Specialists: 12 content area staff and 3 staffers that manage the automated curriculum system. Master teachers promoted to Curriculum Specialists write and revise the curriculum based on ongoing analysis of student performance data and teacher feedback. Each year, these staff members conduct significant student data analysis and content review to make sure all components are aligned and are meeting the current needs of KISD students.

Also built into curriculum development and review is ongoing professional development. The goal of the professional development is to provide a clear, consistent, districtwide emphasis for what staff should focus on each year. In 2002–03, the district implemented Leaders of Learners (LOL) group meetings. LOL is a PLC of educators who focus on improving instructional practices through collaboration, communication, and continual learning. The LOL mission is to build leaders who will transform teaching and learning to ensure that all of KISD's students achieve at the highest levels.

LOL meetings bring together 500 teacher leaders and administrators from every campus across KISD for six sessions, a total of three days, spread out over the school year. Session agendas include an address by the CAO, with supporting activities led by Executive Directors for Elementary and Secondary Instruction. LOL sessions have covered diverse topics such as curriculum and assessment, structures and strategies, planning for learning, engaging students, PLCs, and differentiation, and were complemented by the use of research material.

## 2. DESCRIPTION OF CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

CMAC includes three components: Katy Management System (KMS), Katy Management of Automated Curriculum (KMAC), and Administrative Connection (ADCON).

KMS is the online structure that houses all KISD-developed curriculum. It contains the PreK–12 vertical alignment continuum detailing where knowledge and skills are introduced and reinforced for the core subjects with support elements for elective courses and special programs. Curriculum Specialists input detailed curricular objectives,

assign them to the appropriate six weeks, and group them according to concept. They also make suggestions as to the amount of time that should be spent on concepts and include clarifiers (sample assessment items), instructional resources and strategies, and links to the TEKS and TAKS objectives. This portion of the system is the basis for the curriculum that teachers use to develop lessons.

KMAC, the automated curricular component, has been the foundation of all educational activities in KISD since its implementation in 2002–03. The core of the curriculum is its vertical alignment. The district analyzed what knowledge students needed in order to ensure success, not only on TAKS but for postsecondary learning options as well. The curricular alignment was designed based on these outcomes and built from the highest grade level down to ensure the curriculum minimized gaps and repetition in content. The TEKS are the learning standards which guide the curriculum; KMAC provides specificity to the TEKS and aligns with SAT, ACT, and national standards. TEKS student expectations and TAKS objectives are coordinated so that a teacher can see at a glance whether objectives have been incorporated into the lesson plan. Curriculum development is based on thorough analysis of disaggregated student performance data. Results of these analyses drive curriculum development and review.

Teachers access the curriculum and plan lessons through the KMAC portal. Teachers can use KMAC functions to search by content area, grade level, course, six weeks, or key word when designing lessons. KMAC features allow staff to build lessons based on a common curriculum. When planning lessons, teachers have access to all TEKS and TAKS correlatives to the district's

objectives. Also available in KMAC are a number of resources, strategies, and formative and summative assessments which are aligned to district objectives. Web links also provide additional resources. KMAC is accessible through a menu environment where individual teachers select detailed and specific lesson objectives, aligned TEKS and TAKS, and additional resources to support lesson delivery. Teachers have the option to share lesson plans with peers on campus or across the district, and are also able to import lesson plans from previous years. In addition, teachers can access curriculum documents and run daily or weekly lesson plan reports detailing what content will be taught and what resources will be required in a given period. Teachers report that their planning time has been reduced from 30 minutes per lesson to 30 minutes per week with the introduction of KMAC.

Moreover, KMAC provides a structure that communicates non-negotiable teaching learning objectives with flexibility and resources for teacher choice. All teachers in the district are expected to teach the KMAC curriculum, including the specified objectives for each grade level and content area, sequencing of content, and pacing of coverage. Teachers said they have the freedom to use additional resources and strategies but must cover all of the objectives in KMAC. KMAC also has a master list of materials and resources, such as textbooks or novels that are approved for each grade level, but contains additional resources and strategies for delivery of curriculum. Campus lead teachers are involved in the decision-making process of developing materials lists and relaying the information back to the campuses.

The third component of CMAC, the ADCON portal, allows administrators to access a reporting system for review of lesson plans, as well as create

teacher, departmental, or school reports. Through ADCON, administrators can view lesson plans in real time and identify the top 10 resources, strategies, structures, and assessments used by teachers, departments, or campuses. Administrators also have the capability of emailing teachers from any screen to provide formative feedback about content and instructional choices.

In addition to the three main components of CMAC, a cornerstone of the Katy ISD curriculum is common assessments or the Core Objective Tests (COTs), which are utilized in math, science, and social studies. ELA does not use COTs; instead, the ELA Curriculum Specialists provide district writing lessons, model writing samples, and methods for scoring the lessons. COTs are created based on the TAKS test and are used to measure student progress through the district's scope and sequence. The Curriculum Specialists, often with input and review by teachers, write the COTs. While teachers and PLCs have the ability to add more questions, at a minimum the district-provided 10 questions are required to be used.

In summary, KISD has developed an automated and systematic approach to managing learning outcomes for students through a standardized curriculum supported by a common language, common assessments, professional development, and management tools for teachers and administrators.

**Exhibit 6** summarizes the status of KISD's curriculum components. For the purposes of this review, only specific elements of curriculum support in the four core areas for grades 2, 4, 7, and 11 were analyzed. Analyses indicated that a curriculum management system, scope and sequence documents, and lesson plans are available through CMAC. These components, which address all grade levels and subject areas reviewed for this report, are aligned with the TEKS and TAKS and are regularly updated.

#### 3. DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTATION

KMAC was first implemented in 2002–03. Due to initial difficulties with the technical design of the infrastructure which caused the system to collapse, the district chose to phase in implementation of

EXHIBIT 6
STATUS OF KISD CURRICULUM COMPONENTS
APRIL 2008

CURRICULUM SUPPORTS	IN PLACE	TEKS ALIGNED	TAKS ALIGNED	GRADE LEVELS	SUBJECT AREA*	UPDATE
Curriculum	√Yes	√Yes	√Yes	√2	✓M ✓R ✓S ✓SS	√Yes
System	No	No	No	√4	✓M ✓R ✓S ✓SS	No
•				√7	✓M ✓E ✓S ✓SS	
	{CMAC}			√HS	✓M ✓E ✓S ✓SS	{ongoing}
Scope and	√Yes	√Yes	√Yes	√2	✓M ✓R ✓S ✓SS	√Yes
Sequence	No	No	No	√4	✓M ✓R ✓S ✓SS	No
•				√7	✓M ✓E ✓S ✓SS	
	{KMAC}			√HS	✓M ✓E ✓S ✓SS	{ongoing}
Lesson Plans	√Yes	√Yes	√Yes	√2	✓M ✓R ✓S ✓SS	√Yes
	No	No	No	√4	✓M ✓R ✓S ✓SS	No
				√7	✓M ✓E ✓S ✓SS	
	{KMAC}			√HS	✓M ✓E ✓S ✓SS	{ongoing}

<sup>\*</sup>M = Mathematics, R = Reading, E = English Language Arts, S = Science, SS = Social Studies Source: KISD Proprietary Curriculum Documents, April 2008.

the system. All schools were required to implement each component, but principals had some latitude in the methods of implementation. This phase-in was in recognition of the amount of teacher training necessary on two levels: first, it required teachers to move from the decentralized, non-automated approach to a centralized, automated approach based on the state learning standards. Second, it required a shift in the teaching process by teachers from "planning to teach" to "planning to learn." KMAC was the vehicle to enable this shift to occur.

Initial implementation of the system met resistance from KISD teaching staff for several reasons. First, after the initial technological difficulties in rolling out KMAC, teachers were wary that the system would continue to collapse, creating more work and requiring additional time. Second, staff reported that transitioning to the KMAC system required a major paradigm shift for all staff to use a consistent curriculum and for it to be electronically housed.

Staff described how these initial challenges were overcome through patience and persistence. District administration ensured that campus staff were heavily involved in the development of the curriculum content through hours of content team meetings, vertical team meetings, and meetings with curriculum writers. Additionally, the district provided campus staff opportunities to offer online feedback on the functionality of the new system. District staff reported that during the first semester of implementation, the system received 600 feedback hits. Modifications were made to the system based on this feedback. Now, several years later, feedback hits are minimal. Another strategy to increase teacher buy-in to the new system was to provide sufficient training. District teachers received an average of 100 hours in training for the new online system and curriculum.

In addition, Katy's approach to implementation of the online curriculum management system included piloting system components prior to full implementation. Having learned from previous technological difficulties with the system, KISD piloted the new system and continues to pilot new strategies and programs as they are added across the district. Piloting allows for improved programming, increased staff confidence, and increased support for new programs. KISD staff understands the district will not ask them to implement something that is not sound. For example, one 2007–08 pilot program was a high school PLC creating lessons using SMART Boards.

Once the technological infrastructure was stable, the district required implementation of KMAC districtwide, providing a clear message to staff that this was the direction the district was headed. District staff reported during onsite work that teacher implementation is near 100 percent, stating that while some teachers use the system only because they are required to, the majority of teachers use it because of its benefits. Staff reported that the thorough and detailed TEKS/TAKS alignment and increased efficiency provided by the system impressed and convinced most teachers of its usefulness. The system was reported to be especially beneficial for new teachers. Additional benefits of the system include enhanced communication between teachers and administrators, consistency of content and pacing which reduces curriculum gaps for mobile students, and the provision of a common language and set of strategies that

facilitate teacher collaboration and student learning districtwide.

At the campus level, curriculum team leaders generally meet departmentally at least once per week to monitor scope and sequence implementation and collaboratively develop lesson plans based on student needs as identified by performance data analysis. In many grade levels and departments, one person from the meeting takes notes on a particular subject area, finalizes the lesson, and posts it in KMAC for use by the campus team. Campus teams also have the option of sharing the lesson with all other teachers in the district. According to Curriculum Specialists and lead teachers, this method improves consistency across the campus and throughout the district and promotes sharing of ideas and higher-level thinking among faculty.

Analysis of student performance data drives curriculum modification. A districtwide horizontal curriculum team meets two to three times per year, and district vertical teams meet one to two times per year. During these meetings, teachers review districtwide student performance data to identify gaps or areas of weakness. If a TEKS concept is considered vague, then clarifiers (sample assessment items) are added in to KMAC by Curriculum Specialists to help support understanding of the concept. Every six weeks, a common assessment is administered throughout the district. The assessment data is collected and disaggregated at the central office level, and feedback is provided to the teachers and campus administrators almost instantaneously to facilitate modifications to the curriculum or to the delivery process. Centralizing the analysis and reporting of student data eliminates this task from teachers' responsibilities.

**Exhibit** 7 provides a timeline summarizing major events in the KISD process of curriculum development and implementation. The timeline spans 10 years from 1998 to 2008.

## 4. CONTRACTED SERVICES FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT/DELIVERY

Most curriculum-related services are developed and delivered internally in KISD. However, the district has recently established a partnership with Regional Education Service Center IV (Region 4) for KISD staff access through the CMAC system to Region 4's Comprehensive Curriculum Assessment Professional Development (CCAP) tool. This component provides additional student data management and assessment software for use by KISD staff, allowing teachers another avenue for creating tests linked to state standards or school-created material. CCAP provides flexible data visualization by teacher, student, district, campus, subgroups, or custom fields. In addition, student data can be stored for multiple years, allowing for longitudinal data analysis of teaching and learning.

KISD also contracts with Region 4 for district professional development, such as training in the 5E Model of Instruction (Engagement, Exploration, Explanation, Elaboration, and Evaluation) for science.

## 5. COSTS INCURRED IN OBTAINING CURRICULUM GUIDES/SERVICES

In 2001, the district entered into a contract to have a programmer develop an automated curriculum management system for the district. Over the course of the next year, this system was developed and implemented districtwide. Technological problems with the district's infrastructure created initial difficulties in implementation of the system.

EXHIBIT 7
KISD CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE
1998 THROUGH 2008

ACTIVITY	DATE(S)
Curriculum audit training for all directors, curriculum and program specialists	1998
Formed vertical writing team for mathematics (K–Algebra I)	1999
Vertical team and assessment training	1999
Rolled out math curriculum districtwide	Fall 2000
Studied existing software solution for curriculum management	Fall 2000-Summer 2001
Phase I: Developed an automated curriculum system design steering committee	Summer 2001
Phase II: Hired programmer to develop an automated curriculum system	Fall 2001
Identified design team schools	Fall 2001-Spring 2002
District Trainer of Trainers (TOT) Training	Summer 2002
Phase III: Implemented automated curriculum system in district	August 2002
Application collapsed due to insufficient technical infrastructure and faulty programming	August 2002
Hired a consulting company to diagnose and correct the infrastructure and application	August 2002-July 2006
District TOT Training	Summer 2003
Ongoing enhancements to application (KMS, KMAC, and ADCON)	Annually beginning in 2002–03
New hire training	Annually beginning in 2002–03
Ongoing curriculum development and refinement to curriculum guides (standards, goals, and objectives)	Annually beginning in 2002–03
Develop clarifiers (sample assessment items) to illustrate student mastery of each objective as well as the core objective tests (COTs) for the four core areas for each six weeks	Annually beginning in 2002–03
Subscribe to assessment data banks	Annually beginning in 2002–03
Align all resources used by the district, develop documents to support the curriculum, select best practices (structures and strategies) to be housed in the system, and recommend district lessons for identified critical areas	Annually beginning in 2002–03
Develop and implement the Leaders of Learners (LOL) model for building capacity for curriculum delivery across the district through meetings with over 500 campus leaders	Began in 2002–03 and continues 3 times per year
Develop a TOT for differentiating instruction using strategies and structures	Annually beginning in 2002–03
Entered into contract with Region 4	February 2007–perpetual license
Source: KISD Curriculum Implementation Timeline, 2008.	

To overcome the technological problems, KISD contracted with a computer consulting firm to diagnose and correct the problems with the district's infrastructure. The district entered into a contractual agreement to redesign its infrastructure, including connectivity, standardization of equipment, enterprise software solutions, and retrofitting. Additionally, work was conducted to customize and operationalize district enterprise

software solutions, which included CMAC. This multiple-year contract resulted in the outsourcing of a majority of the Technology Division.

In addition to contracting for work on the technology infrastructure in KISD, the district spent a total of \$1.5 million to redesign, implement, and enhance the KMAC system from 2002 through 2006.

The restructured system, KMAC version 1, was rolled out in 2002 and is maintained solely by inhouse staff. Each year the Curriculum Specialists conduct significant curriculum assessment and review, costs for which are contained within the district's budget for instruction and related services.

KISD employs 20 full-time staff in the area of curriculum. The Curriculum and Instruction Division employs 12 Curriculum Specialists, who support the four content areas as well as health and physical education, at an average base salary of \$65,389. Additionally, one Instructional Officer

and two Curriculum Management Specialists, who have the responsibility of managing the automated system which houses the KISD curriculum, are employed at an average base salary of \$78,794 and \$69,048 respectively. Average 2007–08 base salaries for the 20 positions in KISD's Curriculum and Instruction Division can be found in **Exhibit 8**.

KISD also incurs expenditures associated with maintenance of the curriculum management system and staff training, some of which occur on an annual basis. Expenditures incurred from 1998 through 2008 can be found in **Exhibit 9**.

EXHIBIT 8
KISD CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION DIVISION
STAFF POSITIONS AND AVERAGE BASE SALARIES
2007-08

POSITION TITLE	NUMBER OF POSITIONS	AVERAGE BASE SALARY
Chief Academic Officer	1	\$163,846
Executive Director for Secondary Instruction	1	\$117,169
Executive Director for Elementary Instruction	1	\$117,169
Executive Director for Curriculum, Professional Learning, and Educational Technology	1	\$93,050
Director for Secondary Instruction	1	\$90,111
Instructional Officer for Curriculum Management	1	\$78,794
Curriculum Management Specialists	2	\$69,048
Curriculum Specialists	12	\$65,389
<b>Total Curriculum and Instruction Division Average Base Salaries, 2007–08</b> Source: KISD Human Resources Department salary information, fall 2008.		\$1,582,903

EXHIBIT 9
KISD EXPENDITURES
CURRICULUM-RELATED SYSTEM MAINTENANCE AND STAFF TRAINING
1998 THROUGH 2008

ACTIVITY	YEAR	COST
Curriculum audit training for all directors, curriculum and program specialists	1998	\$20,000
Vertical team and assessment training	1999	\$1,000
Contract with programmer to develop automated curriculum system	2001	\$50,000
New Hire Training	Annually beginning in 2002–03	\$15,000 per year
Subscribe to assessment data banks	Annually beginning in 2002–03	\$35,000 per year maintenance fee
Leaders of Learners Meetings	Annually beginning in 2002–03	\$26,000 per year
Total Curriculum-Related System Maintenance and Staff Training Expenditures, 1998–2008		\$527.000

Source: KISD documentation and interviews, spring 2008.

Expenditures associated with CMAC in its current application are not separated from the ongoing instructional expenditures of the district. Because CMAC was developed as a custom system and is now fully integrated into KISD's instructional program, funds spent on CMAC are considered as one component of the district's instructional expenditures.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) does not require districts to report expenditures on curriculum separately from other instructional expenditures. Therefore, curriculum expenditures are generally coded as instruction or instruction-related. For the 2006–07 school year KISD spent an average of \$4,204 per pupil, which represents 66.8 percent of all operating expenditures per pupil, on curriculum- and instructional-related services. These expenditures include salaries, training, materials, and activities related to curriculum and direct instruction of students in the classroom.

## 6. OTHER CURRICULAR RESOURCES USED IN DISTRICT

As stated previously, teaching staff have the flexibility to integrate additional resources into instruction, but the KMAC curriculum, including specificity of objectives, sequencing of content, pacing of content, and assessment of content, is required by the district.

## C. STRUCTURE TO SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION

This section describes the structures to support implementation based on a review of board policy documents, district organizational charts and job descriptions, and interview and focus group data.

#### 1. SUPPORTING DISTRICT AND BOARD POLICIES

The district contracts with the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) for its policy development and updates. TASB categorizes all policies according to seven major areas of school operations: basic district operations, local governance, business and support services, personnel, instruction, students, and community government relations. TASB developed all policies designated as (LEGAL) or (EXHIBIT) to comply with legal entities that define district governance. In addition, local policies can be created to reflect local school board decisions. TASB designates such policies as (LOCAL) or (REGULATION).

The KISD Board of Trustees has adopted 11 policies that reference curriculum for the grade levels and core areas considered in this review. Four are local policies.

#### AE (EXHIBIT) Educational Philosophy

Objective 4 of this policy states a "well balanced and appropriate curriculum will be provided to all students."

#### AE (LOCAL) Mission Statement

This policy states that KISD's philosophy includes providing a "balanced, dynamic curriculum, which supports academic excellence for all students." The mission statement includes that KISD "seeks academic excellence for each student to pursue a productive and fulfilling life through a balanced curriculum aligned with quality instruction and assessment of achievement."

## BBD (EXHIBIT) Board Members Training and Orientation

This policy describes school board development. Primary areas of responsibility are creating a shared vision, providing guidance and direction, requiring accountability for measuring progress toward the vision, and promoting the district's vision for education. Specifically, this policy states "the Board adopts goals, approves student performance objectives, and establishes policies that provide a

well-balanced curriculum resulting in improved student learning."

BQ (LEGAL) Planning and Decision-Making Process

This policy states that the board will clearly define the roles and duties of district and campus staff in the area of curriculum.

EHAA (LEGAL) Basic Instructional Program: Required Instruction (All Levels)

This policy states the district shall provide instruction in the essential knowledge and skills at appropriate grade levels in the foundation (four core areas) and enrichment curriculum, according to *Texas Education Code §28.002(c)*. It also states that all children in the district participate actively in a balanced curriculum designed to meet individual needs through *Texas Education Code §28.002(g)*.

EHAB (LEGAL) Basic Instructional Program: Required Instruction (Elementary) and EHAC (LEGAL) Basic Instructional Program: Required Instruction (Secondary) provide similar provisions to EHAA (LEGAL).

EFA (LOCAL) Instructional Resources: Instructional Materials Selection and Adoption

This policy states that, although trained professional staff members are afforded the freedom to select instructional resources for their use in accordance with this policy and the state mandated curriculum, the ultimate authority for determining and approving the curriculum and instructional program of the district lies with the board.

#### EG (LOCAL) Curriculum Development

This policy defines curriculum, mandates alignment with state and national standards, and recognizes the need for systematic, ongoing curriculum review and development. Teachers

are required to use district curriculum but use instructional strategies based on student needs. This policy also requires annual reports to the board about curriculum development.

EG (EXHIBIT) Curriculum Development Roles and Responsibilities

This exhibit identifies roles and responsibilities related to curriculum development for the Board of Trustees, superintendent, district-level administrators, campus-level administrators, and teachers. Teachers are required to use the district curriculum and to plan lessons through KMAC.

#### EH (LOCAL) Curriculum Design

This policy states that "written, taught, and tested curriculum shall be aligned and dynamic to reflect the evolving needs of the students and district." A list of student performance expectations, based on TEKS/TAKS and annual goals developed by the board, provides the basis for curriculum development efforts. The ongoing curriculum development cycle includes student data analysis, input from teachers, administrators, parents, and students.

This policy also explains that the Katy Management System (KMS) contains the district curriculum for all subjects and program areas. KMAC provides standard lesson plan templates for teachers, as well as specified objectives, sequencing, pacing, and assessment. It also includes other resources, strategies, and facilitates collaboration. Administrators monitor curriculum delivery through ADCON. In addition, this policy outlines an assessment plan beyond state requirements. Data obtained through these additional assessments is to be used for continuous improvement of the curriculum and as evidence that students are learning.

KISD's board policies contain specific guidance on processes for curriculum adoption, design, implementation, and review. The board adopted *EG (LOCAL)* and *EH (LOCAL)* to communicate the board and community's expectations that the district staff implement KMAC and ADCON. All staff interviewed during onsite work understood this expectation, demonstrating that the intent of these policies has been clearly communicated. Many of the board and district expectations are communicated through KMAC as part of the design. The enactment of policies, delineation of roles of administration, parents, teachers, and students are articulated through the curriculum development process.

Additionally, KISD board policy includes a detailed outline of the general curricular responsibilities of board members, the superintendent, district-and campus-level administrators, and teachers, and detail requirements that administrators and teachers use the automated curriculum system. These policies guide a districtwide integrated approach to curriculum management.

As defined in board policy, major curriculumrelated duties for the KISD Board of Trustees include the following responsibilities:

- establish policies that support ongoing curriculum development and evaluation needed to increase student achievement;
- approve course additions and deletions;
- approve the written curriculum for new course offerings;
- adopt textbooks as instructional resources for curriculum delivery;

- provide funding for professional learning opportunities that focus on and support curriculum design and delivery for increased student achievement;
- communicate to its constituents the board's curricular expectations through the establishment of policy and support of administrative procedures; and
- provide adequate funding for the resources (time, personnel, and money) needed to develop and deliver the district's approved curriculum based on identified needs.

Major curriculum-related duties for the KISD Superintendent include the following responsibilities:

- facilitate the development and revision of policies for adoption by the board;
- work with the Deputy Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction (this title is not used in the district organizational chart for curriculum) to establish procedures to guide curriculum design and delivery;
- provide an annual report to the board concerning curriculum and instruction;
- ensure that a functional decision-making structure is in place for implementation of both curriculum design and delivery; and
- provide support to campus-level administrators in fulfilling their responsibilities for implementing and monitoring the planning and delivery of the curriculum.

Major curriculum-related duties for KISD district-level administrators include the following responsibilities:

- oversee adherence and implementation of district-level policies and procedures;
- monitor the implementation of the curriculum management plan, providing technical and expert assistance as required;
- use disaggregated data to guide instructional decisions to improve academic achievement;
- prepare and disseminate data analysis reports for individual campuses and departments on which instructional decisions will be made; and
- provide support for campus-level administrators in monitoring the planning and delivery of the curriculum.

Major curriculum-related duties for KISD campus-level administrators include the following responsibilities:

- analyze and interpret student assessment data for use in making instructional decisions;
- monitor lesson planning in the KMAC system and the delivery of the curriculum by:
  - o using ADCON;
  - conducting Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) observations and conferences;
  - overseeing curriculum planning meetings and reviewing minutes of the meetings;
  - conducting frequent walkthrough observations and follow-up conversations;
     and

- reviewing lesson plans and common assessments regularly.
- communicate the importance of effective curriculum planning and instructional delivery on a regular basis;
- provide campus-based professional learning opportunities that support curriculum planning and delivery;
- provide opportunities for teachers to analyze data and to collaborate for the purpose of improved student performance and teacher effectiveness; and
- communicate with parents regarding ways in which they can support student learning.

Major curriculum-related duties for KISD teachers include the following responsibilities:

- use the district curriculum to plan lessons through KMAC;
- use a variety of research-based, aligned resources and strategies to differentiate instruction;
- analyze and interpret student assessment data to identify learning gaps, to provide appropriate interventions, and to differentiate classroom instruction;
- participate in appropriate, ongoing professional learning that supports curriculum planning and delivery;
- participate in professional learning communities as a vehicle for improving teacher effectiveness and student achievement;
- ensure equal access to curriculum and equitable instructional delivery to each student; and

• communicate with parents regarding ways in which they can support student learning.

This detailed articulation of roles and responsibilities as part of board policy demonstrates the district's commitment to implementing and maintaining a consistent, systematic, and well-developed approach to learning.

## 2. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND EFFECTIVENESS AS RELATED TO CURRICULUM

KISD's 2007-08 Curriculum and Instruction Division reporting structure reflects a clear articulation of roles and responsibilities for supporting curriculum development. Reporting directly to the superintendent, the CAO is responsible for overseeing the development of curriculum through the Executive Director for Curriculum, Professional Learning, and Educational Technology, as well as the application of the curriculum consistently across all campuses through the Executive Directors for Elementary and Secondary Instruction. Supporting these key lead positions are the Director for Secondary Instruction, who works closely with both Executive Directors for Instruction and principals in areas such as writing the district's grade reporting handbooks, preparing course catalogues, and attending vertical team meetings with principals. Additionally, Curriculum Specialists and Instructional Officers work not only with principals and teachers but also to maintain the curriculum.

**Exhibit 10** illustrates the KISD Curriculum and Instruction Division organization for 2007–08.

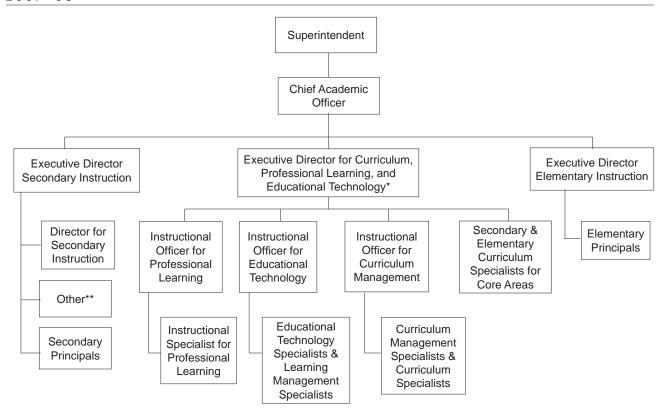
The Director for Secondary Instruction position was initially established to support the Executive

Director for Secondary Instruction. However, as the district has grown, the position's responsibilities have grown to include support for the Executive Director for Elementary Instruction as well. According to the job description for the position, key responsibilities include the following:

- provide instructional support to secondary campuses including development of procedures and interventions;
- serve as a resource to campuses for design/ implementation of TAKS interventions, including analysis of data, support for tutorial programs, and courses at the high school level;
- provide leadership development support to campuses, such as assisting with planning and coordination of campus staff development; and
- provide procedural support for campuses including coordinating revisions and production of course catalogue and Elementary and Secondary Grading and Reporting Handbooks.

The district created Curriculum Specialist positions in each of the core subject areas at both the elementary and secondary levels during the state's transition from the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) to the TAKS in order that these positions could analyze the new standards and develop a district scope and sequence with enough specificity for teachers to teach the TEKS in a manner appropriate to prepare KISD students for the TAKS. The fact that master teachers were promoted to these district curriculum positions was perceived by staff as indicative of the respect and trust that KISD has in its teaching professionals.

EXHIBIT 10
KISD CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION DIVISION
2007-08



\*As of 2008-09, the title for this position is Executive Director for Curriculum & Professional Learning.

\*\*Director of Gifted and Talented (G/T) & Advanced Studies, Program Specialist for G/T & Advanced Academic Studies. Source: KISD Curriculum Organizational Chart, 2007–08.

Job descriptions identified major curriculumrelated duties for Curriculum Specialists as:

- articulate the district's mission, philosophy, and implementation strategies to the community to solicit support in the realization of the goals as they pertain to curriculum alignment and instructional delivery;
- serve as a facilitator in coordinating the district curriculum in accordance with the district goals;
- facilitate the coordination of a PreK-12 vertical curriculum alignment using teacher feedback, as well as appropriate data;

- work in collaboration with other specialists to develop an implementation plan for curriculum delivery;
- plan, facilitate, present, and evaluate training that supports the aligned curriculum;
- collaborate with campus instructional facilitators in the selection of appropriate instructional resources at the campus and the district levels;
- provide constructive feedback in the effectiveness of the instructional program in the assigned content area or program;

 assist teachers in refining appropriate delivery strategies based upon best practices research;

- collaborate with campus technology facilitators to integrate technology into curriculum and instruction;
- collaborate with campus technology facilitators to assure the implementation and delivery of curriculum, via KMAC, at all campuses;
- keep current with best practices in content or program;
- serve as professional model for effective teaching; and
- prepare reports to assist the Executive Director for Curriculum, Professional Learning, and Educational Technology in evaluating the effectiveness of the department's initiatives as they relate to KISD's plans and programs.

The district has also established Curriculum Management Specialist positions within the division. These three staffers have multiple responsibilities related to management of the automated system which houses the KISD curriculum, working with the Curriculum Specialists for the four core areas, and managing the curriculum work of fine arts, career and technology (CATE), languages other than English (LOTE), bilingual, and special education.

Job descriptions identified major curriculumrelated duties for Curriculum Management Specialists as:

 work with appropriate staff to develop, align, maintain, and revise automated management systems (AMS) using curriculum audit standards and systemic review and analysis;

- serve as trainer and facilitator in coordinating the district automated management systems in accordance with audit standards;
- provide leadership in developing, implementing, evaluating, and coordinating automated management systems as they impact and overlap the curriculum management system;
- collaborate with Curriculum Specialists and campus technology facilitators in quality control of curriculum design and input into the AMS;
- work in collaboration with AMS teams in ongoing development as each new interface is added to the curriculum system;
- provide constructive feedback in the effectiveness of curriculum management systems;
- keep current with best practices in content areas/program specialties;
- articulate the district's mission, philosophy, and implementation strategies to the community to solicit support in the realization of the goals as they pertain to curriculum alignment and instructional delivery; and
- prepare reports to assist the Executive Director for Curriculum, Professional Learning, and Educational Technology in evaluating the effectiveness of the district's plans, programs, and other indicators of productivity.

At the campus level, instructional principals supervise curriculum delivery in core subject areas. They work with department lead teachers and district Curriculum Specialists to assist teachers in curriculum delivery and necessary modifications

based on data from district common assessments (COTs). The instructional principals meet with campus assistant principals monthly to inform them of curriculum changes and/or other concerns.

Section C1 of this report details curriculum-related duties of other district and campus personnel as defined by KISD board policy.

#### 3. SCHOOL AND DISTRICTWIDE MONITORING/ EVALUATION TO ENSURE IMPLEMENTATION

A key purpose for developing KMAC was to provide a districtwide structure for managing and monitoring the curriculum to ensure consistency of communications, expectations, implementation, and, ultimately, learning. Monitoring occurs at many levels in KISD. The district's Curriculum Specialists, who have grade-level and subject-matter expertise, work with teachers and administrators to determine professional development needs and to explore solutions to student performance gaps. Data from AEIS student performance accountability measures and district-generated benchmark assessments are analyzed collaboratively to inspect how well the curriculum is meeting student needs and how consistently it is being implemented.

All teachers are required to plan lessons in KMAC and administrators provide feedback through the interactive messaging function.

Structurally, the principal of each campus is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the KISD curriculum is taught. At the high schools, the principal delegates the majority of teacher supervision to the campus instructional assistant principal and grade level assistant principals. At the elementary and junior high schools, the principal and assistant principals share this responsibility.

At all grade levels, campus administrators monitor curriculum implementation through walkthrough observations. The ADCON system enables administrators to access teachers' lesson plans and use that information to monitor the actual delivery of the lesson plan. Staff reported that principals can see quickly through ADCON whether a teacher is on track with regard to unit timelines and progress of other teachers in the department. While the district allows teachers to vary instructional practices to address individual student needs, campus administrators indicated that it is critical that teachers stay on pace with their team in order that all appropriate material is covered before COTS are administered. If a teacher is having difficulty covering all objectives prior to administration of the COTS, the teacher is coached regarding alignment or provided professional development opportunities, such as observing another teacher.

Principals also appoint curriculum lead teachers in core subject areas to meet with district horizontal and vertical curriculum teams periodically to review student performance data and make recommendations for curriculum improvement. To facilitate this, the campus class schedule is built around grade level (elementary) and common core subject (secondary) planning periods.

During onsite work, some teachers reported that they had as many as 10 walkthrough observations by campus and central office administrators in 2007–08. While many staff interviewed were satisfied with the number of walkthrough observations and the consistency of curriculum monitoring, others indicated that monitoring is not consistent from campus to campus, especially at the secondary level. Specifically, secondary campus staff reported inconsistent involvement

of campus administrators in both oversight of curriculum planning meetings and the number of walkthroughs conducted, as well as follow-up feedback provided. Inconsistencies were cited not only among the district's secondary campuses, but sometimes within a singular secondary campus. District staff reported the need for more formative monitoring and feedback between campus principals and teachers around curriculum and instructional choices, including for example, more conversations about how teachers use the feedback provided through walkthroughs to modify the curriculum. District staff did indicate that walkthrough observation training would be conducted in December 2008 in order to provide a more systematic approach for classroom observations and feedback.

Central office staff reported that administrators are allowed flexibility in monitoring teacher delivery of the curriculum, and that monitoring is tailored to the specific needs of a school or teacher.

While the district provides direction for what strategies and approaches should be used in classroom monitoring, it does not systematically collect information on the implementation of the monitoring policies. Additionally, there are no guidelines regarding the oversight of curriculum

planning meetings or the number of walkthroughs required to be conducted by campus-level administrators, nor are the type of and timeline for post-walkthrough feedback to teachers specified.

## D. DISTRICT ACCOMPLISHMENTS, FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section provides a summary and description of accomplishments, findings, and recommendations based on document review, site visit data, and cost analysis. District practices are compared to professional standards.

The standards guiding the identification of accomplishments, findings, and recommendations provided in this review come from the combined efforts of the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI), and the National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE). These standards, the AdvancED Accreditation Standards for Quality School Systems, are tightly aligned with the research on factors that impact student performance and were developed with broad input from practitioners and education experts. (See Exhibit 11)

#### EXHIBIT 11

#### AdvancED ACCREDITATION STANDARDS FOR QUALITY SCHOOL SYSTEMS

#### Standard 1: Vision and Purpose

The system establishes and communicates a shared purpose and direction for improving the performance of students and the effectiveness of the system.

#### **Vision and Purpose**

- 1.1 Establishes a vision for the system in collaboration with its stakeholders
- 1.2 Communicates the system's vision and purpose to build stakeholder understanding and support
- 1.3 Identifies system-wide goals and measures to advance the vision
- 1.4 Develops and continuously maintains a profile of the system, its students, and the community
- 1.5 Ensures that the system's vision and purpose guide the teaching and learning process and the strategic direction of schools, departments, and services
- 1.6 Reviews its vision and purpose systematically and revises them when appropriate

#### Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

The system provides governance and leadership that promote student performance and system effectiveness.

#### Governance

- 2.1 Establishes and communicates policies and procedures that provide for the effective operation of the system
- 2.2 Recognizes and preserves the executive, administrative, and leadership authority of the administrative head of the system
- 2.3 Ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws, standards, and regulations
- 2.4 Implements policies and procedures that provide for the orientation and training of the governing board
- 2.5 Builds public support, secures sufficient resources, and acts as a steward of the system's resources
- 2.6 Maintains access to legal counsel to advise or obtain information about legal requirements and obligations
- 2.7 Maintains adequate insurance or equivalent resources to protect its financial stability and administrative operations

#### Leadership

- 2.8 Provides for systematic analysis and review of student performance and school and system effectiveness
- 2.9 Creates and supports collaborative networks of stakeholders to support system programs
- 2.10 Provides direction, assistance, and resources to align, support, and enhance all parts of the system in meeting organizational and student performance goals
- 2.11 Provides internal and external stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership
- 2.12 Assesses and addresses community expectations and stakeholder satisfaction
- 2.13 Implements an evaluation system that provides for the professional growth of all personnel

### EXHIBIT 11 (CONTINUED) AdvancED ACCREDITATION STANDARDS FOR QUALITY SCHOOL SYSTEMS

#### Standard 3: Teaching and Learning

The system provides research-based curriculum and instructional methods that facilitate achievement for all students.

#### **Teaching and Learning**

- 3.1 Develops, articulates, and coordinates curriculum based on clearly defined expectations for student learning, including essential knowledge and skills
- 3.2 Establishes expectations and supports student engagement in the learning process, including opportunities for students to explore application of higher order thinking skills to investigate new approaches to applying their learning
- 3.3 Ensures that system-wide curricular and instructional decisions are based on data and research at all levels
- 3.4 Supports instruction that is research-based and reflective of best practice
- 3.5 Supports a curriculum that challenges and meets the needs of each student, reflects a commitment to equity, and demonstrates an appreciation of diversity
- 3.6 Allocates and protects instructional time to support student learning
- 3.7 Maintains articulation among and between all levels of schooling to monitor student performance and ensure readiness for future schooling or employment
- 3.8 Supports the implementation of interventions to help students meet expectations for student learning
- 3.9 Maintains a system-wide climate that supports student learning
- 3.10 Ensures that curriculum is reviewed and revised at regular intervals
- 3.11 Coordinates and ensures ready access to instructional technology, information and media services, and materials needed for effective instruction

#### Standard 4: Documenting and Using Results

The system enacts a comprehensive assessment system that monitors and documents performance and uses these results to improve student performance and school effectiveness

#### **Documenting and Using Results**

- 4.1 Establishes and implements a comprehensive assessment system, aligned with the system's expectations for student learning, that yields information which is reliable, valid, and free of bias
- 4.2 Ensures that student assessment data are used to make decisions for continuous improvement of teaching and learning
- 4.3 Conducts a systematic analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness, including support systems, and uses the results to improve student and system performance
- 4.4 Provides a system of communication which uses a variety of methods to report student performance and system effectiveness to all stakeholders
- 4.5 Uses comparison and trend data from comparable school systems to evaluate student performance and system effectiveness
- 4.6 Demonstrates verifiable growth in student performance that is supported by multiple sources of evidence
- 4.7 Maintains a secure, accurate, and complete student record system in accordance with state and federal regulations

#### EXHIBIT 11 (CONTINUED)

#### AdvancED ACCREDITATION STANDARDS FOR QUALITY SCHOOL SYSTEMS

#### Standard 5: Resources and Support Systems

The system has the resources and services necessary to support its vision and purpose, and to ensure achievement for all students.

#### **Human Resources**

- 5.1 Establishes and implements processes to recruit, employ, retain, and mentor qualified professional and support staff to fulfill assigned roles and responsibilities
- 5.2 Establishes and implements a process to assign professional and support staff based on system needs and staff qualifications as may be required by federal and state law and regulations (i.e., professional preparation, ability, knowledge, and experience)
- 5.3 Establishes and implements a process to design, evaluate, and improve professional development and ensures participation by all faculty and staff
- 5.4 Ensures that staff are sufficient in number to meet the vision and purpose of the school system and to meet federal and state law and regulations, if applicable

#### **Financial Resources**

- 5.5 Engages in long-range budgetary planning and annually budgets sufficient resources to support its educational programs and to implement its plans for improvement
- 5.6 Ensures that all financial transactions are safeguarded through proper budgetary procedures and audited accounting measures.

### Standard 6: Stakeholder Communications and Relationships

The system fosters effective communications and relationships with and among its stakeholders.

#### Stakeholder Communications and Relationships

- 6.1 Fosters collaboration with community stakeholders to support student learning
- 6.2 Uses system-wide strategies to listen and communicate with stakeholders
- 6.3 Solicits the knowledge and skills of stakeholders to enhance the work of the system
- 6.4 Communicates the expectations for student learning and goals for improvement to all stakeholders
- 6.5 Provides information that is meaningful and useful to stakeholders

#### Standard 7: Commitment to Continuous Improvement

The system establishes, implements, and monitors a continuous process of improvement that focuses on student performance.

#### **Commitment to Continuous Improvement**

- 7.1 Engages in a continuous process of improvement that articulates the vision and purpose the system is pursuing (Vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, system effectiveness, and the community (Profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (Plan); and documents and uses the results to inform future improvement efforts (Results)
- 7.2 Engages stakeholders in the processes of continuous improvement
- 7.3 Ensures that each school's plan for continuous improvement is aligned with the system's vision and expectations for student learning

### EXHIBIT 11 (CONTINUED) AdvancED ACCREDITATION STANDARDS FOR QUALITY SCHOOL SYSTEMS

- 7.4 Ensures that each school's plan for continuous improvement includes a focus on increasing learning for all students and closing gaps between current and expected student performance levels
- 7.5 Provides research-based professional development for system and school personnel to help them achieve improvement goals
- 7.6 Monitors and communicates the results of improvement efforts to stakeholders
- 7.7 Evaluates and documents the effectiveness and impact of its continuous process of improvement
- 7.8 Allocates and protects time for planning and engaging in continuous improvement efforts system-wide
- 7.9 Provides direction and assistance to its schools and operational units to support their continuous improvement efforts

Source: AdvancED Accreditation Standards for Quality School Systems, March 2008.

#### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

District board policies provide a clear vision and foundation for KISD's long-term curriculum development.

KISD's locally developed board policies provide a comprehensive framework for all aspects of curriculum development and implementation. These policies define the curriculum, outline the curriculum development/adoption process and staff responsibilities, require implementation of scope and sequence and vertical alignment documents, coordinate the curriculum with assessment procedures, provide for staff development related to curriculum, provide for an ongoing review and revision process, and align the budget process with these curricular priorities. Use of the district's automated curriculum system is also required by these policies. The district's board policies provide a clear mandate for district decision-making related to curriculum, enabling KISD to implement an ongoing, systemic curriculum development and review process.

This practice reflects the following professional standards: (1.2) communicates the system's vision and purpose to build stakeholder understanding and support; (1.5) ensures that the system's vision and purpose guide the teaching and learning process and the strategic direction of schools, departments, and services; (1.6) reviews its vision and purpose systematically and revises them when appropriate; (2.1) establishes and communicates policies and procedures that provide for effective operation of the system; (2.5) builds public support, secures sufficient resources, and acts as steward of the system's resources; (2.9) creates and supports collaborative networks of stakeholders to support system programs; (2.11) provides internal and external stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership; (3.10) ensures that curriculum is reviewed and revised at regular intervals; and (7.9) provides direction and assistance to its schools and operational units to support their continuous improvement efforts.

#### KISD creates clear and consistent expectations for student learning through its automated curriculum management system.

KISD has developed curriculum internally for many years. The district's internally created curriculum management system has, through analysis of student performance data and input from teachers and administrators, evolved from a quality paper/binder product to an automated curriculum management framework (CMAC) that KISD staff use exclusively to develop lesson plans and instructional delivery strategies. The structure of CMAC fosters collaboration, allowing shared lessons to be uploaded for all instructional staff, and provides administrators a quick and concise paperless overview of teacher lesson plans.

Administration and staff consistently reported that the district's expectation for curriculum implementation is non-negotiable. Although it is a living document that is continuously revised and updated during the school year, teachers are expected to implement the curriculum in real time. Teachers may choose how to implement the curriculum, but the curriculum is clearly prescribed by the district. Consequently, staff reported having confidence that students across the district received coherent and consistent instruction because of the CMAC system.

This practice reflects the following professional standards: (1.2) communicates the system's vision and purpose to build stakeholder understanding and support; (1.3) Identifies system-wide goals and measures to advance the vision; (1.5) Ensures that the system's vision and purpose guide the teaching and learning process and the strategic direction of schools, departments, and services; (3.1) develops, articulates, and coordinates curriculum

based on clearly defined expectations for student learning, including essential knowledge and skills; and (3.11) coordinates and ensures ready access to instructional technology, information and media services, and materials needed for effective instruction.

#### KISD's curriculum is founded on researchbased models.

KISD implemented a plan for curriculum development that aligned with the auditing methodology developed by Dr. Fenwick English. The Curriculum Specialists and central office administrators were all trained in standardized curriculum auditing procedures to ensure that a common language and philosophy were integrated the district's curriculum development efforts. PLCs also were implemented to provide a system for communication and collaboration to support curriculum implementation. Together these strategies create an environment of continuous improvement. Prior to districtwide implementation of new curriculum-related concepts, programs are piloted to ensure smooth implementation and scale-up. This methodology creates a high degree of teacher confidence that new ideas and concepts are fully functional and designed to improve student performance prior to full implementation.

This practice reflects the following professional standards: (3.3) ensures that system-wide curricular and instructional decisions are based on data and research at all levels; and (3.4) supports instruction that is research-based and reflective of best practice.

A key component in KISD's curriculum development process is based on development of teacher expertise and ongoing feedback from teacher experience in the classroom.

A guiding philosophy of the KISD curriculum management plan is that teachers are professionals and know best how to teach their students. In 1998, district leadership engaged in an intensive process to analyze the TEKS and TAKS objectives after the state transitioned from TAAS to TAKS. The district relied on its teachers as a resource to determine the depth and complexity of the new learning standards and to prescribe the necessary scope and sequence that should logically follow. As a result, staff developed standards-based curriculum expertise that has continued to benefit the district. These teachers have served as leaders in the development of curriculum, the curriculum management plan, and districtwide curriculum implementation.

Further, in delivery of the curriculum, while state and district curriculum standards are nonnegotiable, instructional choices are teacher driven. Teachers are provided additional time in the scope and sequence to cover objectives and are allowed to determine appropriate delivery strategies, based on a variety of models provided in KMAC. Teachers can also suggest or create new strategies. Teachers are encouraged to provide feedback through KMAC regarding the effectiveness of recommended strategies and/or the clarity of written objectives. Should a teacher request more specificity, a Curriculum Specialist will write a clarifier for the objective in question. This process provides structure and support for teachers in real time.

This practice reflects the following professional standards: (2.9) creates and supports collaborative

networks of stakeholders to support system programs; (2.11) provides internal and external stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership; (3.5) supports a curriculum that challenges and meets the needs of each student, reflects a commitment to equity, and demonstrates an appreciation of diversity; (3.9) maintains a system-wide climate that supports student learning; (6.3) solicits the knowledge and skills of stakeholders to enhance the work of the system; and (6.5) provides information that is meaningful and useful to stakeholders.

## KISD engages in collaborative data analysis to inform curriculum and instruction decisions.

KISD is committed to data-driven decision-making processes. Central office staff plays a critical support role in providing professional development to teachers and administrators in data analysis to determine performance gaps and curricular solutions. In addition to TAKS disaggregation, the automated curriculum management system provides a wealth of other analysis possibilities. For example, administrators can quickly assess lesson plan data within ADCON.

At the campus level, instructional principals, department chairs, lead teachers, curriculum teams, and PLCs have specific functions to collaboratively analyze common assessment and benchmark data and determine appropriate curriculum revisions. This process creates a learning environment focused on improvement.

This practice reflects the following professional standards: (2.8) provides for systematic analysis and review of student performance data; (2.9) creates and supports collaborative networks of

stakeholders to support system programs; (4.2) ensures that student assessment data are used to make decisions for continuous improvement of teaching and learning; (4.3) conducts systematic analyses of instructional and organizational effectiveness, including support systems, and uses the results to improve student and system performance; (4.6) demonstrates verifiable growth in student performance that is supported by multiple sources of evidence; and (7.6) monitors and communicates the results of improvement efforts to stakeholders.

#### FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Curriculum monitoring is inconsistent across KISD, specifically among and within secondary campuses.

KISD's administrative structure for curriculum monitoring and support clearly defines roles and responsibilities at both the district and campus levels. As the district has grown, central administration has taken a proactive approach to provide adequate support for campus administrators and new and veteran teachers by creating a layered organizational structure with specific curriculum-related functions and responsibilities at each level. The district supports the structure for curriculum monitoring through board policy and a detailed curriculum management plan.

Structurally, the principal of each campus is ultimately responsible for ensuring instructional delivery of the KISD curriculum. At the high schools, the principal delegates the majority of teacher supervision to the campus instructional assistant principal and grade level assistant principals. At the elementary and junior high

schools, the principal and assistant principals share this responsibility.

Policy EG (EXHIBIT) assigns the following monitoring duties to KISD campus-level administrators:

- Monitor lesson planning in the KMAC system and the delivery of the curriculum by:
  - o using ADCON;
  - conducting PDAS observations and conferences;
  - overseeing curriculum planning meetings and reviewing minutes of the meetings;
  - conducting frequent walkthrough observations and follow-up conversations;
  - reviewing lesson plans and common assessments regularly.

Principals also appoint curriculum lead teachers in core subject areas to meet with district horizontal and vertical curriculum teams periodically to review student performance data and make recommendations for curriculum improvement. To facilitate this, the campus class schedule is built around grade level (elementary) and common core subject (secondary) planning periods.

District and campus staff both noted during interviews that curriculum monitoring is an area in need of improvement in KISD. Some teachers reported during onsite work that they had as many as 10 walkthrough observations by campus and central office administrators in 2007–08. While many staff interviewed were satisfied with the number of walkthrough observations and the consistency of curriculum monitoring, others indicated that monitoring is not consistent from

campus to campus, especially at the secondary level. Specifically, secondary campus staff reported inconsistent involvement of campus instructional leaders in both oversight of curriculum planning meetings and the number of walkthroughs conducted, as well as follow-up feedback provided. Inconsistencies were cited not only among the district's secondary campuses, but also within a singular secondary campus. District staff reported the need for more formative monitoring and feedback between campus principals and teachers regarding curriculum and instructional choices, including for example, more conversations about how teachers use the feedback provided through walkthroughs to modify lesson planning and delivery techniques.

While the district provides direction for what strategies and approaches should be used in classroom monitoring, it does not systematically collect information on the implementation of the monitoring policies. Additionally, there are no guidelines regarding the oversight of curriculum planning meetings or the number of walkthroughs required to be conducted by campus-level instructional leaders, nor are the type of and timeline for post-walkthrough feedback to teachers specified. This has created inconsistencies in the ability of staff to monitor the effectiveness of delivery of the curriculum across the district.

The district should develop administrative regulations which specify the expectations of campus instructional leaders regarding curriculum monitoring activities in order to create consistency in monitoring across the district. Within the administrative regulations, the systematic approach to walkthroughs should be specified so that expectations about classroom observations are clearly articulated to

campus administrators. The regulations should address the number of walkthroughs required by administrators, expectations related to time intervals for conducting the walkthroughs, the amount and form of feedback expected, and a plan for district-level staff to monitor the implementation of the regulations.

District staff indicated that walkthrough observation training would be conducted in December 2008 in order to provide a more systematic approach for classroom observations and feedback. Any walkthrough training conducted should emphasize the importance of providing consistent feedback, which promotes professional growth opportunities for teachers. Through a closely monitored observation and feedback process, teachers have the opportunity for more formative support from administrators. This type of walkthrough training will provide the district with a systematic approach for classroom observations and feedback to be used by teachers, as well as campus and district instructional leaders.

This recommendation reflects the following professional standards: (2.1) establishes and communicates policies and procedures that provide for the effective operation of the system; (7.6) monitors and communicates the results of improvement efforts to stakeholders; and (7.7) evaluates and documents the effectiveness and impact of its continuous process of improvement.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT**

RECOMMENDATION	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013–14	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS) SAVINGS
Develop administrative regulations which specify the expectations of campus instructional leaders regarding curriculum monitoring activities in order to create consistency in monitoring across the district.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0