LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

September 6, 2000
The Honorable George W. Bush
The Honorable Rick Perry
The Honorable James E. "Pete" Laney
Members of the 76th Legislature
Commissioner James E. Nelson

Ladies and Gentlemen:

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

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

We have made a number of recommendations to improve MISD's
efficiency. We also have highlighted a number of "best practices" in the
district's operations--model programs and services provided by MISD's
administrators, teachers and staff. This report outlines 19 detailed
recommendations that could save MISD $30,450 over the next five years,
while reinvesting $15,920 to improve educational services and other
operations. Net savings are estimated to reach $14,530--savings that
MISD can redirect into the classroom.

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

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

Sincerely,

Carole Keeton Rylander

McDade Independent School District

McDade Independent School District, the smallest of the four districts in Bastrop County, is clearly a unique district. Though small districts normally have high administration costs per student, McDade spends 55.3 cents per education dollar in the classroom—the highest of those districts reviewed in Bastrop County, and above the state average of 52 cents. The district is to be commended for holding the line on costs so that students and teachers have the resources they need to be successful. It is no wonder that this district is a source of pride to the McDade community.

McDade's 210 students in kindergarten through grade 7 present their own set of unique challenges and opportunities. My Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) found the district to be well-run, a place where students, parents and staff were satisfied with the education being offered. The district has shown steady improvements in student performance, exhibited tight internal controls, held the line on costs and achieved efficiencies through streamlined procedures.

Like any good district, McDade ISD still has room for improvement. For example, my review found a need for planning and coordination throughout the district, particularly in light of its plans to expand to grade 8 and, possibly, all the way to grade 12.

Planning for this growth can be exciting but must be done with great care since growth brings with it a need for additional funds, staff, supplies, facilities and facility improvements.

One of my 10 Principles for Texas in the 21st Century is to drive more of every education dollar directly into the classroom. My Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) team has developed 19 recommendations that, if fully implemented, could result in net savings of $14,530 over

the next five years. But more importantly, this review provides the district some solid management techniques for achieving its own goals and objectives.

I am confident that school board members, school administrators, teachers and parents are all committed to making McDade ISD the best it can be for their students, now and into the future.

Carole Keeton Rylander

Carole Keeton Rylander
Comptroller of Public Accounts

Key Findings and Recommendations

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

Major Proposals

District Organization and Management

- *Develop a strategic plan for future educational,
  facility and financial needs, particularly when
  considering expanding from a K-7 school district to a
  K-12 school district*—In 1999-2000, McDade ISD
  added grade 7, which increased its average daily
  attendance from 177 to 200. The district plans to
  add grade 8 for the 2000-01 school year. In addition,
  district officials, staff and community members are
  considering whether the district should remain an
  elementary through middle school district or grow
  into a kindergarten through grade 12 district.

  While the Board of Trustees and the superintendent
  are open to a kindergarten through grade 12 district,
  they have not developed an effective plan to guide
  such a decision. Further growth brings a need for
  additional funds, staff, supplies, facilities and facility
  improvements; needs that should be thoroughly and
  effectively planned and prioritized whether the
  district adds more grades or not. It is imperative for
  McDade ISD to develop a comprehensive strategic
  plan addressing future educational, facility and
  financial needs.

- *Design a comprehensive Disaster Recovery Plan*—
  McDade ISD has policies and procedures for backing
  up computer files and data only. The district needs a
  disaster recovery team; a list of contacts to notify
  staff after a disaster; a list of critical business

functions; and the required staffing levels and office equipment needed immediately after a disaster has occurred. Establishing a comprehensive disaster recovery plan that is well-tested would help the district restore key information and functions in the event of a disaster.

Food Service

- *Explore contracting for the food service operation from a neighboring school district or a commercial vendor*–The district's food services function is not breaking even financially, and conditions of the facilities do not meet the requirements of the Texas Department of Health and the Federal Food Code. While the district plans to air condition the kitchen and dining room facilities in 2000-01, major remodeling of the kitchen–estimated to cost as much as $500,000–is required to bring the food service operation into full compliance. Because of this huge cost, the district should review alternatives such as contracting for food services from neighboring districts or commercial vendors.

Technology

- *Create an implementation plan for the district's technology plan*–The district had a detailed technology plan for 1996-2001 that was updated in 1999; however, they have no formal strategies for implementing the goals and objective of the plan. By modifying the existing technology plan to delineate the specific tasks necessary to reach the district goals and spending priorities, the likelihood of success will be greatly improved.

Community Outreach

- *Improve communication with the community via a newsletter and a Web site*–Communication between the district and the community is limited. An October 1999 survey of community members showed there was a need for better communication between the school and the community. To increase community

involvement, McDade ISD should publish a quarterly newsletter and complete the construction of the Web site with assistance from community or parent volunteers.

Energy Management

- *Aggressively seek energy savings*–McDade ISD has been slow to pursue energy savings. A preliminary review by the State Energy Conservation Office showed that through a series of lighting and air conditioning retrofits, the district could save $4,100 annually in utility bills.

Exemplary Programs and Practices in the
McDade Independent School District

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

- **Technology in the classroom**–The district's technology plan effectively integrates technology directly into the classroom, instead of creating computer labs. Region 13 helped the district lease 25 computers for three years at $100 per computer for a total cost of $2,500. At the end of the three-year period, the district can buy the computers for $1 each. McDade ISD also used a Telecommunication Infrastructure Fund grant to acquire an additional seven computers for the middle school. As a result, the district's student to computer ratio is 2.7:1.
- **Special Education Cooperative**–McDade ISD uses cooperatives, like the Giddings Special Education Cooperative, to reduce its special education cost while still providing quality services. Through its membership in the cooperative, McDade ISD provides diagnostic and psycho-educational services, articulation and language speech services, and related services such as occupational and physical therapy, and auditory and visual services, in a cost effective manner.
- **Financial controls**–Over the years, the district's superintendent has streamlined procedures, held costs down, established strong internal controls and considered efficiencies in several areas of the district's operations. For example:
  1. The superintendent instituted a policy that limited the amount paid to employees for

accumulated sick leave when they left the district.

2. The superintendent used lease financing for the new secondary building in the 1999 fiscal year. The lease financed $100,000 of the cost of the facility. MISD will have enough fund balance in the 1999-2000 year to pay the lease off early and save the district approximately $10,000 over the next four years.

3. The district's disbursement procedures dictate that the superintendent and the board president sign all vendor payment checks to ensure that all funds are spent as they were intended. The superintendent includes a listing of all disbursements for the month in the board's monthly meeting packet for board members to review.

4. Finally, annual financial audits of the district, all resulting in favorable reports on basic financial statements, have disclosed no internal control problems or compliance short comings for the past four years.

What Is TSPR?

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

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

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

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

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

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

have had more than one year to implement TSPR recommendations.

Executive Summary

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

After nearly five months of work, this report identifies MISD's exemplary programs and suggests concrete ways to improve district operations. If fully implemented, the Comptroller's 19 recommendations could result in net savings of $14,530 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 having served as a former teacher and school board president, the Comptroller has vowed to use TSPR to increase local school districts' accountability to the communities they serve.

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

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

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

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

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

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

TSPR in McDade ISD

On March 27, 2000, when TSPR began its performance review of the McDade ISD, the smallest of the four districts in Bastrop County, it was clear that this was a unique district. While most of the school districts reviewed by TSPR have fallen in the range of moderate to large school districts, McDade's kindergarten through grade 7 programs presented its own set of unique challenges and opportunities.

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

As part of the review, five campus and four central administrators and support staff; 12 teachers; and 39 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).

MISD selected peer districts for comparisons based on similarities in student enrollment, student performance and community and student demographics. The selected peer districts were Bartlett, Dime Box, Moulton, Prairie Lea, and Silverton. TSPR also compared MISD to district averages in TEA's Region 13 Education Service Center, to which MISD belongs and the state as a whole (**Exhibit 1**).

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

District	Student Enrollment	5-Year Change in Enrollment	Racial/Ethnic Percentage				Percent Economically Disadvantaged
			Percent Hispanic	Percent African-American	Percent Anglo	Percent Other	
McDade	**210**	**52.2%**	**34.6%**	**2.4%**	**61.4%**	**1.4%**	**56.2%**
Bartlett	581	2.8%	37.5%	19.3%	43.0%	0.2%	56.5%
Dime Box	200	(16.7%)	26.0%	23.0%	51.0%	0.0%	55.0%
Moulton	380	0.8%	29.5%	0.3%	80.3%	0.0%	49.7%
Prarie Lea	201	21.8%	41.8%	10.9%	46.8%	0.5%	79.6%
Silverton	259	(9.4%)	32.8%	3.9%	63.3%	0.0%	52.9%
Region 13	264,791	14.1%	33.0%	9.8%	54.6%	2.6%	35.7%
State	4,002,227	6.8%	39.5%	14.4%	43.7%	32.9%	48.9%

Source: Texas Education Agency, 1994-95 - 1999-2000 Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS).

During its five-month review of the district, TSPR developed 19 recommendations to improve operations by 2004-05.

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

Acknowledgments

The Comptroller's office and WCL Enterprises wish to express appreciation to the MISD Board of Trustees, Superintendent Thomas Baca, district employees, students, parents and community residents who helped during the review.

McDade ISD

MISD has one campus serving students in pre-kindergarten through the seventh grade. MISD served 210 students during 1999-2000, an 18.6-percent increase from the 1998-99 enrollment of 177. This growth was primarily the result of adding grade 7 in 1999-2000. Students that complete the grades offered by MISD feed into middle and high schools in Elgin ISD.

From 1995-96 to 1999-2000, the district's enrollment increased 52.2 percent. At the same time, MISD's property value of $150,975 per student is 23.8 percent lower than the state average of $198,149 per student.

Of the 210 students attending MISD in 1999-2000, 34.6 percent of MISD's students were Hispanic, 2.4 percent are African-American, 61.4 percent were Anglo and 1.4 percent were Asian/Pacific Islander, Native American or another ethnicity. Of those, 56.2 percent of MISD's students were classified as economically disadvantaged.

MISD's student performance has fluctuated in the last few years. In 1995-96 and 1998-99, the district's campus earned "recognized" ratings, using TEA's measurement criteria. In 1997-98, the campus was rated "low-performing." In 1999-2000, the campus received an "acceptable" rating. These wide fluctuations are in part due to the fact that in smaller districts the performance of a few students can impact the performance of the entire district.

The district has made strides in closing the student performance gap over the last five years. TSPR used TAAS passing rates for the years 1994-95 through 1998-99 because the 1999-2000 TAAS passing rates for all students were not available as of this printing. In 1998-99, 78.5 percent of all MISD students passed the TAAS compared to 77.1 percent in 1994-95. The performance gains over this same period are even more significant for minority students and economically disadvantaged students.

In 1998-99, 83.3 percent of Hispanic students passed the TAAS compared to 66.7 percent in 1994-95; and 77.4 percent of economically disadvantaged students passed the TAAS in 1998-99, compared to 62.5 percent in 1994-95. This is not to say that MISD does not have more work to do, but the district is moving in the right direction.

During 1999-2000, the district employed a staff of 35 employees, with teachers accounting for 18 or 51.4 percent of MISD staffing. The district had expenditures of $1.4 million in 1999-2000; 26.2 percent of MISD's revenues were generated locally, 67.6 percent came from the state and less than 3.5 percent came from the federal government. Approximately 2.7 percent came from other sources.

In 1998-99, MISD spent 59.4 percent of every education dollar in classroom instruction. In
1999-2000, that number decreased to 55.3 percent; however, it is still higher than the state average of 52 percent.

Exemplary Programs and Practices

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

- Because of the size of the district and the need for certified teachers, MISD encourages teachers to obtain multiple certifications in addition to the required elementary education certification. MISD funds the cost of the required certification exam (EXCET) and also funds additional training for teachers in areas such as dyslexia.
- MISD uses cooperatives to reduce its cost while still providing quality services. MISD has been a member of the Giddings Special Education Cooperative for many years. Through its membership in the cooperative, MISD provides diagnostic and psycho-educational services, articulation and language speech services, and related services such as occupational and physical therapy, auditory and visual services, in a cost effective manner.
- Over the years, the MISD superintendent has streamlined procedures, held costs down, established strong internal controls and considered efficiencies in several areas of the district's operations. For example, the superintendent instituted a policy that limited the amount paid to employees for accumulated sick leave when they left the district. The superintendent used lease financing for the new secondary building in the 1999 fiscal year. The lease financed $100,000 of the cost of the facility. MISD will have enough fund balance in the 1999-2000 year to pay the lease off early and save the district approximately $10,000 over the next four years. Also, the district's disbursement procedures dictate that the superintendent and the president of the board must sign all

vendor payment checks to ensure that all funds are expended as they were intended, and the superintendent includes a listing of all disbursements for the month in the board's monthly meeting packet for board members to review. Both of these practices signify strong internal controls, a process which is difficult with a limited number of employees. Finally, MISD's annual financial audits, all resulting in favorable reports on basic financial statements, have disclosed no internal control problems or compliance short comings for the past four years.

- MISD's technology plan effectively integrates technology directly into the classroom, instead of creating computer labs. Region 13 helped the district lease 25 computers for three years at $100 per computer for a total cost of $2,500. At the end of the three-year period, the district can buy the computers for $1 each. MISD also used a Telecommunication Infrastructure Fund grant to acquire an additional seven computers for the Middle School. As a result, the district's student to computer ratio is 2.7:1.

Key Findings and Recommendations

TSPR found McDade ISD to be a well-run district where students, parents and staff were satisfied with the education being offered. The district has shown steady improvements in student performance, exhibited tight internal controls, held the line on costs and achieved efficiencies through streamlined procedures. There still are some areas, however, where the district could improve its operations. TSPR's recommendations stress planning and coordination throughout the district.

Strategic Planning: In 1999-2000, MISD added grade 7, which increased its average daily attendance from 177 to 200. In May 2000, district voters approved issuing $1.5 million in bonds and the district plans to add grade 8 in 2000-01. In addition, MISD district officials, staff and community members continually discuss whether the district should remain an elementary through middle school district or grow into a kindergarten through grade 12 district. While the MISD board and superintendent are open to considering a kindergarten through grade 12 district, they had not developed an effective plan to guide such a decision. Further growth brings a need for additional funds, staff, supplies, facilities and facility improvements - needs that should be thoroughly and effectively planned and prioritized whether the district adds more grades or not. MISD should develop a comprehensive strategic plan addressing future educational, facility and financial needs.

Technology Planning: While the district had a detailed Technology Plan for 1996-2001 that was updated in 1999, there are no formal strategies for implementing the goals and objective of the plan. By modifying the

existing technology plan to delineate the specific tasks necessary to reach the district goals and spending priorities, the likelihood of success will be greatly improved.

Disaster Recovery Planning: MISD has policies and procedures for backing up computer files and data, but MISD does not have disaster recovery team; a list of contacts to notify staff after a disaster; a list of critical business functions; and the required staffing levels and office equipment needed immediately after a disaster has occurred. A comprehensive disaster recovery plan that is well-tested would help the district restore key information and functions in the event of a disaster.

Improved Food Services: MISD is faced with many challenges in its Food Service program. The food services function is not breaking even financially, and conditions of the facilities do not meet the requirements of the Texas Department of Health and the Federal Food Code. While the district plans to air condition the kitchen and dining room facilities in 2000-01 using funds included in the bond issue approved in May 2000, major remodeling of the kitchen, which is estimated to cost as much as $500,000, will be required to bring the food service operation into full compliance. Because of this huge estimate, the district should review opportunities for contracting for food services from neighboring districts or commercial vendors.

Improved Community Outreach: MISD's communication with the community is limited. An October 1999 survey of community members showed there was a need for better communication between the school and the community. To increase community involvement, MISD should publish a quarterly newsletter and complete the construction of the Web site, with assistance from community or parent volunteers.

Energy Management: MISD has not been aggressive in pursuing energy savings. A preliminary review by the State Energy Conservation Office showed that through a series of lighting and air conditioning retrofits, the district could save $4,100 annually in utility bills.

Savings and Investment Requirements

Many of TSPR's recommendations would result in no fiscal impact. Proposed investments of additional funds usually are related to increased efficiencies or savings or improved productivity and effectiveness.

If all TSPR recommendations are implemented, MISD could achieve total net savings of $14,530 by 2004-05 (**Exhibit 2**).

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

Year	Total
2000-01 Initial Annual Net Savings	$1,566
2001-02 Additional Annual Net Savings	$4,616
2002-03 Additional Annual Net Savings	$4,616
2003-04 Additional Annual Net Savings	$4,616
2004-05 Additional Annual Net Savings	$4,616
One Time Net Savings/(Costs)	($5,500)
TOTAL SAVINGS PROJECTED FOR 2000-2005	**$14,530**

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

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

Exhibit 3
Summary of Costs and Savings by Recommendation

	Recommendation	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	Total 5-Year (Costs) or Savings	One Time (Costs) or Savings
Chapter 1 District Organization and Management								
1	Develop a comprehensive strategic plan addressing future educational, facility and financial needs. p. 16	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0

2	Publish a quarterly newsletter and complete the construction of the Web site. p. 18	($360)	($360)	($360)	($360)	($360)	($1,800)	$0
3	Develop a Parent/Volunteer Involvement Program. p. 20	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
	Totals-Chapter 1	**($360)**	**($360)**	**($360)**	**($360)**	**($360)**	**($1,800)**	**$0**

Chapter 2 Educational Service Delivery

4	Teachers who are successful in supporting student technology projects should share their techniques with other teachers. p. 34	$0	($2,000)	($2,000)	($2,000)	($2,000)	($8,000)	$0
	Totals-Chapter 2	**$0**	**($2,000)**	**($2,000)**	**($2,000)**	**($2,000)**	**($8,000)**	**$0**

Chapter 3 Financial Management

5	Settle the successor-in-interest for the Bastrop County Education District among participating districts to reduce administrative time and effort. p. 50	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
6	Generate a monthly budget comparison report for the board. p. 53	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
7	Develop an implementation	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0

	strategy for GASB Statement No. 34 to meet annual external financial reporting guidelines and TEA's regulatory reporting requirements. p. 55							
8	Establish policies and procedures to require capitalization of items with a unit cost of $5,000 or more, and inventory items with a unit cost of $500. p. 57	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
9	Establish procedures to ensure compliance with all state and local purchasing laws and policies. p. 60	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
10	Establish interlocal agreements with other school districts before making purchases using other school districts' bids. p. 61	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
	Totals-Chapter 3	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**
Chapter 4 Support Services								
11	Develop written job expectations and performance appraisals for each Food Services	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0

12	Develop a uniform policy and conform with the Federal Food Code requirements for proper hair restraints. p. 71	($124)	($124)	($124)	($124)	($124)	($620)	$0	
13	Review outsourcing opportunities for MISD's Food Services operation to reduce deficits and remedy facility needs. p. 73	$0	$3,000	$3,000	$3,000	$3,000	$12,000	$0	
14	Discontinue the practice of assigning color-coded meal cards to students that represents their eligibility status. p. 76	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	
15	Solicit bids from various vendors for a point-of-sale system, or consider an automated solution for collecting, reporting and managing food service financial data. p. 77	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($5,500)
16	Modify the existing technology plan to delineate the specific tasks	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	

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	necessary to reach the district goals and spending priorities. p. 89							
17	Develop of comprehensive disaster recovery plan and test it. p. 90	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
18	Develop a technology forum among all Bastrop County districts. p. 92	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
19	Request a State Energy Conservation Office audit and shift a portion of the bond proceeds already dedicated to building improvements to energy saving retrofits. p. 94	$2,050	$4,100	$4,100	$4,100	$4,100	$18,450	$0
	Totals–Chapter 4	**$1,926**	**$6,976**	**$6,976**	**$6,976**	**$6,976**	**$29,830**	**($5,500)**
	TOTAL SAVINGS	**$2,050**	**$7,100**	**$7,100**	**$7,100**	**$7,100**	**$30,450**	**$0**
	TOTAL COSTS	**($484)**	**($2,484)**	**($2,484)**	**($2,484)**	**($2,484)**	**($10,420)**	**($5,500)**
	NET SAVINGS (COSTS)	**$1,566**	**$4,616**	**$4,616**	**$4,616**	**$4,616**	**$20,030**	**($5,500)**

5 Year Gross Savings	**$30,450**	
5 Year Gross Costs	**($15,920)**	
Grand Total	**$14,530**	

Chapter 1
DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter describes the organization and management of the McDade Independent School District (MISD) in two areas:

A. Planning
B. Community Involvement

An elected Board of Trustees governs each Texas school district, which governs and oversees the management of the schools.

School boards work closely with the superintendent and central office administrators as well as the communities they serve. Administrators work closely with teachers and support staff and regularly seek support from parents and community members. In well run districts the balance is maintained when everyone knows their roles and responsibilities and communication is open and honest.

BACKGROUND

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

- Governance and management oversight of the public schools of the district;
- Adopting such rules, regulations and bylaws as the board may deem proper;
- Approving and implementing a district-developed plan for site-based decision-making;
- Levying and collecting taxes and issuing bonds;
- Selecting tax officials, as appropriate to the district's needs;
- Preparing, adopting and filing a budget for the next succeeding fiscal year;
- Filing of a report of disbursements and receipts for the preceding fiscal year that is audited at district expense by a Texas certified or public accountant holding a permit from the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy;
- Publishing an annual report describing the district's educational performance, including campus performance objectives and the progress of each campus toward these objectives;

- Receiving bequests and donations or other money coming legally into its hands in the name of the district;
- Selecting a depository for district funds;
- Ordering elections, canvassing the returns, declaring results and issuing certificates of election as required by law;
- Disposing of property no longer necessary for the operation of the school district;
- Acquiring and holding real and personal property in the name of the district; and
- Holding all powers and duties that not specifically delegated by statute to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) or the State Board of Education.

The organization and management of a school district involves cooperation between elected members of the Board of Trustees and the staff of the district. The board sets goals and objectives for the district in both instructional and operational areas. The board also determines governance policies, approves plans to implement those policies, provides the funding sources necessary to carry out the plans and evaluates the results.

The staff is responsible for managing the day-to-day implementation of the plans approved by the board. They recommend modifications when 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 amount of resources necessary to operate the district and to accomplish the board's goals and objectives.

School districts are a vital part of communities, especially small communities. Providing accurate, timely information to the public builds positive relationships with parents, area businesses, civic and faith organizations and other citizens. Accurate information allows the citizens to draw conclusions and make decisions based on fact rather than rumor and gossip. An effective school district not only communicates its goals and accomplishments but also solicits input from the community to establish its goals. The manner in which school districts perform this function affects how the public views the district.

The superintendent is responsible for all business functions of MISD. The assistant superintendent is responsible for all educational service delivery and management functions. The assistant superintendent acts as the school principal. The superintendent and assistant superintendent share Human Resource management responsibilities. **Exhibit 1-1** shows the general functional organization of MISD.

Exhibit 1-1
General Organization of MISD
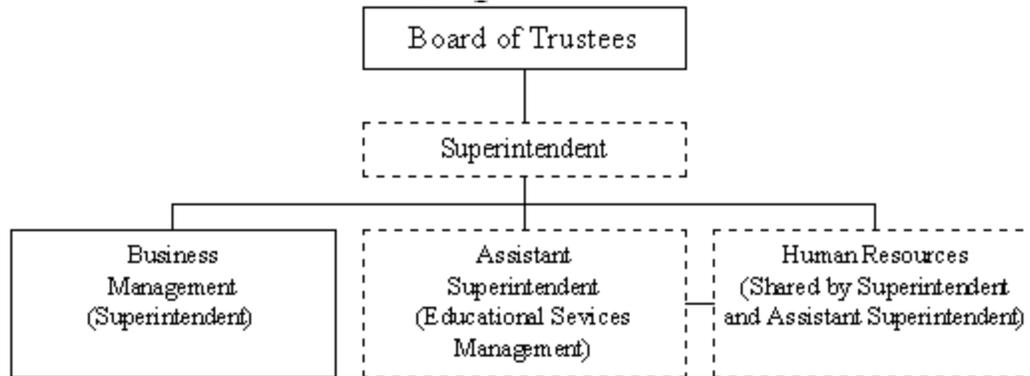
Source: MISD superintendent.

MISD is a small school district serving approximately 200 students in pre-kindergarten through the seventh grade. The district just added the seventh grade in the 1999-2000 school year. Most MISD secondary students attend school in adjacent Elgin ISD to the east. A smaller number of the district's secondary students attend school in adjacent Lexington ISD to the north. In the 1999-2000, MISD received a district rating of Recognized from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for student performance.

MISD includes 64 square miles in north central Bastrop County. The district's history dates back to 1892 when the district made its first school supply purchase. In 1902, MISD bought the land where the current elementary school is today. Some of the district's current students are part of families who have lived in the area for multiple generations. There is a strong feeling among MISD residents that the district helps unify the local McDade community.

In 1888, MISD students were educated in a school district owned house on a bus lot. By the 1930s, MISD had a two-story school building at the current elementary school location. In 1935, MISD discontinued its high school and became a kindergarten through grade 8 district. After the two-story school building burned down in 1948, MISD sold bonds and in 1949, built the brick building that currently houses the elementary school.

MISD became an accredited district in 1976 for kindergarten through grade 6, as a result of the Texas Legislature's enacting requirements for accreditation of school districts in Texas. As a part of the accreditation plan developed in 1977, MISD held a bond election for the purpose of adding a gymnasium in 1980. The bond issue was defeated, but the MISD trustees used five-year time warrants obtained from the state to build the facility anyway. This action by MISD trustees angered some district

residents and in 1987, residents petitioned a vote in accordance with state law for dissolution of the district. MISD's voters resoundingly defeated the dissolution petition by a four-to-one margin. MISD has never had a petition for consolidation with a neighboring school district.

During the early 1980s oil boom, MISD's average daily attendance for its kindergarten through grade 6 students rose to 120. After the boom, the district's average daily attendance declined to 85 students. MISD's growth pattern resumed in 1994. With the addition of the seventh grade in 1999-2000, MISD's average daily attendance has risen from 90 to 200 students. MISD is planning to add the eighth grade in 2000-01. The district's growth brings a need for additional facilities and facility improvements and in May of 2000, district voters approved issuing $1.5 million in bonds by a two-to one margin.

The MISD board consists of seven members elected at large for three-year terms (**Exhibit 1-2**).

Exhibit 1-2
MISD Board Members
May 2000

Board Member	Board Position	Term Expires	Occupation
Willard Rother	President	2003	Retired government employee
Bill Kahanek	Vice President	2002	Engineer
Win Harbison, Jr.	Secretary	2001	Certified public accountant
Janet Brade	Member	2003	Retired government employee
Ruth Miller	Member	2002	State government employee
Wayne Skubiata	Member	2001	Federal government employee
Freddie Wilson	Member	2001	Technology

Source: MISD superintendent.

MISD holds trustee elections each year on the first Saturday in May, in accordance with state law.

The board meets at 7:00 p.m. on the third Monday of each month in the Administration Building. Each year, after the installation of newly elected members, the board elects officers.

The district is served by Regional Education Service Center 13 (Region 13), located in Austin.

For this review, MISD selected peer districts for comparative purposes based upon certain similarities in student enrollment, student performance and community and student demographics. Those districts are Bartlett, Dime Box, Moulton, Prairie Lea and Silverton ISDs.

Chapter 1

PLANNING

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

Section 11.253(a) of the Texas Education Code requires each school district to maintain current policies and procedures to ensure the effective planning and site-based decision-making occur at each campus to direct and support the improvement of student performance. Districts must also establish a district-level planning and decision-making committee configured like the campus committees.

MISD operates one campus, Early Education through grade 7, therefore the district level committee and the campus committee are one and the same. The committee is composed of three parents, one community/business representative, four teachers elected to represent primary grades, intermediate grades, middle school grades and special programs and two paraprofessionals. One of the teachers chairs the committee and the assistant superintendent functions as a facilitator. Committee members serve two-year terms staggered so that one half of the committee is new each year. The site-base committee meets once each six-weeks and for an entire day in June to develop and monitor the District/Campus Improvement Plan. Other items addressed by the committee include recommendations for federal fund budgeting, staff development, parent/community involvement, technology and discipline management.

The budget process should follow the plan's development and implementation by allocating the resources necessary to reach the performance targets established in the plan. When coordinated properly, the combination of planning and budgeting reduces confusion and conflicts over how a school district distributes scarce resources.

FINDING

The challenge to the MISD board and the McDade community is to determine the district's future.

The district has not developed a comprehensive strategic plan addressing future educational, facility and financial needs. A comprehensive plan

helps evaluate options for the future and serves as a framework for ongoing strategic planning.

The MISD board and superintendent have no plans to move to a kindergarten through grade 12 district. District officials, however, indicate a continuing interest in considering a kindergarten through grade 12 school as the community continues to grow. According to the MISD superintendent, the community thinking and sentiment is positive in all aspects, when discussing the future of the district. He stated, however, "we have no push or plan for a kindergarten through grade 12 district, but we do talk a lot about it."

According to TEA, the decision rests entirely with the MISD board. It is, according to TEA, an "at will" choice and does not require state approval. Even the "flow of funds" to the district is up to the board, according to a TEA official. Any board, that considers a move to a kindergarten through grade 12 district, however, must evaluate the legal and financial requirements of the district.

In 1995, Grape Creek ISD became a K-12 district, beginning with the addition of a freshmen class in the fall of 1996 and one grade each year thereafter. GCISD is a district of 1,200 students near San Angelo. In May 2000, the district graduated its first senior class. According to the current superintendent, the transition was most difficult and nearly failed due to a lack of wise financial planning. He stated, the "district did too much too fast," and was fortunate to avoid "catastrophic financial and educational consequences." The primary difficulty came in the construction of a new high school facility without an approved bond. Now, despite inquiries made by the board, no other districts in the area are interested in consolidating because of the large debt incurred by GCISD and the location of the facility.

Comments from focus groups, staff members and individual community residents highlight the dilemma of remaining a small school district:

- Don't think we need an eighth grade until the current grades are a bit more stable and operational.
- Small school environment with a lower student/teacher ratio. Really like this, but problems with teacher retention offsets this positive aspect of our school.
- Parents feel welcome at school. It is a community school that fosters a community feeling.
- More communication on how the public can be involved in district planning and decision-making.
- Generally, the superintendent does a good job getting the most from our tax dollars.

- The school is wonderful. The teachers are great, and the curriculum on target.
- I want to keep our school here.

Comments from focus groups, staff members and individual community residents also indicate some community desire for academic opportunities and other benefits provided in larger school districts:

- Need advanced classes for accelerated students.
- We need some level of guidance counseling at the middle school.
- The district has trouble retaining qualified teachers. Why can't our district pay our teachers better?
- Difficult to share/schedule lunchroom and gym facilities between elementary and middle school.
- We need adequate facilities for all our students.
- There are a lot of statewide procurement opportunities that are not being explored.
- Storage and warehousing problems may be addressed by the possibility of future site growth.
- Allow accelerated students to progress without being held back by slower students.
- The major challenge is enrollment growth and the need for more classrooms.
- Growth in the community and school must be addressed. It will cost lots of money.

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

The board adopts priorities each year and indicates what the district plans to do in a given year to achieve the district's goals and objectives. The plan sets priorities and measurable objectives, assigns responsibility for implementation at each level and defines a mechanism to measure the district's success in accomplishing its priorities.

Each priority relates to the annual budget, ensuring that adequate resources are assigned to accomplish each one. The board and administration communicate budget information to the public in concert with the established priorities of the district using the statutorily required accounting system.

In Texas, 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 System (AEIS);
- Measurable district performance objectives for all appropriate indicators for all student populations;
- Strategies for improving student performance;
- Resources needed 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.

In MISD, a districtwide committee comprised of board members, district staff, principals, teachers and citizens must develop the DIP. A site-based decision-making committee (SBDM) on each campus develops a Campus Improvement Plan (CIP) (MISD has only one campus.). The CIP identifies what each school will do in a given year to help achieve district and school objectives.

Recommendation 1:

Develop a comprehensive strategic plan addressing future educational, facility and financial needs.

The plan should serve as the framework for future district decisions. The board should appoint a committee of staff members and citizens who are representative of the school and community and charge the committee with developing a recommended plan for the board to consider. The plan should include clearly defined goals and objectives and priorities, appropriate implementation strategies and should clearly specify how the district will evaluate the plan, once adopted by the board.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board, in consultation with the superintendent, appoints a committee to evaluate the district's educational, facilities and financial needs and options for the future and prepares a recommended plan for the district that will serve as the framework for future decisions.	September 2000

2.	Using all of the information and resources available, the committee designs and recommends a recommended plan and presents it to the board.	April 2000
3.	The board holds at least two public hearings on the proposed plan.	May 2001
4.	The board considers and/or revises and approves the plan.	June 2001
5.	The board refers the plan to the superintendent to include in the 2000-0l budget, based on the priorities set forth in the plan.	July 2001
6.	The board reports the results of its planning and the manner in which it will reflect priorities in the proposed 2001-02 budget.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 1

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

School districts conduct a wide variety of community involvement activities. In smaller districts like MISD, the superintendent and the campus administrators generally coordinate and carry out these activities.

Districts involve the community by providing opportunities for volunteers, mentors, booster clubs, parent/teacher organizations and school/business partnerships to be active in the school district. Districts use newsletters, town hall meetings, cable television programs, Internet web sites, school calendars, brochures and inserts in news media published by other entities to communicate with parents and other members of the community.

A school board also can play an important role in community involvement. When citizens perceive that school boards are accessible and sensitive to their concerns, they are less likely to feel alienated from the district.

FINDING

MISD's communication with the community is limited to parents. MISD sends a calendar of events home with students and mails the calendar to board members. The district sends information about activities at the school and communications from individual teachers home with the students.

The district posts the date of the next board meeting on the marquee in front of the school, on the door to the main office and at the local Post Office.

MISD uses a single committee as the campus site-based committee and the district improvement committee because there is only one campus. The committee is composed of three parents, two paraprofessionals and four teachers elected to represent primary grades, intermediate grades, middle school grades and special programs. One of the teachers chairs the committee, and the assistant superintendent functions as a facilitator. The site-based committee meets once each six-weeks and for an entire day in June to develop and monitor the District/Campus Improvement Plan.

MISD's site-based committee used opinion inventory forms from the National Study of School Evaluation to conduct a survey in October 1999. The committee randomly selected 25 community members, 25 parents, 20 staff members and 25 students to receive the inventory. Each form

included questions regarding the quality of instructional programs, support for student learning, school climate and resource management. The parent and community forms included questions on school program awareness, responsiveness to community and school/parent/community relations.

The rate of return on the surveys was low. Only 32 percent of the community members returned the survey, 24 percent of the parents, 60 percent of the staff and 40 percent of the students. The results of the survey from the community members showed there was a need for better communication between the school and the community, while the parents felt communication was appropriate.

Six of eight community responses either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement: "I wish I were better informed about our school." One response was neutral, and one response was marked "do not know." The responses to the statement "The community receives the information it needs about the school's programs were as follows: Agree- one; Neutral - three; Disagree - two; Strongly disagree - one and Do not know - one.

Comments on this issue from participants in interviews, focus groups and the public forum conducted by the TSPR team included the following:

- "Communication is an issue."
- "Public is not informed about school policies and often have to ask for copies from school administrators."
- "Most people are uninformed about the work of the district."

The assistant superintendent said MISD planned to publish a newsletter, but did not complete the publication before the close of the school year. She also said MISD has a Web site under construction through Region 13.

Informed communities generally support school district activities. Informing citizens about the programs and activities of the district allows them to make decisions based on facts rather than on rumors.

Brazos ISD, a small district, publishes a district newsletter each six weeks. The superintendent provides district and board activity information and each campus provides an article of school news. The journalism class at the middle school organizes the information into a newsletter format, and the secretary to the superintendent makes the needed copies and prepares the newsletter for mailing.

Socorro ISD mails *Spotlight,* a bimonthly newsletter to all parents and members of the community in English and Spanish.

Recommendation 2:

Publish a quarterly newsletter and complete the construction of the Web site.

The district should seek community or parent volunteers to assist in the compilation and publication of a newsletter and students, as part of the technology-related instructional programs, should assist in website development and updating activities.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent seeks parent volunteers or volunteers from the community to assist with the production of a newsletter.	September 2000
2.	Volunteers gather information for the district newsletter and for the Web site.	September 2000
3.	The assistant superintendent publishes the district newsletter.	September 2000
4.	The Middle School Science teacher/Technology coordinator works with students to complete the Web site.	October 2000
5.	MISD middle school students update the Web site in conjunction with technology-related courses.	Monthly

FISCAL IMPACT

Reproduction costs for a two to four page newsletter would include one to two reams of paper for each issue and toner for the copy machine. ($2 for two reams times four issues = $16 + $24 toner = $40). The McDade Post Office estimates 300 postal patrons in town and another 100 to 200 in the rural areas for a total of no more than 500 addresses. Postage costs are 16 cents for bulk rate. If the newsletter is mailed four times per year, the total cost of postage would be $320 (16 cents for 500 households times four mailings = $320).

The total cost of reproduction and postage would be $360 ($40 for supplies plus $320 for postage) for the new publication.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Publish a quarterly newsletter and complete the construction of the Web site.	($360)	($360)	($360)	($360)	($360)

FINDING

MISD's parent/teacher organization, Parent Teacher Incorporated (PTI), has approximately 70 members. This organization offers some opportunities for parents and community members to be involved with the school. The PTI president reported that about six or seven of the 70 members attend the regularly held meetings. Many more members respond when the PTI sponsors a fundraiser or other activity. **Exhibit 1-3** shows examples of activities sponsored by the PTI.

Exhibit 1-3
Examples of PTI Activities
1999-2000

Month	Summary of Activities
October	Fall Festival
April	Spring Fling
May	Teacher Appreciation Week
May	Field Day

Source: Assistant Superintendent, McDade Independent School District, April 2000.

Parents and members of the community said there was a need for more parent and community involvement. Some of the comments made in interviews, the public forum and in focus groups follow:

- "Parent involvement is very rare."
- "Need more parent involvement."
- "A lot of parents do try to be involved, but there have been many occasions where teachers have chosen not to let them."
- "Parent participation would be higher if they were to be more accepted and felt wanted."

Parent and community involvement can occur in a variety of ways, such as attending school events, working on school projects and assisting the school by volunteering in the office, the library and the classroom. Parent involvement also means being involved with the child's learning by ensuring homework is completed and participating in parent/teacher conferences.

La Mesa Elementary School in Plainview ISD created a Parenting/Volunteer Center where parents go to get parenting tips, meet

other parents and educators and help with making materials for classroom projects.

Bastrop ISD organized a program, Hand in Hand, which uses parents and community members as mentors to children who have been identified as at risk. The mentor meets with the student at school for 30 minutes weekly. The mentor serves as a guide, a friend, a listener and a tutor.

Santa Gertrudis ISD parents are afforded an opportunity to become involved in various ways. Each campus has a parent/teacher organization that meets monthly. The parent/teacher organization provides support in the academic endeavors of the district by donating funds which supply rewards for the students who meet their reading goals on the Accelerated Reading Program. Additionally, the club raises funds through a variety of activities to support the district's scholarship fund.

Club members also operate all concession stands for home game sports events and have donated of their time to assist the district in building a gazebo, a greenhouse and landscaping part of the school yard.

Recommendation 3:

Develop a Parent/Volunteer Involvement Program.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The site-based decision-making committee (SBDM) creates and integrates a parent/community involvement plan into the Campus Improvement Plan (CIP).	October 2000
2.	The assistant superintendent reviews the plan at the PTI meeting and solicits a volunteer coordinator for the program.	November 2000
3.	The assistant superintendent publishes an article about the parent/community involvement plan in the newsletter.	November 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2
EDUCATION SERVICE DELIVERY

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

A. Compensatory Education
B. Special Student Populations
C. Instructional Technology

The primary mission of every school district is educating children. Accomplishing that mission takes a great deal of coordination and careful planning.

BACKGROUND

MISD's assistant superintendent manages all educational service delivery functions. The assistant superintendent also serves as the school principal.

Since 1993, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has rated and accredited districts and schools based upon specific performance measures including the reading, writing and math portions of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), dropout rates and attendance rates. TEA currently rates districts each year as presented in **Exhibit 2-1**.

Exhibit 2-1
TEA Accountability Ratings
1998-99

Rating	Applicability/Explanation
Exemplary	District and campus
Recognized	District and campus
Academically Acceptable	District
Acceptable	Campus
Academically Unacceptable	District
Low Performing	Campus
Alternative Education (AE):	Campuses that applied and were identified as eligible to be evaluated under alternative education procedures

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

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1998-99.

Exhibit 2-2 presents the enrollments and accreditation status for MISD and its peer districts.

Exhibit 2-2
MISD and Peer District Enrollments and Accountability Ratings
1998-99

District	Enrollment	Accreditation Status
Bartlett	573	Academically Acceptable
Dime Box	240	Academically Acceptable
Moulton	362	Exemplary
McDade	**177**	**Recognized**
Prairie Lea	205	Academically Acceptable

Silverton	274	Recognized

Source: TEA, AEIS 1998-99.

Compared to its peer districts, MISD has the second highest percentage of Anglo students, the second lowest percentage of African American students and the third lowest percentage of Hispanic students (**Exhibit 2-3**).

Exhibit 2-3
Ethnicity of MISD, Peer Districts and State Student Populations
1998-1999

Entity	Anglo	Hispanic	African American	Other
Moulton	80.1%	18.8%	.6%	.6%
McDade	**65.5**%	**31.1%**	**2.3%**	**1.1%**
Silverton	62.8%	34.3%	2.9%	0%
Dime Box	50.0%	25.4%	24.6%	0%
Prairie Lea	46.3%	44.9%	6.8%	0%
Bartlett	45.0%	34.4%	20.1%	.5%
State	44.1%	38.6%	14.4%	2.8%

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 1998-99.
Note: Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Twenty percent of MISD students are classified as limited English proficiency (LEP) students, and 54 percent are classified as economically disadvantaged students (**Exhibit 2-4** and **Exhibit 2-5**). The percentages of LEP students and economically disadvantaged students in MISD are higher than the percentages in the Regional Education Service Center 13 (Region 13) and the state.

Exhibit 2-4
MISD, Region 13 and State LEP Students as a Percentage
of Total Student Population
1995-96 to 19998-99

Entity	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99

McDade	14%	19%	20%	20%
Region 13	8%	8%	7%	8%
State	13%	13%	13%	14%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1995-96 to 1998-1999.

Exhibit 2-5
MISD, Region 13 and State Economically Disadvantaged Students
as a Percentage of Total Student Population
1995-96 to 1998-99

Entity	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
McDade	44%	56%	54%	54%
Region 13	38%	38%	37%	37%
State	47%	48%	49%	49%

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

Student performance in MISD fluctuated from year to year. Between 1995-96 and 1999-2000, student performance decreased in reading and math and increased 11 percentage points in writing. MISD was rated as academically unacceptable in 1997-1998 due to the low percentage of students passing writing (**Exhibit 2-6**). Fluctuations in student performance are not uncommon in smaller districts because the performance of one or two students can positively or negatively impact district overall performance. For 1999-2000, the district received an academically acceptable rating.

Exhibit 2-6
Percentage of All MISD Students Passing TAAS, All Levels
1995-96 to 1999-2000

Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Reading	89.4%	82.7%	83.3%	86.9%	77.2%
Math	91.5%	92.3%	84.7%	87.5%	80.2%
Writing	72.7%	88.9%	33.3%	91.7%	81.3%

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

Anglo student performance in MISD remained fairly constant in reading and math. In 1997-98,
22 percent of Anglo students passed TAAS, a decrease of 65.3 percentage points (**Exhibit 2-7**).

Exhibit 2-7
Percentage of MISD Anglo Students Passing TAAS
1995-96 to 1999-2000

Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Reading	89.5%	83.3%	83.0%	86.0%	86.0%
Math	89.5%	92.9%	84.8%	84.4%	82.7%
Writing	80.0%	87.5%	22.2%	88.9%	70.0%

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

Two African American students tested in 1997-98. In other years, zero tested.

Hispanic student performance in MISD fluctuated from year to year. Due to the small numbers of students tested, one or two students not passing or passing skew the percentage greatly. (**Exhibit 2-8**).

Exhibit 2-8
Percentage of MISD Hispanic Students Passing TAAS
1995-96 to 1999-2000

Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Reading	83.3%	77.8%	81.8%	88.2%	60.7%
Math	100%	88.9%	90.9%	94.4%	75%
Writing	0%	100%	35.7%	100%	100%

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 1994-95 - 1998-99
and preliminary TAAS results 2000.

Between 1995-96 and 1997-1998, economically disadvantaged student performance in reading and writing fluctuated from year to year and then increased beginning in 1998-1999. Performance in mathematics remained

steady for three years and increased eight percentage points in 1998-1999. (**Exhibit 2-9**).

Exhibit 2-9
Percentage of MISD Economically Disadvantaged Students
Grades 3-8 and 10 Passing TAAS
1995-96 to 1999-2000

Grade/Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Reading	78.6%	65.0%	75.9%	82.8%	61.1%
Math	85.7%	85%	85.7%	93.3%	75.5%
Writing	66.7%	100%	22.2%	88.9%	0%

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

Exhibit 2-10 shows the exemptions from TAAS for MISD, Region 13, and the state for 1997-98 and 1998-99. Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) exemptions are granted to individual special education students in a process controlled by the ARD committee on each campus. Each special education student receives an annual evaluation of their progress by the ARD committee, which includes the regular education teacher, the special education teacher, an assessment person (e.g., diagnostician, counselor), and an administrator who is empowered to commit the school district to whatever services are determined necessary by the ARD committee.

The Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) on each campus grants LEP exemptions to individual bilingual/ESL students. The same types of positions comprise the LPAC committee as the ARD committee. But instead of a special education teacher, the LPAC has a bilingual or ESL teacher.

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

As shown in **Exhibit 2-10**, MISD's TAAS exemption rate was higher in some categories than the regional and state averages. Overall the percent of students not tested declined from 10.3 percent in 1997-98 to 8.9 percent in 1998-99.

Exhibit 2-10
MISD, Region 13, and State Percentages of Students

Not Tested
1997-98 and 1998-99

	McDade		Region 13		State	
Category	**1997-98**	**1998-99**	**1997-98**	**1998-99**	**1997-98**	**1998-99**
Absent	1.1%	0%	1.0%	0.9%	0.8%	0.7%
ARD exempted	0%	5.1%	4.0%	5.7%	5.2%	6.9%
LEP exempted	9.2%	3.8%	1.1%	1.0%	2.3%	2.2%
Other	0%	0%	0.6%	0.9%	0.7%	0.9%
Not tested - all	**10.3%**	**8.9%**	**6.8%**	**8.4%**	**8.9%**	**10.7%**

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

In 1999-2000, MISD officially had one campus and two buildings. One building serves as the elementary school and one serves as a middle school with grades six and seven. The district is served by the Regional Education Service Center 13 (Region 13), which is located in Austin.

The ethnic student breakdown of the district includes 2.3 percent African American students, 31.1 percent Hispanic students, 65.5 percent Anglo students and 1.1 percent Native American and Asian/Pacific Islander students.

As **Exhibit 2-11** shows, MISD experienced an increase of 28.3 percent in its student enrollment from 1995-96 through 1998-99. During the same period, Region 13 and the state have experienced increases in the total number of students by 11.7 and 5.5 percent, respectively. MISD grew faster over this period than any of the peer districts, with only Prairie Lea having a similar growth rate.

Exhibit 2-11
MISD, Peer District, Region 13 and State Growth Rates
1995-96 to 1999-2000

Entity	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	Percent Change
Region 13	**231,518**	**240,713**	**247,989**	**258,660**	**11.7%**
State	**3,740,260**	**3,828,975**	**3,891,877**	**3,945,367**	**5.5%**
Bartlett	565	571	552	573	3.2%
Dime Box	240	245	216	240	0.0%

Moulton	374	377	377	362	-3.2%
McDade	**138**	**167**	**178**	**177**	**28.3%**
Prairie Lea	161	194	201	205	27.3%
Silverton	285	288	291	274	-3.9%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1995-96 to 1999-2000 and MISD superintendent.

MISD's budgeted expenditures in 1999-2000 totaled $1.358 million. Of that total, $839,000, or 61.8 percent, was budgeted for direct classroom instruction and other activities that deliver, enhance or affect instruction to students (**Exhibit 2-12**).

MISD's percentage of budgeted expenditures for direct classroom instruction is 55.3 percent higher than the state average. Compared to its peer districts, MISD budgets the third-highest percentage of its total expenditures on classroom instruction.

Exhibit 2-12
MISD, Region 13 State, and Peer District Classroom Instruction Expenditures
as a Percentage of Total Expenditures
1999-2000

Entity	Total Expenditures	Classroom Instruction Expenditures	Classroom Instruction Expenditures as a Percent of Total Expenditures
State	**$25,466,956,558**	**$13,159,445,408**	**51.7%**
McDade	**$1,497,793**	**$828,299**	**55.3%**
Bartlett	$4,212,990	$1,856,426	44.1%
Silverton	$2,081,754	$1,122,025	53.9%
Prairie Lea	$1,373,353	$708,181	51.6%
Moulton	$2,564,268	$1,487,937	58.0%
Dime Box	$1,667,614	$924,947	55.5%

Source: TEA, PEIMS 1999-2000.

The percent expenditures by program for 1999-2000 were similar to the percent expenditures by program in 1995-96, though there was significant variation in the intervening years. (**Exhibit 2-13**).

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

Program	1995-96 Actual	1996-97 Actual	1997-98 Actual	1998-99 Actual	1999-2000 Budget
Regular education	87.3%	83.0%	79.1%	83.7%	87.2%
Special education	3.1%	6.1%	6.9%	2.8%	3.4%
Compensatory education	8.2%	9.0%	11.5%	11.5%	7.8%
Bilingual/ESL education	1.0%	1.3%	2.0%	2.0%	1.0%
Gifted and talented education	0.4%	0.5%	0.6%	0	0.6%
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Source: TEA, AEIS 1995-96 to 1999-2000.
Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Chapter 2

A. COMPENSATORY EDUCATION

Accelerated or compensatory education, as defined in Section 42.152 (c) of the Texas Education Code, is a program designed to improve and enhance the regular education program for students in at-risk situations. The purpose is to increase the achievement and reduce the dropout rate of identified students in at-risk situations.

Section 29.081 of the Texas Education Code defines the criteria used to identify students in at-risk situations. Each student in grades 7-12 who is younger than 21 years of the age and who: 1) was not advanced from one grade level to the next for two or more school years; 2) has mathematics or reading skills that are two or more years below grade level; 3) did not maintain an average equivalent to 70 on a scale of 100 in two or more courses during a semester, or is not maintaining such an average in two or more courses in the semester and is not expected to graduate within four years of the date the student begins ninth grade; 4) did not perform satisfactorily on the statewide assessment instrument; or 5) is pregnant or a parent is considered to be in an at-risk situation.

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

Also, students in any grade are identified as students 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.

Districts must use state compensatory funding to supplement the regular education programs for students identified as being in at-risk situations. The state determines funding allocated under state compensatory education based on the number of economically disadvantaged students in the district. 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.

MISD's at-risk student population increased by more than 10 percent in 1997 when the percentage of students classified either as economically disadvantaged or eligible for receiving free and-reduced-priced meals grew from 44 percent to 57 percent (**Exhibit 2-14**). The state compensatory funds budgeted by MISD for 1999-2000 totaled $71,270. The district uses these funds to supplement other funding based upon the needs of the school.

Exhibit 2-14
MISD, At-Risk Students and Compensatory Funding
1998-99 and 1999-2000

Year	Number of Eligible Free and-Reduced-Priced Lunch Students	Total Enrollment	Percent of Total Enrollment	Compensatory Funding	Compensatory Expenditures per Eligible Student
1995-96	61	138	44%	$33,142	$543
1996-97	93	167	56%	$40,144	$432
1997-98	96	178	54%	$58,670	$590
1998-99	96	177	54%	$62,306	$649
1999-2000	113	200	57%	$71,270	$631

Source: PEIMS, AEIS 1995-99 and MISD assistant superintendent, May 2000.

The poverty level in the geographical area in which the school district is located is the basis for federal funding.

Title I, Part A funding is for helping disadvantaged children at risk of failure to meet high standards.
Part A - Migrant funding is for education of migratory students.

Title II, Part B funding is for Dwight D. Eisenhower professional development program.
Title IV is for safe and drug-free schools,
Title VI funding is for innovative education program strategies.

TEA and the federal government provide specific guidelines for determining which services to provide and the amount of funds used at each school. MISD submits an annual program evaluation for all Title funds. TEA reviews PEIMS data to ensure the district uses compensatory funds to supplement and not supplant regular education funds. TEA conducts a comprehensive audit every three years of each district receiving compensatory funding.

Exhibit 2-15 identifies funds the district received in each of these programs.

Exhibit 2-15
MISD Federal Program Funds
1997-98 to 1999-2000

Title	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
I, Part A	$0	$0	$26,996
I, Part A - Migrant	$7,763	$9,237	$5,000
II	$260	$282	$427
IV	$590	$627	$729
VI	$862	$1,041	$1,173
Total	**$9,475**	**$11,187**	**$34,315**

Source: MISD assistant superintendent, May 2000.

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

A schoolwide assistance school is one in which 50 percent of the student population is economically disadvantaged. MISD has identified 57 percent its student population as economically disadvantaged and qualifies as a schoolwide assistance school.

MISD used Title I, Part A funds to provide an after-school reading program and TAAS tutorials. Parent as Teacher positions that are used to assist teachers in classrooms receive funding from the Title I program.

MISD used Title VI funds to support innovative education strategies and school media center improvements. The funds pay for school library materials, reference texts, computer software and other materials used to improve student achievement.

MISD participates in a Region 13 Shared Services Agreement for use of the Title I, Part A - Migrant and Title II funds. Region 13 uses funds from all participating districts to provide services to the districts.

FINDING

Because of the district's size and need for certified teachers in many areas, MISD encourages teachers to obtain multiple certifications in addition to the required elementary education certification. MISD funds the cost of the required certification exam (EXCET). MISD also funds additional training for teachers in areas such as dyslexia. In grades K-5, five teachers and the assistant superintendent completed Reading certification in addition to their elementary education certification. The English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) teacher and three grade level teachers are ESL-certified. Two teachers and the assistant superintendent received dyslexia training.

COMMENDATION

MISD financially helps staff obtain multiple certifications to ensure that all students' needs are served by professional staff.

Chapter 2

B. SPECIAL STUDENT POPULATIONS

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

MISD's special education student population is 10.7 percent of the total student population. This percentage is approximately the same as the regional average, below the state average of 12 percent and the lowest among its peer districts (**Exhibit 2-16**).

Exhibit 2-16
MISD, Peer District, Region 13 and State Students in Special Programs
as a Percent of Total Enrollment
1998-99

Entity	Special Education
Prairie Lea	22.9%
Bartlett	18.5%
Silverton	16.8%
State	**12.0%**
Dime Box	11.7%
Moulton	11.0%
Region 13	**11.0%**
McDade	**10.7%**

Source: TEA, AEIS 1998-99.

Expenditures for special education increased by 23 percent from 1995-96 to 1999-2000, and the number of students served increased by 55 percent. The per-student expenditure decreased from $4,920 in 1995-96 to $3,926 in 1999-00, or by 20 percent (**Exhibit 2-17**).

Exhibit 2-17
MISD Expenditures for the Special Education Program
1995-96 to 1999-2000

Category	1995-96 Actual	1996-97 Actual	1997-98 Actual	1998-99 Actual	1999-2000 Budget	Percent Change
Special education expenditures	$54,116	$49,279	$59,024	$51,057	$66,748	23%
Special education students served	11	14	14	19	17	55%
Special education expenditures per student	$4,920	$3,520	$4,216	$2,687	$3,926	-20%

Source: TEA, PEIMS 1995-96 to 1998-99 and MISD superintendent.

Compared to its peer districts, MISD spends the lowest in gross dollars on the special education program and is the lowest in per-student expenditures (**Exhibit 2-18**).

Exhibit 2-18
MISD Special Education Program Expenditures vs. Peer Districts
1998-99 Budget

Entity	Special Education Expenditures	Expenditures per Eligible Student
Prairie Lea	$296,259	$6,303
Silverton	$229,427	$4,988
Bartlett	$528,570	$4,987
Moulton	$195,199	$4,880
Dime Box	$131,187	$4,685

McDade	$51,057	$2,687

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1998-99.

The special education program provides aides, diagnosticians, therapists, transportation, materials and supplies, adaptive and adaptive equipment, contract services and workshops.

MISD employs one special education teacher to deliver instructional services to special education students through a co-teaching/inclusion method. The special education teacher co-teaches with the regular classroom teacher or works in the regular classroom with the students who qualify for special education instruction and modifications. An aide assists the teacher with some students.

FINDING

MISD has been a member of the Giddings Special Education Cooperative for many years. Through its membership in the cooperative, MISD provides diagnostic and psycho-educational services, articulation and language speech services, related services (occupational and physical therapy, auditory and visual services) in a cost effective manner.

Seven school districts form the Giddings Special Education Cooperative with Giddings ISD serving as the fiscal agent. MISD pays a flat fee of 5 percent of the total expenses for co-op-provided services. MISD's cost for 1999-2000 is $24,060.

One student receives services in Austin at the School for the Blind. MISD contracts with a community member who works near the Austin School for the Blind to provide daily transportation.

COMMENDATION

MISD uses cooperatives to reduce its cost while still providing quality service.

Chapter 2

C. INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Integrating technology into the instructional programs of the school
district involves providing the infrastructure and technology hardware,
training the staff on the technology system, establishing curriculum for
technology, training staff on the curriculum standards and monitoring
implementation of the curriculum.

The State of Texas developed and implemented a new curriculum for
technology applications in September 1998. Prior to that time, there was
no specific technology curriculum in grades K-6.

FINDING

MISD has a teacher staff with varying degrees of success in implementing
technology into the classroom. MISD is making an effort to ensure every
student through grade 5 has a technology project every semester.

Intel's Teach to the Future Program recently trained nineteen Texas Master
Teachers in and around Austin. These Master Teachers have been trained
to more effectively apply computer technology in the classroom. Intel
pays for the training and upon graduation from the program, Master
Teachers are given laptop computers provided by IBM and Toshiba. In
return, Master Teachers are expected to train 60 other teachers within
three years.

Recommendation 4:

**Teachers who are successful in supporting student technology projects
should share their techniques with other teachers.**

MISD should apply for the Intel Teach to the Future Program by applying
through the Regional Training Agency at Texas A&M's Center for
Distance Learning and Research. If MISD is unable to place any teachers
in this program, then it should offer to the teachers who are most
successful in integrating technology into the classroom a stipend for
training other teachers.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent and the Technology coordinator identify teachers who have successfully used technology in their	September 2000

		classroom instruction.	
2.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction interviews each teacher about the responsibilities of being a resource for other teachers.	September 2000
3.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction recommends the teachers who can serve as a technology resource and applies for the Intel Teach for the Future Program.	October 2000
4.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and the director of Technology develop a plan for using the resource teachers in their technology training.	November 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

Participation in the Intel Teach to the Future Program can be implemented with existing resources. If the district is unable to place a teacher or teachers in the Intel program, a stipend of $1,000 per year should be offered to teachers willing to train other teachers on using technology in the classroom. No more than two teachers per year should be awarded the stipend.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Develop a core group of teachers who are successfully using technology as a resource for other teachers.	$0	($2,000)	($2,000)	($2,000)	($2,000)

Chapter 3
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the financial operations, asset and risk management functions and purchasing function of the McDade Independent School District (MISD) in the following areas:

A. Financial Management Practices
B. Financial Reporting and Budgeting
C. Fixed Assets
D. Purchasing and Contract Management

Successful financial management operations ensure a school district receives all available revenue from the state and federal governments; maintains a track record of sound financial decisions and adequate and equitable budget allocations; issues timely, accurate and informative reports on the district's financial position; maintains adequate internal controls; employs a skilled, well-trained staff; and maintains a consistent record of favorable reports from its external auditors.

Asset management involves the management of the district's cash resources and physical assets in a cost-effective and efficient manner. This function includes accounting for and safeguarding these elements against theft and obsolescence. Risk management includes the identification, analysis and reduction of risk through insurance and safety programs to protect the district's assets and employees.

BACKGROUND

MISD is a small school district serving approximately 200 students in pre-K-7. MISD just added the seventh grade in the 1999-2000 school year. Most MISD secondary students attend school in nearby Elgin ISD to the east. A smaller number of MISD secondary students attend school in adjacent Lexington ISD to the north.

Because of the district's small size, the superintendent is responsible for all business functions and related support activities. The district employs one bookkeeping clerk and relies heavily on Regional Education Service Center 13 (Region 13) for bookkeeping and accounting assistance through a contractual arrangement at an annual cost of $3,643. The Region 13 accountant visits the district frequently and assists in closing the books each month, creating payrolls and maintaining MISD's general automated accounting system.

MISD kept accounting records manually before the 1999-2000 school year. In 1999-2000, the district implemented the Regional Service Center Computer Cooperative (RSCCC) software supported by Region 13. The superintendent and Region 13 representative anticipate it will take the entire 1999-2000 year to fully implement the RSCCC system. The district has access to all RSCCC modules, including accounting and finance, budgeting, payroll, fixed assets and purchasing. The district now uses the RSCCC software for monthly accounting and reporting. This system uses a series of options, or menus, to allow a district to choose the level of detail it prefers to use in maintaining its business records.

The RSCCC software is able to generate a wide variety of management information reports in four general categories: summary reports, fixed asset/inventory reports, vendor/purchase order reports and journals/checks/detailed ledger reports. Summary reports are most useful for board members and district administrators and include a summary of general ledger activity, comparisons of revenue to budget, budget status by organization (for example, by department or school) and budget status by program (for example by technology or athletics).

The superintendent is responsible for cash management and investments. The bookkeeping clerk assists in all cash receipts and transfers as necessary for investment purposes. MISD's investment strategy is simple, and the district uses a government investment pool for its excess funds that not needed in regular bank accounts.

More than 56 percent of MISD's property value is in raw land, compared to 9.4 percent on average for the other districts in Region 13 and 7.3 percent for the entire state. MISD has less property value in business property than the state, peer districts and regional averages (**Exhibit 3-1**).

Exhibit 3-1
MISD, Region 13, State and Peer District Property Values
by Category as a Percentage of Total Property Value
1998-99

Entity	Business	Residential	Land	Oil and Gas	Other
Silverton	18.8%	16.9%	63.7%	0.1%	0.6%
McDade	**10.4%**	**30.1%**	**56.2%**	**0.0%**	**3.3%**
Moulton	18.2%	31.4%	49.2%	0.0%	1.2%
Bartlett	21.1%	36.3%	41.5%	0.0%	1.1%
Prairie Lea	16.7%	22.4%	31.9%	27.1%	2.0%

Dime Box	23.2%	6.9%	31.1%	37.9%	0.8%
Region 13	**32.0%**	**57.5%**	**9.4%**	**0.6%**	**0.5%**
State	**40.7%**	**47.2%**	**7.3%**	**4.1%**	**0.6%**

Source: TEA, AEIS 1998-99.

In 1998-99, Texas school districts budgeted an average of 47.8 percent of their revenues from the local property tax and 44.3 percent in revenue from the state. In MISD, those percentages were 37.1 and 55.3 percent, respectively. The averages for the region are 65.7 and 27.0 percent, respectively **(Exhibit 3-2)**. Compared to the region and the state, MISD is deriving more revenue from the state and is getting a comparatively low percentage from its local property tax. MISD is deriving the second highest percentage of revenue from property taxes among its peers.

Exhibit 3-2
MISD, Region 13, State and Peer District
Sources of Budgeted Revenue as a Percentage of Total Budgeted Revenue
1998-99

Entity	Local Property Tax	Other Local And Intermediate	State	Federal
Bartlett	15.8%	3.6%	77.6%	3.0%
Moulton	21.4%	4.0%	71.8%	2.8%
Silverton	25.4%	2.7%	69.5%	2.4%
Prairie Lea	30.5%	3.9%	61.9%	3.7%
McDade	**37.1%**	**3.1%**	**55.3%**	**4.5%**
State	**47.8%**	**4.4%**	**44.3%**	**3.4%**
Dime Box	60.5%	1.9%	33.1%	4.5%
Region 13	**65.7%**	**4.8%**	**27.0%**	**2.4%**

Source: TEA, AEIS 1998-99. Includes general, debt service, and food service funds.

Over the past four years, local property tax revenue as a source of funds for MISD has decreased from 35.8 to 26.2 percent of total revenues. At the same time, state revenue has increased from 56.9 to 67.6 percent of total

revenues (**Exhibit 3-3**). Federal funds have remained relatively stable over the last four years.

Exhibit 3-3
MISD Sources of Revenue as a Percentage of Total Revenue
1996-97 - 1999-2000

Source of Revenue	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	Percent Change
Local property tax	35.8%	31.8%	37.1%	26.2%	-26.8%
Other local and intermediate	3.7%	3.9%	3.1%	2.7%	-28.2%
State	56.9%	60.0%	55.3%	67.6%	18.7%
Federal	3.5%	4.3%	4.5%	3.5%	1.4%
Total	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	

Source: District Annual Financial and Compliance Reports 1996-97 and 1998-99, MISD budget information for 1999-2000 and TEA, AEIS 1998-99. Includes general, debt service and food service funds.

The local property tax rate has decreased by 1.4 percent over the last four years while the total students have increased by 20 percent. Local property values have increased by 21.1 percent for this same period (**Exhibit 3-4**).

Exhibit 3-4
MISD Tax Rates, Assessed Property Values
and Per Student Property Values and Debt Service Costs
1996-97 - 1999-2000

Category	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	Percent Change
Maintenance and operations tax rate	$1.30	$1.22	$1.38	$1.43	9.7%
Interest and sinking fund tax rate	$0.15	$0.12	$0.11	$0.00	(100.0%)
Total tax rate	**$1.45**	**$1.34**	**$1.49**	**$1.43**	**(1.4%)**
Total	**$24,262,181**	**$25,444,234**	**$26,012,529**	**$29,380,439**	**21.1%**

property value (000's)					
Total Students	170	182	185	204	20.0%
Value per student	$142,719	$139,803	$140,608	$144,022	0.9%

Source: District Financial and Compliance Reports 1996-97 - 1998-99 and Business Office records from superintendent.

For 1998-99, MISD's property value per student of $156,322 was lower than state and regional averages. The district's $1.49 tax rate and property value per student was higher than all but one of its peer districts (**Exhibit 3-5**). All peer districts have students in kindergarten through twelfth grades, while MISD has students in kindergarten through grade 6 only for the 1998-99 year.

Exhibit 3-5
MISD Tax Rate and Property Value per Student
Compared to Peer Districts, Region 13 and the State
1998-99

Entity	Tax Rate	Value per Student
Dime Box	$1.32	$284,022
Region 13	**$1.57**	**$260,338**
State	**$1.54**	**$190,769**
McDade	**$1.49**	**$156,322**
Prairie Lea	$1.34	$152,852
Silverton	$0.99	$143,473
Moulton	$1.21	$115,228
Bartlett	$1.40	$75,700

Source: TEA, AEIS 1998-99.

On the expenditure side, **Exhibit 3-6** shows how MISD's budgeted funds were distributed in 1998-99, compared to the region and the state averages. MISD spent comparatively more in the categories of instruction, school leadership, food services and central administration, while

spending comparatively less in the categories of instructional related services, security, debt service and capital outlay.

Exhibit 3-6
MISD, Region 13 and State Expenditures by Function
as a Percentage of Total Expenditures (In thousands)
1998-99

Function	McDade		Region 13		State	
	Amount	Percent	Amount	Percent	Amount	Percent
Instruction	**$581**	**59.5%**	**$762,050**	**49.0%**	**$11,830,069**	**51.3%**
Instructional related services	**$14**	**1.4%**	**$33,580**	**2.2%**	**$611,978**	**2.7%**
Instructional leadership	$0	0.0%	$18,122	1.2%	$284,266	1.2%
School leadership	**$69**	**7.1%**	**$76,510**	**4.9%**	**$1,208,860**	**5.2%**
Support services - student	$1	0.1%	$54,638	3.5%	$902,584	3.9%
Student transportation	$37	3.8%	$48,106	3.1%	$577,964	2.5%
Food services	**$71**	**7.3%**	**$76,050**	**4.9%**	**$1,149,708**	**5.0%**
Co-curricular/extracurricular activities	$0	0.0%	$32,037	2.1%	$524,145	2.3%
Central administration	**$77**	**7.9%**	**$55,507**	**3.6%**	**$859,514**	**3.7%**
Plant maintenance and operations	$81	8.3%	$136,431	8.8%	$2,304,705	10.0%
Security and monitoring services	**$0**	**0.0%**	**$4,640**	**0.3%**	**$114,989**	**0.5%**
Data processing services	$0	0.0%	$14,023	0.9%	$214,598	0.9%
Community services	$0	0.0%	$4,252	0.3%	$47,278	0.2%
Total operating expenditures	$931	95.4%	$1,315,946	84.7%	$20,630,658	89.4%
Debt service	$32	3.3%	$196,652	12.7%	$1,763,445	7.6%
Capital outlay	$13	1.3%	$41,853	2.7%	$678,240	2.9%
Total non-operating expenditures	**$45**	**4.6%**	**$238,505**	**15.3%**	**$2,441,685**	**10.6%**

| Total Expenditures | $976 | 100.0% | $1,554,451 | 100.0% | $23,072,343 | 100.0% |

On a per student basis over the past four years, expenditures have increased by 13.2 percent (**Exhibit 3-7**). Instruction and instructional leadership spending has increased by 9 percent or $271 per student, while school leadership spending has increased by 81.5 percent or $176 per student. Other operating costs have increased by 15.4 percent or $154 per student and non-operating expenditures, which include capital outlay and debt service costs, have increase over 64.1 percent or $100 per student.

Exhibit 3-7
MISD Expenditures Per Student
1996-97 - 1998-99

Expenditure Category	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	Percent Change
Instruction and instructional leadership	$3,010	$2,782	$2,875	$3,281	9.0%
School leadership	$216	$0	$296	$392	81.5%
Central administration	$495	$426	$423	$436	(11.9%)
Other operating	$1,002	$1,144	$1,003	$1,156	15.4%
Total operations	**$4,723**	**$4,352**	**$4,597**	**$5,265**	**11.5%**
Total non-operations	**$156**	**$1,752**	**$581**	**$256**	**64.1%**
Total per student	**$4,879**	**$6,104**	**$5,178**	**$5,521**	**13.2%**

Exhibit 3-8 shows MISD's 1999-2000 expenditures by function.

Exhibit 3-8
MISD Total Budgeted Expenditures by Function 1999-00 School Year

Function (Code)	McDade	Percent of Total
Instruction(11,95)	$839,707	61.8%

Instructional Related Services(12,13)	$18,752	1.4%
Instructional Leadership(21)	$0	0.0%
School Leadership(23)	$52,668	3.9%
Support Services-Student(31,32,33)	$601	0.0%
Student Transportation(34)	$37,643	2.8%
Food Services(35)	$79,639	5.9%
Cocurricular/Extracurricular Activities(36)	$0	0.0%
Central Administration(41,92)	$117,945	8.7%
Plant Maintenance and Operations(51)	$116,539	8.6%
Security & Monitoring Services(52)	$6,195	0.5%
Data Processing Services(53)	$0	0.0%
Debt Service	$64,209	4.7%
Capital Outlay	$24,845	1.8%
Other*	$0	0.0%
Total Budgeted Expenditures	**$1,358,743**	**100.0%**

Source: PEIMS Data, TEA.
*Expenditure not listed above and non-operational expenditures such as community and parental involvement services.

The superintendent and the assistant to the superintendent are responsible for the district's asset and risk management. Their responsibilities include cash management and investing, maintaining fixed assets records, managing long-term debt, administering the district's employee benefit programs as well as the workers' compensation program.

MISD uses First National Bank of Bastrop as its depository. Texas school districts bid and issue depository contracts for a two-year period. Recent legislation; however, allows a district to renew its depository contract for one additional two-year term if the district considers the service satisfactory. First National Bank of Bastrop maintains bank accounts for the district, which cover general operations, an interest and sinking fund and an ice cream fund.

MISD maintains one account, the library fund, at Elgin Bank. The district pays no service charges for banking services with the exception of charges

for research or statement reproduction, if requested by the district. All accounts are interest bearing, earning a fixed rate of 70 basis points below the 13-week T-Bill rate. As required by state law, the depository agreement also provides for the pledge of acceptable securities to protect district funds on deposit at the bank at any given time.

According to the district's investment policy, the investment program's main goal is to ensure the safety of district funds and to maximize financial returns within current market conditions. MISD also diversifies its investment portfolio, and tracks maturity scheduling and financial institutions to reduce the risk of loss resulting from over concentrating assets in a specific class of investments.

The policy allows the district to use seven investment types, with restrictions. These seven types are summarized as follows:

1. Obligations of the U. S. or Texas or its agencies and instrumentalities and political subdivisions including collateralized mortgage obligations directly issued by a federal agency or instrumentality of the United States as permitted by Government Code 2256.009;
2. Certificates of deposit as permitted by Acts of the 74th Legislative Session, Chapter 32;
3. Fully collateralized repurchase agreements permitted by Government Code 2256.011;
4. Banker's acceptances as permitted by Government Code 2256.013;
5. Commercial paper as permitted by Government Code 2256.013;
6. Two types of mutual funds as permitted Government Code 2256.014; and
7. Public funds investment pools as permitted by Government Code 2256.016-2256.019.

The district's investment portfolio for all funds as of March 2000 consists of deposits in a public funds investment pool, known as the Lone Star Pool.

The state uses countywide appraisal districts to determine the appraised and taxable values of properties within each taxing jurisdiction. The Bastrop Central Appraisal District (BCAD) performs these services for the district. The district also contracts with BCAD to collect its property taxes. MISD deposits daily tax collections directly to the Lone Star Liquidity Plus Fund.

MISD provides group health insurance to eligible district employees and their dependents through Fortis Insurance Company. All employees who work more than 20 hours per week receive $226.28 per month toward the

cost of employee only health insurance premiums. Employees may purchase, at their own expense, family coverage for an additional $379.14 per month.

Before enrollment, employees receive information about the coverage options available and their costs. MISD does not offer any voluntary insurance products, such as dental or vision coverage. The district also provides unemployment compensation and workers' compensation insurance. In addition to five personal leave days provided by the state each year, employees earn from four to seven local personal leave days per year. There is no limit on the accumulation of state personal leave days; employees may not accumulate local days.

Exhibit 3-9 provides a summary of the key plan provisions of the district's health insurance program.

Exhibit 3-9
Summary of MISD Medical Plan Benefits
1999-00

Item	Benefit Amount
Participating Provider Network	Healthsmart
Primary Care Physician Co-payment	$20
Calendar Year Deductible	$2,000 per person
Rate of Payment	80% of first $5,000; 100% thereafter
Family Out-of-Pocket Maximum	$6,000 per person
Maternity	Yes
Accidental Medical Expense Benefit	$300
Pre-existing Condition Coverage	Full
Prescription Drug Co-payments	$10 generic, $25 brand-name
Maximum Lifetime Benefit	$5,000,000
Hospital & Surgical Pre-authorization Required	Yes

Source: MISD superintendent.

Exhibit 3-10 details employee out-of-pocket costs for premiums.

Exhibit 3-10
MISD Full-Time Employee Monthly Premiums for Medical Coverage
1999-00

Category	Premiums
Employee only	$0
Employee + family	$379.14

Source: MISD superintendent.

Exhibit 3-11 summarizes MISD and selected peer districts employees'
out-of-pocket costs for medical insurance.

Exhibit 3-11
MISD's and Selected Districts' Employee Cost for Medical Insurance
1999-2000

District	Amount of Premium Paid by the District	Cost to Employee			
		Employee Only	Employee and Children	Employee and Spouse	Employee and Family
McDade ISD	**$226.28**	**$0**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**$379.14**
Bartlett	$130.00	$47.79	$186.30	$200.66	$407.13
Dime Box	$105.00	$118.01	$318.07	$341.00	$608.60
Prairie Lea	$130.00	$65.60	$241.63	$261.19	$495.91
Silverton	$$25.00	$153.25	$313.69	$349.14	$527.60

Source: Telephone survey conducted by TSPR, April 2000.

The superintendent is responsible for issuing bonds and other debt
instruments as well as managing the district's debt service. **Exhibit 3-12**
presents the district's outstanding debt at the end of fiscal 1999. The debt
consists of five-year warrants for facility improvements.

Exhibit 3-12
MISD Debt Schedule

Description	Original Issue	Interest Rates	Outstanding Principal, 8/31/99

Contractual Obligations, Series 1996	$45,000	8.0%			$30,000
Contractual Obligations, Series 1999	$78,000	8.0%			$78,000
Totals	**$123,000**	**N/A**			**$108,000**

Source: MISD superintendent.

MISD's property and casualty insurance coverage and educator's legal liability insurance is provided by Coregis Indemnity Company for the 1999-2000 year. **Exhibit 3-13** summarizes coverage levels purchased by the district, deductibles and contribution rates for 1999-2000. The increase in commercial fire premiums is due to the addition of a new building and the increase in auto coverage is due to the addition of a used bus.

Exhibit 3-13
MISD Property and Casualty Insurance Coverage and Contributions

	1999-2000 Liability Limits	Deductible	1998-99 Premium	1999-2000 Contribution	Difference Inc./(Dec.)	Percent Change Inc./(Dec.)
Commercial Fire	$100,000 per occurrence		$2,076	$3,049	$973	46.8%
General Liability	$1,000,000 per occurrence		$475	$475	$0	%0
School Professional Liability	$1,000,000 per occurrence and aggregate; $10,000 retention		$1,415	$1,405	($10)	(0.7%)
Auto	$100,000 per person, $300,000 per occurrence bodily injury; $100,000 per occurrence		$458	$611	$153	33.4%

	property damage					
Total			**$4,424**	**$5,540**	**$1,116**	**25.22%**

Source: MISD superintendent.

The superintendent makes investment decisions based on available cash balances as well as on the cash needed to pay bills and make payroll. Once cash needs are determined, the superintendent initiates any investment purchases or sales by telephone to Lone Star Pool. The pool forwards transactions to the superintendent's assistant who records the transaction in the general ledger system, and is responsible for balancing monthly bank statements.

The district is classified as a "type 2" payee for state funding purposes. A "type 2" payee classification results in receipt of most of the district's state funds in the first few months of the fiscal year. Thus, the district has excess funds in the first part of the fiscal year and can invest these funds on a short-term basis. The Bastrop County Appraisal District (BCAD) collects the taxes and deposits receipts directly to the Lone Star pool.

As of March 31, 2000, the district had $53,003 in checking accounts earning 4.89 percent. This amount represents 11 percent of the district's total cash and investment balances. **Exhibit 3-14** summarizes cash and investment balances by type.

Exhibit 3-14
MISD Schedule of Cash and Investments by Type
As of March 31, 2000

Deposit/ Investment	Balance	Percent of Total Cash and Investments	Average Interest Rate
Bank accounts	$53,003	11%	4.89%
Lone Star Liquidity Plus Fund	$174,206	35%	5.64%
Lone Star U.S. Government Fund*	$263,634	54%	3.76%
Total/Average	**$490,843**	**100%**	**4.76%**

Source: MISD superintendent.
* Net Asset Value converted to interest rate

MISD's cash and investment balances in its general operating fund and debt service fund combined total $486,585 or 99.2 percent of the total cash and investment balances as of March 31, 2000 (**Exhibit 3-15**).

Exhibit 3-15
MISD Schedule of Cash and Investments by Account
As of March 31, 2000

Description	Cash Balance	Investment Balance	Total	Percent of Total Cash and Investments
General Operating	$17,350	$437,529	$454,879	92.7%
Debt Service	$31,395	$311	$31,706	6.5%
Ice Cream Fund	$4,178	$0	$4,178	0.8%
Library Fund	$80	$0	$80	0
Total	**$53,003**	**$437,840**	**$490,843**	**100.00%**

Source: MISD superintendent.

Chapter 3

A. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The MISD superintendent has been with the district for 25 years and has developed a simple financial management control process. Because the district is small in size, the superintendent spends most of his time running the business office, whereas the assistant superintendent runs the education programs.

MISD's administrative employees include the superintendent, a bookkeeping clerk and a clerk who tracks the Public Education Information Management system data and submits it to TEA. These employees account for 11.5 percent of the district's total payroll (**Exhibit 3-16**).

Exhibit 3-16
Salaries and Benefits of MISD Administrative Employees

Employee	Salaries	Benefits	Total	Percent of MISD Total Payroll
Superintendent	66,374	12,920	79,294	7.6%
Bookkeeping clerk	20,000	2,288	22,288	2.2%
PEIMS clerk	16,000	1,288	17,288	1.7%
Total	**102,374**	**16,496**	**118,870**	**11.5%**

Source: MISD Business Office records from superintendent.

FINDING

As part of the ongoing effort to save money and streamline operations, the superintendent has :

- Instituted a policy that prohibits paying employees for accumulated sick leave at termination or retirement. Although this policy is consistent with other Bastrop County ISD's, many districts throughout the state incur high costs for more liberal sick leave payment policies. Based on normal annual attrition rates, this policy saves MISD $5,000 annually.
- The superintendent used lease financing for the new secondary building in the 1999 fiscal year. The lease financed $100,000 of the cost of the facility. MISD will have enough fund balance in the

1999-2000 year to pay the lease off early and save the district approximately $10,000 over the next four years.

- MISD disbursement procedures dictate that the superintendent and the president of the board must sign all vendor payment checks. The superintendent also includes a listing of all disbursements for the month in the board's monthly meeting packet for board members to review. These practices signify strong internal controls.
- MISD's annual financial audits, all resulting in favorable reports on the basic financial statements, have disclosed no internal control problems or compliance shortcomings for the past four years. The district contracts with an audit firm that has a concentration of clients that are small school districts, and as a result, the district's pays $3,200 in annual audit fees.

MISD uses cooperative arrangements for services that would be costly for a small district to provide. The district has entered into cooperative arrangements for special education services, alternative education activities and property tax collections (**Exhibit 3-17**).

Exhibit 3-17
MISD Cooperative Arrangements, Providers and Annual Costs

Provider	Description	Annual Cost
Giddings Special Services Cooperative	Special education for MISD students	$24,000
Bastrop County Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program	Educational service delivery for students with disciplinary problems	$0 (As used on a daily basis)
Bastrop County Central Appraisal District	Property tax billing and collections	$3,254
Total		**$27,254**

Source: MISD Business Office records from superintendent.

Using cooperative arrangements helps MISD save money in providing costly but needed services to students and the district.

COMMENDATION

The MISD superintendent has worked hard over the years to streamline procedures, hold costs down, establish strong internal controls and consider efficiencies in several areas of the district's operations.

FINDING

The Texas Legislature established County Education Districts (CEDs) for two years in 1991 as a means to equalize funding to Texas public schools. MISD is a participating member of Bastrop County Education District (BCED). For two years, County Education Districts (CEDs) assessed and levied property taxes for the benefit of all schools within counties. The courts eventually deemed CEDs unconstitutional. The court rulings ultimately abolished CEDs and established "successors-in-interest" for these entities to collect any remaining property taxes that were delinquent and owed to participating school districts in accordance with established formulas.

For the Bastrop County Education District, the successor-in-interest is Bastrop ISD. Under guidelines established by TEA's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide,* final settlements between participating schools can be made, reducing the future time and effort necessary to administer these entities' activities. The Bastrop County Education District successor-in-interest administered by Bastrop ISD has not been settled among participating districts to achieve these administrative cost savings.

All information on handling the settlement of these entities among participating districts is available through TEA and industry organizations such as the Texas Association of School Boards and the Texas Association of School Administrators. In addition, accounting and reporting guidance for these settlements are included in the TEA's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide.*

Recommendation 5:

Settle the successor-in-interest for the Bastrop County Education District among participating districts to reduce administrative time and effort.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent negotiates a settlement for the successor-in-interest for the Bastrop County Education District with participating districts in accordance with acceptable methods.	September 2000
2.	The superintendent submits the recommended settlement to trustees for final approval.	November 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 3

B. FINANCIAL REPORTING AND BUDGETING

All Texas school districts must comply with state financial reporting guidelines as contained in TEA's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide.* The guide includes the accounting and financial reporting requirements of recognized generally accepted accounting principles, federally mandated auditing and financial reporting requirements and the specific accounting and financial reporting requirements of TEA. 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.*

According to the guide, budgeting is the process of allocating resources to the prioritized needs of the district. Although budget formats and policies are by no means uniform in school districts, formal budgets play a far more important role in the planning, control and evaluation of school district operations than in those of privately owned organizations. In school districts, the adoption of a budget implies that a set of decisions have been made by school board members and school district administrators, which culminate in matching a school district's resources with its needs. As such, the budget is a product of the planning process. The budget also provides an important tool for controlling and evaluating a school district's funding sources and its other resources. With the assistance of the accounting system, administrators can execute and control budgeted activities and evaluate performance based upon comparisons between budgeted and actual operations.

Sound budget planning is important because the scope and diversity of school district operations make comprehensive planning necessary for good decision making. Through the budget, consensus is reached among citizens, school board members and district/campus staff on the future direction of a district's operations.

The link between planning and budget preparation in school districts gives budgets a unique role in these organizations. The public considers budgets in the public arena the ultimate policy document because they are the financial plans a school district uses to achieve its goals and objectives. The budget reflects:

- Goods and services the district will and will not produce;
- District's priorities among the wide range of activities in which they are involved;

- Relative weight given to the influence of various participants and interest groups in the budget development process; and
- How the district has acquired and used its resources.

The budget is an intrinsically political document reflecting school district administrators' accountability and fiduciary responsibility to citizens.

In the educational context, budgeting is a valuable tool in both planning and evaluation processes. Budgeting provides a vehicle for translating educational goals and programs into financial resource plans. Thus, instruction planning (to attain students' educational goals) determines budgetary allocations. This link between instruction and financial planning is critical to effective budgeting. In addition, such a budgeting practice may enhance the evaluation of budgetary and educational performance because resource allocations are closely related to instructional plans.

Performance evaluation allows citizens and taxpayers to hold policymakers and administrators accountable for their actions. State laws and constitutions often explicitly require accountability to citizens, and accountability is a cornerstone of budgeting and financial reporting. The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) recognizes its importance in its Concepts Statement No. 1 (Section 100.177):

- Financial reporting provides information to determine whether current-year revenues were sufficient to pay for current-year services.
- Financial reporting demonstrates whether resources were obtained and used in accordance with the entity's legally adopted budget. It also demonstrates compliance with other finance-related legal or contractual requirements.
- Financial reporting provides information to assist users in assessing the service efforts, costs and accomplishments of the governmental entity.

Meeting these objectives requires budget preparation to include several concepts recognizing accountability. Regulatory requirements often mandate these concepts for state and local public sector budgets. The mandates include requirements that budgets:

- Be balanced so current revenues are sufficient to pay for current services.
- Be prepared in accordance with all applicable federal, state and local legal mandates and requirements.
- Provide a basis for evaluating a government's service efforts, costs and accomplishments.

The state, TEA and the local district formulate legal requirements for school district budgets. In addition to these requirements, individual school districts also may have their own legal requirements for budget preparation. Additional legal requirements also may be imposed by state and federal grants. This section, however, deals only with state legal mandates, TEA's legal requirements and the local district's requirements for basic budget development and submission.

The responsibility for preparing district budget guidelines and the budget process lies primarily with district administrators and the superintendent. Because these guidelines and the related processes create a framework for the entire budget development process, their careful design is critical to an efficient and effective process.

As a small school district, MISD's budget process is relatively simple. The superintendent works with staff, the board and the public every spring and summer to develop the next year's budget.

FINDING

MISD currently has a contract with Region 13 to assist the bookkeeper and PEIMS clerk in their activities. The district pays $3,643 annually for this service. The major activities covered under this contract include:

- Help implementing the new RSCCC financial software;
- Routine accounting assistance with financial records and budget reports;
- Assistance with PEIMS processes and submissions; and
- Assistance using the RSCCC payroll module.

Region 13 plans to help MISD automate its fixed assets listing and purchasing process when the initial implementation of the financial and budget software is fully installed.

COMMENDATION

The superintendent has automated MISD financial record keeping through an outsourcing arrangement with Region 13.

FINDING

Due to MISD's history of maintaining accounting records manually, the board has had to rely on annual audited financial statements to review actual revenue and expenditure comparisons to budgeted financial information. An annual review of this information is not enough for

trustees to make sound financial decisions or for the public to ascertain the impact of these decisions.

The district's new RSCCC financial system can provide budget comparison reports at any level of the district's operations each month. MISD maintains the financial accounting structure of this system in accordance with TEA's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide.* The system includes the coding necessary to identify revenue sources and expenditures by functional area, expenditure type, program area and campus or facility. All of these detailed line items for revenues and expenditures include budgeted data and financial information. The district was able to generate detailed reports containing budgeted and actual data requested during TSPR's review.

Recommendation 6:

Generate a monthly budget comparison report for the board.

The report should include the budgeted amount, the actual financial result and variances from the budget at a selected level of detail **(Exhibit 3-18)** and should include explanations of large budget variances. This information is available on the district's RSCCC financial system.

Exhibit 3-18
Example Standard Monthly Budget Comparison Report

Description	Budget Amount	Actual Amount	Variance
Fund:	$	$	$
Revenue:	$	$	$
Categories	$	$	$
Total Revenues	$	$	$
Expenditures:	$	$	$
Function:	$	$	$
Expenditure type:	$	$	$
Program area	$	$	$
Campus or facility	$	$	$
Total expenditures	$	$	$

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent meets with the bookkeeping clerk and the Region 13 accountant to review budget report options available from the district's RSCCC financial system.	September 2000
2.	The Board of Trustees and superintendent decide on the minimum requirements for a monthly, standardized report that includes information necessary for evaluating the district's financial status.	October 2000
3.	The board presents the report to the public for input at a regular meeting and receives input from the public about the level of detail. The board makes final recommendations to the superintendent on the contents of the standard report.	November 2000
4.	The superintendent includes the standard report in monthly board meeting packets.	December 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

In June 1999, the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) issued the most comprehensive governmental accounting rule ever developed. GASB Statement of Financial Accounting Standards No. 34 will significantly change the way Texas school districts and other state and local governments report their finances to the public. MISD has not established an implementation strategy for this new financial reporting standard.

TEA requires implementation of the new standard in the 2001-2002 year. GASB is the private sector organization formed in 1984 that sets financial accounting and reporting standards for state and local governments. Its seven members are drawn from the board's diverse constituency, including preparers and auditors of state and local government financial statements, users of those statements and members of the academic community.

Under the new rule, anyone with an interest in school finance - citizens, the media, bond raters, creditors, legislators and others-will have more and easier-to-understand information about the school in question. For the first time, school financial reports will have information about the full cost of providing services to students and the public. An additional feature of financial reports presented under the new standard is management's narrative analysis of the school's financial performance. The new financial reporting system will give citizens a clearer picture of what a school district is doing with the taxes it collects. This includes whether current

revenues are paying for current services, or if the services are the responsibility of the next generation of taxpayers. Other significant features of the new standard include calculating and recording depreciation for school facilities and equipment and disclosing the extent of net costs for all school programs that tax revenues and basic state revenues actually fund.

Currently, school financial reports focus on the funds of government, which provide some information about various activities or sources of revenue. The number of these funds can run anywhere from two to 200 or more, making it difficult at times to pull the information together and make sense out of it. Financial reports prepared under the new system will improve information provided for major funds and provide financial information from a schoolwide perspective, which is an entirely new concept.

The new reporting system will affect a broad spectrum of the public. Reports prepared under the new standard will help to determine whether the school district's financial health is improving or deteriorating. The reports will provide vital information to a company planning to relocate to a particular county or region of the state. Reports prepared under the new standard will help trustees better understand the long- and short-term implications of policy decisions. Investors will better understand the financial health of school districts participating in the financial markets. The new standard will help taxpayers better assess the fiscal soundness of district management's actions.

Assistance is available from Region 13, MISD's bookkeeping contractor, in dealing with the GASB 34 financial reporting change. Practice guidelines from TEA during the implementation period and assistance from industry associations, such as the Texas Association of School Business Officials, are also available to help MISD implement the new standard.

Recommendation 7:

Develop an implementation strategy for GASB Statement No. 34 to meet annual external financial reporting guidelines and TEA's regulatory reporting requirements.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent and bookkeeping clerk develop plans with Region 13 representatives for implementing the new financial reporting standard.	February 2001

2.	The superintendent develops information for presentation to the board concerning the new standard and explains significant implementation issues.	Spring and Summer of 2001
3.	The superintendent implements necessary procedures to satisfy new reporting and data maintenance requirements necessary to satisfy the new standard.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 3

C. FIXED ASSETS

In governmental fund accounting, which school districts use, districts purchase fixed assets with money currently available within a given fund (for example, the general operating fund or capital projects fund). Fixed assets are tangible items that typically have significant value. Therefore, it is critical that districts establish controls and accountability over these items. Typically, school districts determine an appropriate unit cost to capitalize items as fixed assets. The capitalization threshold is the value that an item must have for it to be tracked for the fixed asset inventory system. MISD does not currently have written policies and procedures that define capitalization levels for the purpose of maintaining fixed assets records.

According to the TEA's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide,* the emphasis in governmental accounting for fixed assets is on control and accountability. Accordingly, a school district must accumulate a variety of data relating to fixed assets to maintain control and ensure accountability. These data include quantity, location, condition and life expectancy.

Fixed asset records are necessary to designate who is accountable for the custody and maintenance of individual items and to assist in estimating future requirements. School districts generally control capital transactions that are used when acquiring fixed assets by using a well-defined authorization procedure. Many federal programs require separate accountability for fixed assets.

School districts should maintain detailed subsidiary records to maximize the control of fixed assets. These records should include the following information as a minimum:

- The item purchased,
- Date of purchase,
- Purchase price,
- Life expectancy,
- Location number,
- Inventory number,
- Fund from which purchased and
- Other information that may be useful for control.

The subsidiary record, regardless of its physical form, should describe an item to permit positive identification, and to determine its cost, purchase data and its location.

Adequate accounting procedures and records for fixed assets are essential to protecting school property. In addition, an appropriate system:

- Designates responsibility for custody and proper use.
- Provides data for managing fixed assets.
- Provides data for financial control, financial reports and adequate insurance coverage.

Of paramount importance is the security of the system. Any material change in the customary recording of distribution or disposal of fixed assets is a financial matter that should be decided by the school district's administration. Management must impose discipline throughout the organization so managers maintain an appropriate level of internal control to ensure fixed assets are adequately protected.

School district policies should address the use of school district fixed assets in a location other than that assigned. The policy should also address the off-site use of school district assets by employees.

Schools should inventory certain fixed assets, such as furniture and equipment, on a periodic basis. Districts should take annual fixed asset inventories at the end of the school term before the staff members leave. Schools should settle discrepancies between the fixed asset inventory list and what is on hand in a timely fashion. Districts should list missing items and write off the assets in accordance with established policy.

FINDING

MISD does not have written policies and procedures for fixed assets accounting and the related systems to maintain a proper fixed assets inventory.

Currently, fixed assets are all items with a useful life of one year or more, regardless of unit cost. The district is in the process of converting its financial records from a manual system to computerized financial accounting software that includes fixed assets maintenance. MISD has not decided how to convert existing manual records to the automated system.

Recommendation 8:

Establish policies and procedures to require capitalization of items with a unit cost of $5,000 or more, and inventory items with a unit cost of $500 or more.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent gathers information from Region 13 and other school districts about their local policies and procedures for capitalization of fixed assets.	August 2000
2.	The superintendent presents to the Board of Trustees for approval updated policies and procedures, reflecting a requirement to capitalize items with a unit cost of $5,000 or more and inventory items with a unit cost of $500 or more.	September 2000
3.	The superintendent and staff begin capitalizing items with a unit cost of $5,000 or more and inventorying items with a unit cost of $500 or more.	October 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 3

D. PURCHASING AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

The goal of a school district purchasing department is to purchase the best products, materials and services at the lowest practical prices within relevant statutes and policies.

An effective purchasing system requires several key components. One of the most important is a good organization that includes well-trained people. School administrators must clearly define roles and related responsibilities and adapt them to meet the unique operating environment of the district. Although purchasing organization structures may vary, most provide similar functions. An administrative role in purchasing typically:

- Approves purchase orders and service contracts, including competitive procurement specifications and tabulations
- Assists in the development and modification of purchasing policies and procedures and is responsible for their implementation
- Resolves problems encountered within the purchasing function
- Establishes and monitors good working relations with vendors
- Communicates with vendors and approves vendor communications with schools and departments
- Ensures district staff is aware of relevant purchasing statutes, regulations and board policies through either formal or informal training programs
- Stays current on purchasing statutes, regulations and practices by attending various purchasing-related courses, seminars or workshops, and by reading current purchasing periodicals and books

Also, the purchasing administrator or an assistant typically prepares competitive procurement specifications, evaluates competitive procurement bids, maintains a vendor list, supervises the processing of purchase orders and evaluates the performance of vendors. Buyers and clerical staff typically write, review and modify specifications for competitive procurements; help evaluate competitive procurements; identify sources to obtain competitive prices and terms; assist in maintaining an updated vendor list from which purchases can be made; and obtain and verify vendor price quotes.

In MISD, the superintendent is responsible for purchasing. Because of its small size, there are few purchases that require bidding.

A district must strive to maximize the efficiency of its purchasing function. As recommended by TEA, a centralized purchasing function is desirable for achieving maximum efficiency. Centralized and decentralized purchasing are defined by the Council of State Governments publication, *State and Local Governmental Purchasing,* as follows:

- Centralized purchasing is "a system of purchasing in which authority, responsibility, and control of activities are concentrated in one administrative unit".
- Decentralized purchasing is "a system of purchasing in which there is a varying degree of delegation of authority, responsibility, and control of purchasing activities to the several using agencies".

A centralized purchasing function is essential to efficiency in purchasing for the reasons listed below.

- It provides for the coordination and consolidation of smaller purchases into larger volume purchases for the entire district.
- Vendors and the business community have a single central contact within the district.
- The Purchasing Department and its personnel have experience and are trained in purchasing, sourcing, prices and vendor relations that saves the district money and allows a more efficient process.
- The Purchasing Department and its personnel are trained in state and federal laws and local board policies, which helps to ensure the district's compliance.

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 at 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 competitive bidding for certain types of professional services, including engineering, architectural, accounting and land surveying.

In 1995, the Texas Legislature expanded school district purchasing options by adding three new methods of competitive procurement: design-build contracts, competitive sealed 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 to competitively purchase goods valued at $25,000 or more in the aggregate over a 12-month period **(Exhibit 3-19)**.

Exhibit 3-19
Competitive Procurement Methods

Purchasing Methods	Method Description
Competitive bidding	Requires schools evaluate and award bids based solely upon bid specifications, terms and conditions contained in the request for bids, and according to the bid prices offered by suppliers and pertinent factors affecting contract performance. Forbids negotiation of prices of goods and services after proposal opening.
Competitive sealed proposals	Requires the same terms and conditions as competitive bidding, but allows changes in the nature of a proposal and prices after proposal opening.
Request for proposals	Generates competitive sealed proposals and involves several key elements, including newspaper advertisement, notice to proposers, standard terms and conditions, special terms and conditions, a scope-of-work statement, an acknowledgment form/response sheet, a felony conviction notice and a contract clause.
Catalog purchase	Provides an alternative to other procurement methods for the acquisition of computer equipment, software and services only.
Interlocal contract	Provides a mechanism for agreements with other local governments, the state or a state agency to perform governmental functions and services.
Design/build contract	Outlines a method of project delivery in which the school district contracts with a single entity to both design and construct a project.
Job order contracts	Provides for the use of a particular type of contract for jobs (manual labor work) for minor repairs and alterations.
Construction management contracts	Outlines the use of a contract to construct, rehabilitate, alter or repair facilities using a professional construction manager.

Source: Texas Education Agency.

FINDING

Due to its small size, MISD rarely issues purchase orders for more than $10,000. However, during the 1998-99 school year, MISD purchased a used, 83-passenger school bus from 7K Bus Sales for $13,000 without

getting formal quotes. For purchases between $10,000 and $25,000 written or telephone quotes from at least three vendors are required. The district did call a number of vendors to try to find a used 83-passenger bus, but they could only locate one bus. There is no documentation regarding the telephone calls. Although this is not technically a violation of purchasing law, the documentation on the telephone calls made would be prudent for documenting that the district is following proper procedures.

Recommendation 9:

Establish procedures to ensure compliance with all state and local purchasing laws and policies.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent develops and implements improved administrative procedures and monitoring systems to ensure compliance with state and local purchasing laws and policies.	September 2000
2.	The superintendent reviews the 2000-01 budget to determine if bids or quotes will be needed for the purchase of any goods or services.	September 2000
3.	The superintendent prepares bids for those goods or services as needed.	October 2000
4.	The superintendent submits bid recommendation to the board for approval.	November 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

In one instance, MISD purchased playground equipment from Miracle Recreation Equipment for $37,000 as part of a bid issued by other area governments. The bid had been issued by Elgin ISD, Giddings ISD, and the cities of Elgin and Giddings for the playground equipment, and MISD purchased the equipment off that bid. However, MISD did not have an interlocal agreement with those school districts or cities to allow them to use these bids under state purchasing laws. Under state purchasing laws, the district must have an interlocal agreement in place to enable it to use other governments' bids.

MISD has used other bids from other school districts, but has not had formal interlocal agreements with these other districts. Through interlocal

agreements, school districts can legally purchase off each other's bids. For example, if Bastrop ISD bid exterminating services, and if an interlocal agreement existed between the districts, MISD could use that bid as well, provided the vendor was willing to extend the pricing to that location.

Recommendation 10:

Establish interlocal agreements with other school districts before making purchases using other school districts' bids.

Wording would need to be included in each district's bid specifications to notify the vendors of the interlocal agreements and the possibility of other districts participating.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent determines when MISD would be interested in participating in an interlocal arrangement to allow the districts to purchase off each other's bids.	September 2000
2.	The superintendent has the school attorney draw up an interlocal agreement.	October 2000
3.	The boards of all participating school districts approve the agreement.	November 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4
SUPPORT SERVICES

This chapter describes the support services of the McDade Independent School District (MISD) in the following areas:

A. Food Services
B. Transportation
C. Computers and Technology
D. Facilities

Food Services

School food service operations should provide an appealing and nutritionally sound breakfast and lunch as economically as possible. Several factors used to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of a school food services operation include: a high ratio of meals served per labor hour (MPLH), food costs, amount of waste, participation in breakfast and lunch programs, nutritional value, the variety of meals served, the wait time per student served and financial self-sufficiency.

Transportation

The primary goal of every school district's transportation department is to transport students to and from school and related functions in a timely, safe and efficient manner. 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; and for co-curricular and extra curricular activities.

Technology

School districts address technology in a variety of ways. Some districts have one management information systems (MIS) department with separate individuals responsible for each area. Most small school districts generally do not have a formal MIS department, but have staff responsible for the technology. A school district's technology department, however organized, includes the following activities.

- Management and oversight of all the district's software applications;
- Hardware and software maintenance;
- Planning, implementation and oversight of local and wide area networks; and

- Training and technical support for hardware use, software applications and networks.

Facilities

A comprehensive facilities use and maintenance program ensures the coordination of all the physical resources in a school district. The program must effectively integrate facilities planning with all other aspects of school planning. Plant operations and maintenance personnel must be involved in design and construction activities. To be effective, facilities managers must be involved in long-term planning activities.

A school district's maintenance program should provide a clean and safe environment for the educational process to take place. School districts should keep building facilities clean. School personnel should make facility repairs in a timely manner to reduce deterioration and increase safety.

Chapter 4

A. FOOD SERVICES

The goal of a school district's operations is to provide students affordable, appealing and nutritionally-balanced breakfasts and lunches. An adequate breakfast and lunch are vital to any child's ability to learn. In response to this need, the federal government has established breakfast and lunch programs to ensure that school children receive the proper nutrition so that they can learn and succeed in the classroom.

A school district's food service operation is funded from four sources:

1. Student and adult meal payments;
2. Federal reimbursements for all qualified students who eat school meals;
3. A la carte sales; and
4. Fees from special catered functions.

Public school food service directors are under pressure to make a profit, while offering low-cost meals and ensuring compliance with nutrition standards and federal guidelines. Increasing student meal participation is important to a school district not only because of the federal reimbursements it receives for every student who participates in meal programs, but because it ensures that more students receive adequate nutrition as directed by the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs.

The Texas School Food Service Association (TSFSA) has identified 10 standards of excellence for evaluating school Food Services programs. TSFSA states that effective programs should:

- Identify and meet current and future needs through organization, planning, direction and control;
- Maintain financial accountability through established procedures;
- Meet the nutritional needs of students and promote the development of sound nutritional practices;
- Ensure that procurement practices meet established standards;
- Provide appetizing, nutritious meals through effective, efficient systems management;
- Maintain a safe and sanitary environment;
- Encourage student participation in food service programs;
- Provide an environment that enhances employee productivity, growth, development and morale;
- Promote a positive image to the public; and

- Measure success in fulfilling regulatory requirements.

BACKGROUND

The MISD Food Services Department serves approximately 200 students in one elementary school and one middle school. The department prepares meals in a non-institutional style kitchen for all of the district's students.

Food Services administers *offer-versus-serve* meal service as approved by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). This service allows students to select as few as three of the five meal components offered in the service line. MISD serves students the same menu regardless of grade level. The district does not sell *a la carte,* snack bar or federally-approved snacks.

MISD's Food Services receives revenues from the sale of meals and federally funded breakfast and lunch programs. MISD submits detailed reports to TEA to document reimbursements from the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs. MISD is subject to coordinated reviews by the TEA, which last conducted such a review in 1998. The district has a contract with TEA under the School Lunch and Breakfast Agreement. The provisions of this agreement are identical to the provisions of the contract between TEA and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). At the end of each school year, the district must complete a renewal of agreement on the Child Nutrition Programs Information Management System. Although the Texas Department of Health conducts periodic sanitation inspection of MISD operations, it has not inspected MISD since 1998. **Exhibit 4-1** presents MISD Food Services Department financial information.

Exhibit 4-1
MISD Food Services Department
Actual Financial Information
1997-98 - 1998-1999

Category	1997-98 Actual	% of Total Expenditures	1998-99 Actual	% of Total Expenditures
Payroll	$22,062	37.5%	$32,614	44.3%
Benefits	$4,850	8.2%	$8,872	12.0%
Professional/Contracted Services	$2,223	3.8%	$2,763	3.8%
Food	$25,624	43.6%	$26,192	35.6%
Commodities	$2,269	3.9%	$2,462	3.3%

Other	$1,587	2.7%	$235	0.3%
Travel/ Subsistence	$81	0.1%	$0	0.0%
Other	$100	0.2%	$520	0.7%
Total	**$58,796**	**100.0%**	**$73,658**	**100.0%**

Source: MISD Food Services; 1998-99 PEIMS.

Exhibit 4-2 represents the reimbursable rates for each eligible breakfast and lunch served. "Severe need" breakfast funding is available to schools that served 40 percent or more of their lunches for free or at reduced prices in two consecutive prior years, and whose breakfast costs are higher than the federal reimbursement rates.

Exhibit 4-2
MISD 1999-2000 Federal Reimbursement Rates
For Breakfast and Lunch

	Breakfast	**Lunch**
Full	$0.21	$0.19
Reduced	$0.79	$1.58
Free	$1.09	$1.98
Severe Need	$0.21	

Source: TEA.

Exhibits 4-3 and **4-4** show MISD and peer district food service operation expenditures and revenues. **Exhibit 4-3** shows expenditures, while **Exhibit 4-4** shows revenues for MISD. MISD ranked highest for increases in expenditures with peer districts and highest for increases in revenues from 1995 to 2000. From 1995-96 to 1999-2000, MISD food service expenditures increased 32.6 percent and revenues increased 62.7 percent, although for 1999-2000, expenditures exceeded revenues by 4.8 percent.

Exhibit 4-3
MISD and Peer District Food Service Expenditure Comparison
1995-96 through 1999-2000

District	**1995-96**	**1996-97**	**1997-98**	**1998-99**	**1999-2000**	**Percent Change**

District	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	Percent Change
McDade	**$60,062**	**$64,427**	**$58,796**	**$73,658**	**$79,639**	**32.6%**
Silverton	$92,506	$101,801	$114,442	$112,321	$116,288	25.7%
Dime Box	$94,249	$109,647	$92,504	$100,266	$114,879	21.9%
Moulton	$112,320	$114,387	$116,119	$113,075	$126,744	12.9%
Bartlett	$183,544	$197,579	$202,822	$208,421	$195,358	6.4%
Prairie Lea	$65,815	$67,341	$71,084	$76,958	$64,365	(2.2%)

Source: AEIS 1995-96 through 1998-99; PEIMS 1999-2000.

Exhibit 4-4
MISD and Peer District Food Service Revenue Comparison
1995-96 through 1999-2000

District	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	Percent Change
McDade	**$46,705**	**$56,351**	**$68,137**	**$71,333**	**$76,000**	**62.7%**
Bartlett	$169,681	$188,320	$186,552	$196,341	$198,018	16.7%
Prairie Lea	$55,861	$67,466	$69,460	$90,414	$63,665	14.0%
Moulton	$103,044	$102,881	$111,723	$109,722	$99,332	(3.6%)
Silverton	$80,973	$87,255	$89,579	$88,057	$75,000	(7.3%)
Dime Box	$93,874	$86,485	$85,626	$83,122	$81,621	(13.1%)

Source: AEIS 1995-96 through 1998-99; PEIMS 1999-2000.

Exhibit 4-5 shows MISD and peer district comparisons for expenditures per student. In 1998-99, MISD ranked second highest among peer districts for expenditures per student.

Exhibit 4-5
MISD and Peer District Expenditures per Student
1995-96 through 1999-2000

District	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	Percent Change
Prairie Lea	$347	$348	$346	$441	27%
McDade	**$338**	**$337**	**$383**	**$401**	**19%**
Dime Box	$391	$353	$396	$346	(12%)

Bartlett	$300	$330	$338	$343	14%
Silverton	$284	$303	$308	$321	13%

Source: AEIS 1995-96 through 1998-99; PEIMS 1999-2000.

Exhibit 4-6 shows MISD meal costs for 1999-2000. The prices are low compared to other Bastrop County districts. The peer districts charge between 75 cents and 90 cents for breakfast, and $1.50 to $1.90 for student lunches and between $2.25 and $2.50 for adult breakfasts and lunches.

Exhibit 4-6
MISD Meal Costs
1999-2000

Meal	Price
Breakfast Full Pay	$0.60
Breakfast Adult	$0.60
Lunch Full Pay	$1.25
Lunch Adult	$1.25

Source: MISD.

Exhibit 4-7 showsthe organizational structure of MISD's Food Services. The manager has been employed nine years in the district and reports to the superintendent. The district employs two other full-time employees and one substitute when a full-time employee is absent. MISD contracts with Region 13 for the required services of a registered dietitian. Neither the manager nor any of the staff have completed TSFSA or TEA certification programs. The superintendent manages all financial aspects of the program, including the applications for free and reduced-price student eligibility. The district does not offer nutrition education programs for the students or other programs established by the USDA and TEA, such as Team Nutrition and Healthy Meals Initiative.

Exhibit 4-7
Organization of MISD Food Services
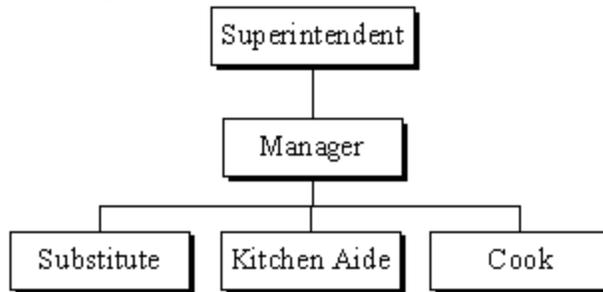
Source: MISD Superintendent.

Exhibit 4-8 compares the Average Daily Participation (ADP) to the Average Daily Attendance (ADA) for MISD and its peers, and reflects participation for breakfast and lunch. Forty-seven percent of the student population is eligible for free and reduced-price meals; 82 percent of the eligible students actually participate in the meal program.

Overall participation for all students in MISD for 1999-2000 (Average Daily Participation ÷ Average Daily Attendance) was 47 percent for breakfast and 82 percent for lunch (**Exhibit 4-8**).

Exhibit 4-8
MISD and Peer District Percentage of Average Daily Participation
Free and Reduced-Price
Breakfast and Lunch
1995-96 through 1999-2000

District	1995-96		1996-97		1997-98		1998-99		1999-2000	
	B	**L**	**B**	**L**	**B**	**L**	**B**	**L**	**B**	**L**
Bartlett	19%	66%	20%	66%	17%	64%	18%	60%	19%	62%
Dime Box	41%	81%	47%	76%	38%	78%	43%	76%	48%	77%
McDade	**34%**	**74%**	**37%**	**81%**	**46%**	**87%**	**52%**	**76%**	**47%**	**82%**
Prairie Lea	27%	58%	31%	64%	41%	71%	54%	69%	54%	69%
Silverton	15%	81%	16%	77%	17%	77%	20%	80%	15%	81%
Moulton	18%	67%	17%	65%	21%	65%	21%	62%	19%	63%

Source: Texas Education Agency/Child Nutrition Programs District Profile.

FINDING

Food Services employees are not given written expectations as to what they need to do to perform their jobs efficiently. Regardless of the size of the district, or number of students who are served, employees need to be effectively managed and developed. This involves setting and implementing performance standards and controls, monitoring, mentoring, developing and coaching personnel. TSFSA's *Standards of Excellence Manual* states that written job expectations should be available to personnel. Expectations should include education, experience and professional development requirements, performance standards and current job duties. Each employee should be evaluated annually.

The superintendent also does not routinely evaluate Food Services employees, and employees do not help set their goals and expectations. The lack of feedback and participation contributes to performance problems.

Recommendation 11:

Develop written job expectations and performance appraisals for each Food Services employee.

The use of performance-based job expectations helps employees know what their job responsibilities are and how their managers will evaluate them. Employees can then help set their expectations and should be encouraged to give and receive feedback about their job performance.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Food Services manager meets with the superintendent to develop a format for employee job expectations, requirements and appraisals.	October 2000
2.	The superintendent begins using the formats to set goals and expectations and to document the job performance of the Food Services manager and employees.	November 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Food Services employees do not wear standard uniforms. The manager and employees wear T-shirts provided by the district, and shorts or jeans.

The students and teachers in focus groups said that they were offended by the lack of standard uniforms and inadequate hair restraints used by cafeteria employees. The lack of hair restraints in the cafeteria and in the kitchen is in violation of federal and state laws.

Recommendation 12:

Develop a uniform policy and conform with the Federal Food Code requirements for proper hair restraints.

School food service personnel should adhere to an established dress code, including proper hair restraints and good appearance.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Food Services manager and employees select uniforms and present their recommendations to the superintendent. Employees immediately begin wearing hair restraints.	September 2000
2.	The Food Services manager develops a dress code policy and presents it to the superintendent for approval.	October 2000
3.	The district purchases two uniforms for each employee.	October 2000
4.	The Food Services manager instructs the employees on the new policy and implements the dress code.	November 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost to buy each Food Services employee two uniforms plus aprons each year would be about $124. Similar districts pay $13.65 for tops, $16.75 for pants and $10.95 for aprons (3 employees X $41.35 = $124).

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Develop a uniform policy and conform to the Federal Food Code requirements for proper hair restraints.	($124)	($124)	($124)	($124)	($124)

FINDING

MISD is faced with many challenges in its Food Services program. In 1999-2000, MISD expenditures exceeded revenues by 4.8 percent, although the gap has closed considerably since 1995-96 (**Exhibits 4-**3 and **4-4**), the district still must subsidize food service operations.

In focus groups, teachers and students voiced concerns about the quality of the food items and the lack of nutritious choices. The students requested more selections, including choices of sandwiches, juices and snack items. The middle school students said they wanted the same food choices students receive in other districts and wanted bigger portions, different food, and they did not want to eat with elementary students. Teachers stated that they rarely ate in the cafeteria because of poor selections and lack of nutritious foods.

Meal participation is tracked manually as students pass through the cafeteria serving line. Students are given different colored cards signifying their eligibility status (free or reduced-price) and pick up their cards in the class prior to lunch or breakfast. This method does not protect the confidentiality of students participating in federally-subsidized meal programs.

The federal School Meals Initiative mandates that all school districts meet nutrient standards established by USDA for fat content and calories. MISD contracts with the Regional Education Service Center 13 (Region 13) for the services of a registered dietitian when needed. The school meals initiative also requires schools to participate directly in nutrition education as well as federal Team Nutrition programs. MISD is not participating in any of these programs.

Small school districts are challenged to meet the requirements of the federally-funded school food programs. Old facilities and new codes for sanitation have created multiple challenges for compliance with food sanitation requirements.

TSPR observed that MISD's kitchen floors, ceilings, work surfaces, cabinets and serving areas are made of wood and do not meet Federal Food Code restrictions. Food Services uses residential, rather than industrial or instructional equipment such as mixers, slicers and freezers. Dishes are washed manually and cleaned in a non-commercial home dishwashing machine.

An air conditioning unit blows dust into the kitchen. Doors are propped open in the cafeteria, which also serves as a gym, because there is no air conditioning; this allows flies to come into the kitchen and dining area. Food temperatures for cold foods or foods requiring refrigeration did not meet requirements of the Texas Department of Health and the Federal Food Code. TDH did not conduct health inspections in any of the Bastrop County school districts in 1999-2000.

The district plans to air condition the kitchen and dining room facilities in 2000-01. This renovation is included in the bond issue that was approved

by voters in May 2000 but does not include funds to remodel the kitchen operation to meet health and safety standards, which are estimated to cost from $50,000 to as much as $500,000.

In any case, major expenditures will be required to bring the food service operation into full compliance. Some school districts in Texas contract with other school districts for the management and operation of their food service program. For example, Texarkana ISD (TISD) runs the school food service operation for the Red Lick and Redwater ISDs. As a result, TISD was able to negotiate more favorable food prices because of the increased food volume purchased, thereby improving the cost-effectiveness of its own food service program.

The Elgin ISD (EISD) has the capability to prepare and transport meals to MISD. EISD uses an automated point-of-sale system to track food service performance and student data without compromising students' confidentially. By contracting with EISD, MISD students and faculty would enjoy better quality food, have more food items to choose from and better financial and student data reporting. EISD's Food Services department also maintains a healthy fund balance because it is a profitable operation, and its students and faculty enjoy the menu items. Some school districts contract with private companies to manage their food service operation.

Recommendation 13:

Review outsourcing opportunities for MISD's Food Services operation to reduce deficits and remedy facility needs.

In the coming years, MISD will have to consider major expenditures to bring the food service operation into compliance with state and federal laws. Before investing these funds, the district should carefully weigh the alternatives; contracting with a neighboring district is one option. EISD has the capacity, the facilities and the transportation necessary to provide meal service to MISD schools. EISD could transport meals to MISD on a daily basis, and both districts could use identical menus. Meals would be purchased from EISD on a per-meal cost, which includes labor, food, supplies, transportation and some equipment. This arrangement would increase revenues for EISD and will ensure that MISD stays in compliance with federally-mandated child nutrition requirements. The agreement would require planning and coordination by both districts, approval from the Texas Education Agency and the negotiation of a contract between participating districts.

Another option MISD should explore is whether to outsource its Food Services operation to a private company. If MISD decides to contract out

the management of its food service operation, a regular evaluation is necessary to ensure that the highest quality services are delivered at the lowest price.

The steps that MISD should take in order to determine whether outsourcing with private company or contracting with another school district are listed below.

Step 1: Determine total in-house costs.

In determining the cost of operating food services in-house, MISD should use extensive calculations and assumptions about its operations including anticipated increases or decreases in revenue, food, labor and overhead costs, as well as all budgeted or anticipated costs, and all costs whether or not the cost could be avoided if the service was outsourced.

In addition to completing a detailed framework for comparing costs, MISD should include a cost analysis of the previous school year and estimated (or budgeted, if available) costs for the next two school years.

The following formula illustrates the methodology to use for determining total in-house costs:

[Total In-House Costs = Direct Costs + Department Indirect Costs + District Indirect Costs]

Direct costs include salaries and wages (including overtime pay), fringe benefits and allowances, supplies and materials, rent, telecommunications, utilities, equipment maintenance and repair and the depreciation of assets.

Indirect costs include appropriate percentages of costs for items such as district central support activities, personnel and equipment. In addition, any administrative services provided by the department that contains the activity also should be considered, such as the percentage of costs for a department director with direct oversight of the staff performing food service, or other personnel such as purchasers or accountants who assist Food Services with its purchasing and financial tracking and reporting.

Step 2: Request proposals for alternative providers of service.

After the determination of in-house costs, MISD should make additional determinations of factors such as its ability to step in quickly if a vendor fails to perform and reasonable yet substantive liquidated damages for such failures. At that point, the activities to be put out for competitive bidding should be advertised to the general public and the community of vendors identified on the Ameritech web site. While the district should

create appropriate standards for a fair evaluation, a reasonable amount of bid flexibility should be allowed so that vendors can propose creative new methods for food service delivery that meet or exceed current standards. In addition, existing employees should be allowed time and access to internal resources to prepare bids for alternate, more efficient and effective methods of delivering services.

Step 3: Determine total cost to contract.

The formula given in the methodology below should help MISD determine the total cost to contract:

> [Total Cost to Contract = Contractor Cost + Contract Administration Cost + One-Time Conversion Costs + Unavoidable District Costs + Loss on Assets - Gain on Assets]

Contractor costs are, of course, the fees and expenses proposed by a qualified vendor to provide the service being considered. Administration costs are the expenses involved in negotiating, executing, monitoring and evaluating the contract, including personnel and training costs as well as facility and equipment charges, maintenance, utilities and other costs.

Unavoidable costs are those that will continue to be borne by the district even if a particular component activity has been outsourced. An example might be the costs of a Food Services supervisor/manager who oversees a specific activity. If that particular activity is outsourced, the services and therefore costs of the supervisor may still be required to manage other functions.

The gain or loss on assets, such as cafeteria, kitchen and serving space or kitchen equipment that are unnecessary after a successful outsourcing, also should be included in the final cost determination.

Step 4: Request Proposals from Vendors.

Request for Proposals (RFPs) should be prepared for food service activities offering significant potential for savings and/or service improvements. Both private and public potential vendors should be solicited. All competitive cost review information about the specific service should be made public. Vendors should be allowed a large degree of flexibility in providing creative solutions towards accomplishing the recognized performance standards for the particular service and asked to create performance measurements that can be developed into eventual contractual obligations should the service be outsourced.

Step 5: Determination of Savings.

Savings are the difference between total in-house costs, both direct and indirect, and the total cost to contract, which is determined if and when a qualified vendor is selected and the service is performed for at least one year.

In addition to the steps listed above, MISD needs to determine whether it can afford to bring its food service operations (equipment and facility) into compliance with the Federal Food Code, whether it can continue to meet USDA nutritional guidelines, and at what cost. MISD also needs to take a serious look at its current food service quality and the level of customer satisfaction as indicated by students and faculty. And, finally, MISD should determine what arrangement is in the district's best interests.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent seeks the board's approval to explore outsourcing or contracting options for its food service operations with private companies or other school districts.	October 2000
2.	The superintendent and the Food Service manager complete the five steps listed above to the determine the current costs of operations, including an estimate for the kitchen/cafeteria renovation projects, and to seek request for proposals for alternative providers of service.	November 2000 - January 2001
3.	The superintendent contacts the EISD superintendent about the possibility of contracting with EISD for the delivery of and operation of meal service.	November 2000
4.	The superintendent contacts the Texarkana ISD superintendent to learn about the contracting services they provide to surrounding districts.	November 2000
5.	The superintendent and Food Services manager evaluate the contracting options.	January - February 2001
6.	The MISD superintendent prepares a plan for the future of the Food Services Department and submits a recommendation to the board for approval.	February 2001
7.	Depending upon what option the district decides to go with, it should be implemented in time for the start of 2001-02.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

As shown in **Exhibits 4-3** and **4-4**, MISD's budget deficit has ranged from approximately $15,000 in 1995-96 to $3,000 in 1999-2000. If through outsourcing, the district can eliminate this deficit, the district would save at least $3,000 each year and avoid the unknown cost of renovations.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Review outsourcing opportunities for MISD's Food Services operation to reduce deficits and remedy facility needs.	$0	$3,000	$3,000	$3,000	$3,000

FINDING

Meal participation is tracked manually as students pass through the cafeteria serving line. Students are given different color-coded cards signifying their eligibility status (free and or reduced), and a student from each class is responsible for picking up the cards before meal service.

According to the TEA's *Child Nutrition Programs Administrator's Reference Manual,* "there must not be any discrimination against children receiving free and reduced-price meal benefits." Moreover, any information about the student eligibility determination should be kept confidential. A color-coded system jeopardizes a student's privacy and confidentiality because their ability to pay or not pay can be easily seen by other students. This method does not ensure that students' rights are protected who participate in federally-subsidized meal programs.

Recommendation 14:

Discontinue the practice of assigning color-coded meal cards to students that represents their eligibility status.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the Food Service manager and principals to come up with an alternative, non-discriminatory system to the color-coded card system.	October 2000
2.	The Food Service manager submits a recommendation to the superintendent.	November 2000
3.	The superintendent eliminates the color-coded system and begins implementing an alternative system.	December 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The TEA's Administrator's Reference Manual for Child Nutrition Programs states that acceptable point-of-sale (POS) counting procedures are required to determine the number of reimbursable meals a district serves. Any alternate counting/collection procedure must include an employee stationed at the end of the serving line to monitor and record the types of meals selected. In addition, the anonymity of eligibility for each child must be protected.

The MISD Food Services Department operates its cash management system manually. Employees keep manual records and turn them in to the manager at the end of the meals.

There are no computerized reports generated that track student eligibility, daily cash flow, participation rates and free and reduced-price meal applications. Therefore, the superintendent must compile these reports.

Many school districts have purchased and implemented POS systems that allow more efficient menu management, daily entry of meals served, inventory planning and control, meal costing and accounting, purchasing and receiving and nutritional analysis and student confidentiality.

Recommendation 15:

Solicit bids from various vendors for a point-of-sale system, or consider an automated solution for collecting, reporting and managing food service financial data.

The Food Services manager and staff could be trained to operate an automated POS system and the reports that would be generated.

If the district decides that it is not cost-effective to purchase a POS system, an automated solution for data collection and tracking should be explored.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Food Services manager contacts TEA for a list of USDA-approved POS system vendors.	November 2000
2.	The superintendent solicits bids from vendors.	January 2001

3.	The superintendent evaluates proposals and presents the final bid to the board for approval.	February 2001
4.	MISD's purchases the POS system and the vendor trains the superintendent, Food Services manager and employees on its use.	June 2001
5.	The Food Services manager implements the POS.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

TSPR consulted with several POS systems vendors and the cost for a system in MISD would be approximately $5,500.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Solicit bids from various vendors for point-of-sale system, or consider an automated solution for collecting, reporting and managing food service financial data.	$0	($5,500)	$0	$0	$0

Chapter 4

B. TRANSPORTATION

According to TEA's *1998-99 School Transportation Route Services Report,* MISD's Transportation Department operates two routes per day, transporting an average of 120 students and covering an area of 64 square miles. Since MISD does not have facilities for grades 8-12, it provides transportation for high school students attending Elgin ISD. Secondary students who choose to attend Lexington ISD must provide their own transportation. MISD contracts with a private carrier to transport one special education student to the School for the Blind in Austin. The total ridership of 120 represents about 60 percent of the district's 200 students.

The superintendent is responsible for the transportation operations in MISD. There are two drivers and the MISD maintenance worker is a certified driver, in case a driver is absent. This MISD maintenance worker also checks the fluid levels in the buses each day. After-hours maintenance is performed by a Precinct 2 employee in Bastrop County who works under contract.

Exhibit 4-10 shows how MISD's bus driver salaries compare with peer districts.

Exhibit 4-10
MISD and Peer District Comparison of Bus Driver Hourly Rates
1999-2000

School District	Minimum	Mid-Point	Maximum
McDade	**$9.25 ($6,662/yr.)**	**$11.15 ($8,028/yr.)**	**$13.05 ($9,394/yr.)**
Bartlett	$19.60/day ($3,469/yr.)		$32.89/day ($5,821/yr.)
Dime Box	$15.00/ regular route; $5.00/special route		
Prairie Lea	$11.00 per route		

Source: MISD, 1999-2000, Transportation Department.

All MISD transportation employees work at least 20 hours per week and, with the exception of one employee, get individual health insurance at no cost (**Exhibit 4-11**).

Exhibit 4-11
MISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Health Benefits
1999-2000

School District	Hours per Week Required to Earn Health Benefits	Premium Paid By District	Percent of Total Premium Cost
McDade	**20**	**$226**	**100%**
Austin	20	$154	100%
Elgin	20	$175	100%
Manor	20	$188	100%

Source: Personnel Department of each peer district, 1999-2000.

To receive state funding, all Texas school districts must submit two reports to TEA by July, the *School Transportation Operations Report* and the *School Transportation Route Services Report.* The first of those reports, the *School Transportation Operation 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.

Linear density is the ratio of the average number of regular program students transported daily to the number of miles driven daily. TEA uses this ratio to assign each school district to one of seven groups, with each group receiving a different per-mile reimbursement. **Exhibit 4-12** shows the categories of reimbursement, the linear density for each category and the related reimbursement. MISD's linear density is 0.386 and the district receives 68 cents from the state per mile.

Exhibit 4-12
Categories of State Linear Density Reimbursement for Regular Bus Routes

Category	Linear Density Range	Reimbursement per Mile
1	0.000 - 0.399	$0.68
2	0.400 - 0.649	$0.79
3	0.650 - 0.899	$0.88
4	0.900 - 1.149	$0.97

5	1.150 - 1.649	$1.11
6	1.650 - 2.399	$1.25
7	2.400 - 9.999	$1.43

Source: TEA.

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 4-13** shows the route data for MISD for five years, beginning with the 1994-95 school year.

Exhibit 4-13
MISD Summary of Route Services Reports
1994-95 through 1998-99

	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Regular Program					
Annual Standard Ridership	4,140	3,780	4,680	14,580	14,220
Annual Standard Mileage	20,556	19,440	20,520	33,986	36,864
Linear Density	0.201	0.194	0.228	0.429	0.386
Allotment per Mile	$0.68	$0.68	$0.68	$0.68	$0.68
Annual Mileage (incl. hazardous)	41,112	19,440	20,520	33,986	36,864
Total Daily Ridership	46	21	34	81	79
Hazardous Annual Mileage	20,554	0	0	0	0
Hazardous Daily Ridership	23	0	0	0	0
Special Program					
Total Daily Ridership	0	0	0	0	0
Total Annual Mileage	0	0	0	0	0
Career & Technology Program					
Total Daily Ridership	0	0	0	0	0
Total Annual Mileage	0	0	0	0	0
Private Program					
Total Daily Ridership	1	1	1	1	1

Total Annual Mileage	4,680	5,040	4,480	5,040	5,040
Allotments					
Regular Program	$14,677	$13,219	$13,954	$23,110	$25,068
Special Program	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Career & Technology Program	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Private Program	$816	$816	$816	$816	$816
Total Allotments	**$15,493**	**$14,035**	**$14,770**	**$23,926**	**$25,884**

Source: TEA, School Transportation Route Services Reports, 1994-95 - 1998-99.

Compared to its peer districts, MISD has the second-lowest linear density (**Exhibit 4-14**). Conversely, MISD receives 69 percent of its total operating costs from the state transportation allotment, which is the second-highest percentage compared to its peer group.

Exhibit 4-14
MISD and Peer Districts, Linear Density and State Allotment
1998-99

School District	Linear Density (Riders Per Mile)	Allotment per Mile	Total State Allotment	Percent of Operating Costs
Prairie Lea	1.140	$1.11	$12,535	46%
Moulton	0.608	$0.79	$38,926	84%
Bartlett	0.523	$0.79	$61,695	37%
Dime Box	0.392	$0.79	$23,721	27%
McDade	**0.386**	**$0.68**	**$25,884**	**69%**
Silverton	0.132	$0.68	$32,558	31%

Source: TEA School Transportation Route Services Status, 1998-99.

FINDING

McDade's transportation costs are relatively low because the district owns only two buses, each built in 1983 and purchases used buses. The TEA *School Transportation Operation Report*, establishes a cost-per-mile for reimbursements in the fiscal year following the report. **Exhibit 4-15**

shows that from 1994-95 to 1998-99 MISD's transportation costs increased 97 percent and the total route mileage increased 110 percent. Over that same time, the district's cost-per-mile decreased 6 percent.

Exhibit 4-15
MISD Summary of School Transportation Operations Reports
1994-95 - 1998-99

	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Operations Costs					
Salaries & Benefits	$8,759	$9,378	$10,071	$15,311	$15,499
Purchased & Contracted Services	$3,011	$1,262	$9,398	$7,859	$7,795
Supplies & Materials	$2,859	$6,885	$5,895	$7,682	$7,969
Other Operating Expenses	$1,157	$1,351	$1,357	$1,041	$458
Debt Service	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Capital Outlay	$3,400	$3,400	$3,400	$4,000	$6,000
Total Operations Costs	$19,186	$22,276	$30,121	$35,893	$37,721
Mileage Summary					
Route Mileage	15,480	15,452	17,931	33,096	33,549
Extra/Cocurricular Mileage	1,218	873	1,326	1,722	1,786
Non-School Organizations Mileage	0	0	0	0	0
Other Mileage	200	700	200	200	200
Total Annual Mileage	16,898	17,025	19,457	35,018	35,535
Cost per Mile - Regular	**$1.135**	**$1.308**	**$1.548**	**$1.025**	**$1.062**
Cost per Mile - Special	**$0.000**	**$0.000**	**$0.000**	**$0.000**	**$0.000**

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Reports, 1994-95 - 1998-99.

Exhibit 4-16 shows how MISD's operations costs for transportation compared to its peer districts.

Exhibit 4-16
MISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Operations Costs
1998-99

School District	Salaries & Benefits	Purchased & Contracted Services	Supplies & Materials	Other Operating Expenses	Capital Outlay	Total Operating Costs
Bartlett	$64,528	$18,770	$24,657	$592	$60,202	$168,749
Silverton	$41,058	$12,179	$11,646	$8,882	$29,975	$103,740
Dime Box	$39,603	$3,314	$15,332	$10,533	$18,851	$87,633
Moulton	$20,799	$13,833	$8,861	$2,612	$0	$46,105
McDade	**$15,499**	**$7,795**	**$7,969**	**$458**	**$6,000**	**$37,721**
Prairie Lea	$10,161	$1,660	$2,844	$1,901	$10,530	$27,096

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Reports, 1998-99.

Exhibit 4-17 shows each cost category as a percentage of the total operations costs for each district. MISD has above-average costs for purchased and contracted services and supply costs, and below-average costs for other operating expenses and capital outlay items.

Exhibit 4-17
MISD 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
Bartlett	38.2%	11.1%	14.6%	0.4%	0.0%	35.7%
Silverton	39.6%	11.7%	11.2%	8.6%	0.0%	28.9%
Dime Box	45.2%	3.8%	17.5%	12.0%	0.0%	21.5%
Moulton	45.1%	30.0%	19.2%	5.7%	0.0%	0.0%
McDade	**41.0%**	**20.7%**	**21.1%**	**1.2%**	**0.0%**	**15.9%**
Prairie Lea	37.5%	6.1%	10.5%	7.0%	0.0%	38.9%
Peer Average	**41.1%**	**12.5%**	**14.6%**	**6.7%**	**0.0%**	**25%**

Other information obtained from peer districts shows that MISD's cost-per-mile for pupil transportation is below average when compared to its peer districts (**Exhibit 4-18**).

Exhibit 4-18
MISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Mileage Data
1998-99

School District	Route Mileage	Extra/ Co-Curricular Mileage	Other Mileage	Total Annual Mileage	Cost Per Mile
Dime Box	31,680	10,210	810	42,700	$2.050
Bartlett	72,260	28,159	0	100,419	$1.789
McDade	**33,549**	**1,786**	**200**	**35,535**	**$1.062**
Prairie Lea	12,106	12,962	800	25,868	$1.047
Silverton	47,880	60,259	6,060	114,199	$0.908
Moulton	48,240	16,383	312	64,935	$0.710
Peer Average	**42,433**	**25,595**	**1,596**	**69,624**	**$1.301**

MISD has the third-lowest cost-per-rider when compared to its peer districts (**Exhibit 4-19**).

Exhibit 4-19
MISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Cost Per Rider
1998-99

School District	Total Annual Operating Costs	Annual Ridership	Cost Per Rider Per Day
Silverton	$103,740	6,300	$16.47
Dime Box	$87,633	10,260	$8.54
Bartlett	$168,749	20,700	$8.15
McDade	**$37,721**	**14,220**	**$2.65**
Prairie Lea	$27,096	11,700	$2.32

Moulton	$46,105	29,340	$1.57

COMMENDATION

MISD provides efficient transportation by using cost-efficient buses.

Chapter 4

C. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

In 1983, MISD administration and staff designed and implemented a program to develop computer literacy among students. MISD purchased a single computer for the library. In 1988, in response to TEA mandates, MISD set up a five-member committee composed of a superintendent, teachers and community members (parents). This committee met to develop a five-year plan for instructional technology for grades K-6. During 1993, state legislation allotted funds for each school according to their average daily attendance. This was the year that MISD set a goal of purchasing two new computers per classroom.

When the district built a new school during the 1996-97 school year, MISD acquired a new computer lab. With the donated and purchased equipment, MISD taught computer literacy to all grade levels (K-6).

A well-managed administrative technology and information services department is guided by a clearly defined plan based on appropriate goals and organization, clear assignments of responsibility for each application, well-defined development procedures for new applications and a customer-service orientation that continually seeks to meet and anticipate user needs.

An instructional technology support department must be familiar with school operations and the technologies used for instructional purposes; technology-oriented instructional material; networks used for instructional purposes; and technology-related training, particularly training that seeks to integrate new technologies into the curriculum. Establishing a positive working relationship with the Curriculum and Instruction Department will ensure that all technology initiatives support the learning process.

The assistant superintendent and technology coordinator are the staff of MISD's Technology group. The assistant superintendent is responsible for all administrative functions. The Technology coordinator is responsible for managing the network, acquiring equipment, replacing equipment and grant management.

Exhibit 4-22 shows MISD technology expenditures. MISD paid for equipment with grant funds.

Exhibit 4-22
MISD Technology Expenditures
1996-97 to 1999-2000

Function	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000
Administrative	$0	$3,020	$0	$4,200
Instructional	24,003	110,528	17,668	21,500
Total	**$24,003**	**$113,548**	**$17,668**	**$25,700**

Source: MISD assistant superintendent.

Exhibit 4-23 lists the successful grants for funding MISD technology.

Exhibit 4-23
MISD Grant Funds for Technology
1996-97 through 1999-2000

Grant Source	Year	Amount	Purpose
E-rate	1998-99	$19,000	Wiring
TIF	1998-99	$90,000	Wiring buildings, library, office, cafeteria and teacher's lounge
TIF	1999-2000	$20,000	Communitywide network
Total		**$129,000**	

Source: MISD assistant superintendent.

Planning for new technologies is particularly important to education because of the following factors:

- *Equity.* The level of technological resources available to each school in a district can vary. Unfortunately, poorly-planned introductions of new technology can serve to further widen the gap between the "haves" and "have nots." Careful planning at the district level can ensure all schools receive adequate support.
- *Rapid Change.* The pace of technological change continues to accelerate. If planning for the implementation of new technology does not cover an adequate span of time (3-5 years), the district risks failing to take full advantage of new technology.
- *Funding.* Funding can be the greatest barrier to the effective use of technology in the classroom. A district must determine where all technology spending will come from in advance.
- *Credibility.* The public is eager to see its tax dollars are spent effectively. Thorough planning makes it possible to demonstrate

that proposed strategies have been well thought out, acquisitions of technological resources have been carefully considered and every aspect of the implementation is cost-effective.

To implement information technology effectively in administrative offices or schools, a district must have:

- An extensive computer network connecting modern computers;
- Comprehensive administrative and instructional software and up-to-date operating systems;
- Effective, ongoing training and technical support;
- A professional staff; and
- A means to provide the community access to school information through technology.

MISD is committed to sustaining and improving the use of technology to improve the academic performance of all students. The technology staff also actively works to ensure all technology equipment functions well, and seeks additional funding for equipment and services.

Network infrastructure is the underlying system of cables, telephone lines, hubs, switches, routers and other devices that connect the various computers of an organization through a Wide Area Network (WAN).

Typically, 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 that allows anyone connected to the WAN to access information and people outside the organization. WAN's are usually "closed," meaning that they include security measures to prevent unauthorized users outside the organization from accessing information or people inside the organization.

MISD's network provider is Region 13. MISD provides Internet access from a connection from Region 13 and Esconett to MISD.

The district uses software services (RSCCC) from Region 13 for districtwide accounting, purchase orders, budgeting and finance. **Exhibit 4-26** lists MISD's software modules.

Exhibit 4-26
Inventory of Computer Software
1999-2000

Administrative Software	Application

RSCCC	Bookkeeping and PEIMS
Microsoft office '97	Word processing
Instructional Software	Application
Random CDs for student use	**Tutoring games**
Heart Beeps	**TAAS remediation**
Inspiration	Brainstorming for writing
Claris Works	Word processing
Educational Package from Apple	Various CDs for student use in core subject areas

Source: MISD assistant superintendent.

Training is one of the most critical factors in using technology 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 take this into account.

Technology-related training must be ongoing. Teachers need continuous opportunities to expand their technological skills and must interact with other teachers so they can share new strategies and techniques. Access to electronic mail and the Internet have proven valuable for 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

MISD's technology plan effectively integrates technology by getting as many computers into the classroom as they can, instead of creating computer labs. The Region 13 helped the district lease 25 computers for 3 years at $100 per computer for a total cost of $2,500. At the end of the 3-year period, the district has the option to buy the computers for $1 each. In addition, MISD used Telecommunication Infrastructure Fund grant to acquire an additional seven computers for the Middle School.

The TEA has made short-term (1997-98), mid-term (1999-2002), and long-term (2003-2010) recommendations to local education agencies. The

short-term goal for technology equipment is a student-to-workstation ratio of 4:1. The mid-term goal for technology equipment is a student-to-workstation ratio of 3:1. The long-term goal for technology equipment is a student-to-workstation ratio of 1:1.

Exhibit 4-27 shows MISD's inventory of current technology available for student use. Only 486 speed or better; at least 16 MB RAM; network-capable student computers are listed. The list does not include administrative computers or file servers.

Exhibit 4-27
Inventory of MISD Computer Equipment
January 2000

School	Number of Students	Total Computers	Student to Computer Ratio
McDade Middle School	40	25	1.4 to 1
Old Building (4th & 5th)	62	16	5.1 to 1
New Building (K-3rd)	105	37	5 to 1
Special Education	N/A	2	N/A
Teacher Power Books	N/A	21	N/A
Library/Central Adm.	N/A	8	N/A
GRAND TOTALS	**207**	**109**	**2.7 to 1**

Source: Interview with MISD assistant superintendent.

COMMENDATION

The MISD Middle School has exceeded the TEA's mid-term student-to-workstation goal of 3:1.

FINDING

The Technology coordinator and the District Technology Committee prepared a detailed Technology Plan for 1996-2001. The most recent update occurred in 1999.

The plan primarily addresses a requirement in the Texas Infrastructure Fund (TIF) grant application.

The existing technology plan provides some ideal and lofty goals, but there has been no effort to formally develop a plan for implementing for these goals and objectives. There are few dates listed for completing objectives.

Exhibit 4-28 shows MISD's technology plan.

Exhibit 4-28
MISD Technology Plan
1996-2001

Goals	Objectives
MISD will develop a plan for effectively integrating instructional technology within the comprehensive educational program to better teach students.	• The District will designate a team to devise the most effective instructional use of technology for all students. • The District will provide opportunity for staff technology training, and to observe and review exemplary technological programs in other area school districts.
MISD will begin implementation of technology as based on needs identified by the campus committee to extend student outcomes. Implementation will include the purchase of equipment, furniture and materials and reorganization of classroom designs.	• Determine campus level needs for student and staff, such as a system for cataloging and inventory, storing and networking. • Prioritize the district needs over a year implementation period (Technology Committee), year 1-3 specified and years 4-5+ futuristic.
MISD will implement a staff development plan for technology aligned with program goals and identified staff needs to extend student outcomes.	• Provide basic computer/technology training appropriate to instructional, support and administrative staff. • Provide staff computer/technology training that is appropriate to specified subject needs.
MISD will develop evaluation strategies and procedures to ensure that all technology resources provide optimum teaching opportunities to extend student outcomes.	• Examine the current distribution of technology resources and programs to determine appropriateness and continuity (annually).

Incorporate technology as a natural part of education.	• In five years, all students will demonstrate technology competencies through state and local performance assessments. • Students will develop technology performance skills standards for benchmark competencies for all grades using the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. • Provide staff development for teachers. • Write guidelines to integrate the use of technology with critical thinking skills and problem solving in all content areas. • In two years, all teachers will demonstrate technological competencies in instructional delivery, student assessment and professional communication. • Develop a multilevel technology certification program for teachers in district competencies such as: basic technology operation, personal/professional use of technology tools, social, ethical and human issues and application of technology in instruction. • Provide access and time to work on technological resources. • Provide staff development for teachers. • Integrate technology skills into the curriculum. • In two years, all staff will demonstrate technological competencies according to job responsibilities and descriptions. • Develop technology performance skills, standards and assessments for benchmark competencies for staff for professional competence. • Provide access and time to resources. • Provide staff development. • In five years, all documents, such

	as policy, procedures, handbooks and curriculum guides will reference the use of technology. • Develop a process to ensure that all documents reference technology.
Assess technology needs within the framework of the MISD District Technology Plan.	• On a two-year continuum, McDade Elementary School will conduct yearly assessments of equity of access to, appropriateness of and utilization of resources by students, teachers and staff. • Provide current and accurate inventories. • Develop purchasing options within district/campus budgetary constraints. • Administer surveys, questionnaires; use checklists and logs. • McDade Elementary School will develop and submit to the Technology Committee a five-year technology plan that projects the goals, objectives, resources and evaluation of the incorporation of technology with yearly reviews. • Submission of campus plans.
Provide current and appropriate technological resources and staff development to use these resources.	• On a five-year continuum, MISD will provide technological resources for programs, courses and equity of access as outlined in the state guideline and to meet district performance competencies. • Develop a holistic picture of the district's technological infrastructure. • Develop hardware standards. • Develop software standards. • Provide ongoing research on emerging technologies. • Develop and implement a procedure for allocation of funds

	and resources that accounts for different levels of funding, and different sources of funding. • Provide a list of standard hardware for campus purchases. • Provide a list of standard software for campus purchases. • Maintain and update hardware and software libraries. • On a five-year continuum, MISD will provide staff development and maintenance for all technological resources acquired through the district technology framework. • Develop district technology staff development program. • Develop campus incentives for maintenance of technology. • Train staff person to troubleshoot the equipment. • Review maintenance certifications. • Consider outside maintenance contracts. • In a five-year continuum, MISD will outfit all facilities for networked technology. • All facility improvement programs would include cabling for voice, data, video, power and security.
Measure the progress and evaluate the impact of technology on education.	• McDade Elementary School will design and implement an authentic assessment procedure to assess the impact of technology as stated in their plans. • Develop assessment models for the district. • The campus will use the data collected in the assessment procedure to evaluate their technology goals and objectives. • Assess performance competencies. • Each year the district will monitor equity of access and the impact of

	technology and related staff development on student achievement. • Collect and analyze data from campus plans, inventories and logs to determine equity and student achievement.

Source: MISD Technology Department assistant superintendent.

Recommendation 16:

Modify the existing technology plan to delineate the specific tasks necessary to reach the district goals and spending priorities.

Once MISD finalizes the plan, the director should identify the detailed steps required to accomplish the tasks and should enter them into project tracking software. This will allow the district to track the plan's implementation.

A technology plan needs input from the teachers and administrators as well as students, parents and community members. Identifying the tasks, cost estimates and timeframes for each goal will help the District Technology Committee develop a realistic plan.

The District Technology Committee should produce quarterly reports on the progress of the plans implementation. MISD should present these quarterly reports at board meetings to inform the board, district employees and community members. The committee also should ensure that the technology plan reflects and supports districtwide goals and objectives.

Coordinating the goals, tasks and detailed steps will make it easier for people in the district and in the community to see that the district is accomplishing its goals.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The District Technology Committee works with the staff and representatives from schools and administration to identify goals and tasks for the technology plan.	September 2000
2.	The District Technology Committee works with the staff and representatives from schools and administration to identify cost, source of funds, person responsible for and deadline for	October 2000

	each task.	
3.	The District Technology Committee updates the technology plan.	December 2000
4.	The District Technology Committee tracks detailed tasks in project tracking software.	January 2001
5.	The District Technology Committee produces and presents a quarterly report to the board, district staff and community members.	January 2001 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

MISD has policies and procedures for backing up computer files and data, but there is no written, comprehensive disaster recovery plan. MISD performs daily file backups on each server. For the key administrative servers, the district provides redundant hard drives and power supplies. MISD personnel records and other key data is maintained in paper files.

MISD policies and procedures for backing up computer files and data does not include;

- A disaster recovery team
- A contact list name to notify staff after a disaster
- A list of critical business functions
- Required staffing levels needed it immediately after a disaster has occurred; and
- Office equipment needs

MISD must develop a comprehensive disaster recovery plan in order to value and restore key information in the event of a disaster.

A computer disaster could result in lost productivity and an inability to perform important district operations. Unfortunately, protecting electronic information is not as straightforward as simply assigning a technical staff person to verify protection of the "system." It requires top-level administrators to invest time and expertise into developing a well-conceived, comprehensive and customized security policy. MISD must then implement this policy appropriately throughout the organization.

Recommendation 17:

Develop a comprehensive disaster recovery plan and test it.

Exhibit 4-29 lists some of the key elements of an effective disaster recovery plan.

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Exhibit 4-29
Key Elements of a Disaster Recovery Plan

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Step	Details
Build the disaster recovery team.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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 MISD can resume critical operations as soon as possible. • Establish procedures for obtaining off-site backup records. • Locate support resources that MISD needs, 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.	• Identify individual roles and responsibilities by name and job title so that everyone knows exactly

	what they need to do. • Define actions to be taken in advance of an occurrence or undesirable event. • Define necessary actions at the onset of an undesirable event to limit damage, loss and compromised data integrity. • Identify actions to be taken to restore critical functions. • Define actions to be taken to re-establish normal operations.
Test the plan.	• Test the plan frequently and completely. • Analyze the results to improve the plan and identify further needs.
Deal with damage appropriately.	• If a disaster actually occurs, document all costs and videotape the damage. • Be prepared to overcome downtime on your own; insurance settlements can take time to resolve.
Give consideration to other significant issues.	• Don't make a plan unnecessarily complicated. • Make one individual responsible for maintaining the plan, but have it structured so that others are authorized and prepared to implement if it is needed. • Update the plan regularly and whenever system changes occur.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, "Safeguarding Your Technology."

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Technology coordinator establishes a Disaster Recovery Team, composed of department representatives from administration, teachers and technology area.	October 2000
2.	The Disaster Recovery Team develops the Disaster Recovery Plan.	January 2001
3.	The director presents the plan to the superintendent and board for approval.	February 2001

4.	The director explains the plan to the appropriate personnel.	March 2001
5.	The director runs a scheduled test of the plan.	April 2001
6.	The director reports the results to the board.	May 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Bastrop County school districts do not share technology-related best practices. For example, BISD technology personnel are planning to have "frequently asked questions" maintained on their Web site to enable teachers and staff to troubleshoot computer problems. The goal is to minimize the number of expensive computer technician calls. Elgin ISD's use and experience with TEKStar software for lesson plans management could benefit other districts. Smithville ISD's technology competency requirements may have value to other county districts. Smithville ISD's superintendent has a technology background with an understanding of network installation and maintenance that could be useful to other districts.

Recommendation 18:

Develop a technology forum among all Bastrop County districts.

Bastrop County school districts should communicate and share best practices through periodic meetings among appropriate technology personnel. The goal of these meetings should be to identify current processes that improve efficiencies or lower costs. All districts can share resources by linking Web sites.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	Bastrop ISD's assistant superintendent establishes a technology information-sharing forum with other school districts in the county.	September 2000
2.	The technology information-sharing forum identifies best practices in the district.	September 2000
3.	The technology information-sharing forum assigns appropriate personnel to update Web content or create a Web site.	October 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

D. FACILITIES

The district's voters approved issuing $1.5 million in bonds for facility needs in May 2000. MISD plans to issue the bonds when TEA approves specific instructional facilities funding assistance to pay debt service on the bonds. The district expects to receive this facilities funding assistance in fall 2001, after the Legislature approves the biennial state budget.

Included in MISD's plans for the these bond proceeds are $1.2 million for middle school facilities and $200,000 to replace army barracks acquired in the late 1940s that the district uses for elementary school classrooms (**Exhibit 4-30**).

Exhibit 4-30
Planned Use of Proceeds for New MISD Facilities and MISD Facility Improvements from the May 2000 $1.5 Million Bond Election

Planned Use of Bond Proceeds	Amount
Four new middle school classrooms and gymnasium	$1,125,000
New septic system for middle school	$50,000
New paving for middle school facilities	$25,000
Middle school total	**$1,200,000**
New five-room elementary facility to replace army barracks	$200,000
Air condition elementary gymnasium	$20,000
Elementary school total	**$220,000**
Contingencies	$50,000
Bond issuance costs	$30,000
Total	**$1,500,000**

Source: MISD superintendent.

FINDING

MISD has not been aggressive in pursuing energy savings. Records indicate that the district spends approximately $25,000 annually on

utilities. As part of the review process the State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) made a preliminary review of the MISD operations and identified several opportunities for reducing utility consumption.

Some of the suggestions included retrofitting light fixtures and installing high efficiency air conditioners. According to the preliminary findings of the SECO office, a minimal investment of $16,500 in lighting retrofits could reduce the district's energy consumption by 11 percent, or $2,900 per year. Replacing window units and fan powered strip heat units at the older building with high efficiency heat pump units in the classrooms at a cost of $18,000 would reduce utility bills by another $1,200 annually.

Other suggestions included simple maintenance and operating procedural changes, such as publicizing energy conservation at regular staff meetings, improving controls for lighting, inspecting door seals and keeping doors and windows closed to reduce air leaks, and regularly changing filters and cleaning condensers so that air conditioning systems are operating efficiently.

The district has budgeted for some air conditioners as part of the bond programs but it is unclear whether the intent was to replace the older air conditioning units. There is, however, a contingency amount set aside in the bond that may be available for energy saving retrofits.

Recommendation 19:

Request a State Energy Conservation Office audit and shift a portion of the bond proceeds already dedicated to building improvements to energy saving retrofits.

If the district should decide that a small portion of bond proceeds could not be dedicated for this purpose, the district should seek low interest financing for these retrofits through the state where utility savings are used to make the annual payments on the loan.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent contacts SECO and requests a study to determine energy saving opportunities for district facilities.	September 2000
2.	The superintendent and staff prepare a draft energy management plan, including proposed budgets, based upon the SECO study and maintenance needs of facilities.	October - November 2000
3.	The superintendent reviews the plan with the board and requests that either a portion of the bond proceeds be dedicated to energy retrofits or a low interest loan be obtained	December 2000

	for these retrofits.	
4.	The superintendent initiates the work on the facilities and begins implementing the energy saving procedural plan.	January 2001
5.	Retrofits are complete.	February 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

According to SECO estimates, making energy retrofits as part of the bond program would result in utility savings of $4,100 annually. First year savings are estimated for one-half of the year. Additional savings may be possible through procedural changes.

Recommendation	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Request a State Energy Conservation Office audit and shift a portion of the bond proceeds already dedicated to building improvements to energy saving retrofits.	$2,050	$4,100	$4,100	$4,100	$4,100

Appendix A
COMMUNITY COMMENTS

As part of this review, a community meeting and focus group were conducted during the early stages of the review process. This appendix contains comments from a public forum held at the McDade School cafeteria on March 30, 2000, a focus group with faculty in the school library on April 13, 2000 and other written comments received by the Comptroller's office.

These comments, presented verbatim in most instances, help illustrate community perceptions of the McDade Independent School District (MISD), but do not necessarily reflect the findings or opinions of the review team or the Comptroller. The following is a summary of comments received by focus area.

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

- Small school environment, everyone seems to wear a lot of "hats."
- Board is not fully and truly informed of what goes on or what is needed! Management is weak and often not student oriented.
- Management makes it too difficult to speak to school board about concerns or problems that they would rather not deal with.
- The superintendent is wonderful. He cares about the students and is very involved.
- School policies are sometimes out of date and contain a lot of loopholes and inconsistencies.
- Public is not informed about school policies and often have to ask for copies from school administrators.
- The superintendent and principal are always approachable and seem to be genuinely concerned with students' and parents' concerns.
- I have always found the principal and superintendent ready and willing to discuss and assist with any problem that I have brought to them. Great job!
- All governing bodies in this district have made, and continue to make, great strides in their vision and communication.
- Board attends many training programs, which is good.
- [The state] mandated that the board receives training and be in touch with school administration, rules and laws.
- More communication [is needed] on how public can be involved in district planning, decision-making (i.e. new school, grades).
- [From] what I have seen and heard during conversations and meetings, the administration's attention is high.

- The Campus Improvement Plan process needs improving. It is board approved and probably does not drive the budget.
- Administration is not always (very rarely, in fact) available when needed.
- One of the challenges for our district is growth.
- Support for the administration is a challenge.
- Need more communication from administration.
- The administration needs to follow through and follow up.
- Community uninformed about bond issue.
- The administration is not very organized.
- The administration is not always available if there is a problem.
- I do feel like I am listened to by the administration. This is a very laid back campus. I could go to them for anything.
- Growth in the community: This school will have to come up with the money to add on more grades, a gym, a bigger Early Childhood Center and a P.E. Program. All these things will require lots of money.
- I feel that I am supported by the administrative staff. I feel I can speak my mind and address my opinions. I believe I am listened to. My issues are handled with care.
- Ideas and input are listened to as long as it doesn't conflict with administration.
- One major challenge that will face our district is the change in administration. Our superintendent is retiring soon and the coming changes will affect teachers, students, parents, taxpayers. Also, if the growth rate continues at the pace we have seen over the past decade, we are going to quickly outgrow our existing facilities. The growth plan I have seen does not accommodate this growth, especially among the lower grades.
- I feel that the administration hears our concerns or views, but I feel that most decisions have been made before we are approached for input.
- Bond issue is not needed now. We can't take care of more staff when we still have issues, such as middle school.
- School board needs to be more involved and informed of what is going on in the school and not just what administration wants them to know
- We don't need the asst. superintendent. It has done nothing but cause problems in the faculty. (No, we are not listened to by administrators. If we do speak out, we get treated poorly.)
- Site-based team addresses 90 percent of faculty needs. The school board is responsive.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

- New 7th grade this year. Quite disorganized, some curriculum undocumented w/questionable grading system, chaotic at best. Now, we are having an 8th grade? Are we to expect the same thing? Don't think we need to have an 8th grade until the current grades are a bit more stable and operational.
- Problems with 7th grade curriculum and lack of structure makes one question judgement to proceed with 8th grade next year. Is this a good business decision for the district, and will our children suffer if they have to go through the lack of structure one more year?
- Teachers should not be "chewed out" in front of students. The kids lose all respect for the teacher and this in turn causes behavior problems. If there is a problem with a teacher, it should be taken care of in private!
- Why do school administrators publicly "correct" teachers in front of the teachers' students? Even if there is a problem, it should be taken offline and addressed in private. This results in the students losing respect for their teacher and potentially discipline problems in a classroom.
- Small school environment with a lower student/teacher ratio. Really like this, but problems with teacher retention offsets this positive aspect of our school.
- Enrichment program for middle school had no official documented curriculum and grading system. Grading system was based on child's "participation" in class during the grading period. After being questioned, teacher began using "Rubric" for the curriculum, but did not allow the students to see the criteria in the Rubric. Difficult to make 100 in class when the grade started at 100 and points were deducted from this. Potentially, students could feel "not good enough" to make a good grade and give up on trying. Suggest if rubric is to be used, the students at least SEE the content so they would know what it is they were being graded on. This is wrong!
- Need advanced classes for accelerated students.
- Not enough textbooks for students in some classes.
- Schools need to seize on every opportunity for conflict resolution education at the grade/middle school level. Programs like "DARE" are excellent examples which offer valuable life skills opportunities for our youth. We need to get to them when they are young and impressionable, not after we put them in our correctional facilities.
- We need some level of guidance counseling at the middle school.
- One of districts' stronger areas. The staff and community are supportive in this area.
- All of our Educational Programs are great. Students' performance is fabulous on TAAS.

- The school is wonderful. The teachers are great and the curriculum is on target.
- Allow accelerated students to progress without being held back by slower students.
- The amount of time spent by my daughter on the TAAS Test is a waste of the teacher's time and my child's time specifically. Teach the children the basics, then test them. Don't teach them on how to take the test. Anyone can learn to pass the test if you make them take it enough times. Retest the students who fail it.
- There is a lack of curriculum in the Middle School Enrichment Program. Our children watched videos and read books the entire 1st semester and received numerical grades for it - based on the teacher's interpretation of their participation for that particular semester. Where is the fairness in that? The second semester has really picked up. Good curriculum for the 2nd semester. I would like to know how much money we allocated for this program for this school year, 1999-2000 - where did it go?
- My child has gone to school here all her life. The elementary teachers that she had were fantastic people. Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Campbell, Mrs. Wright, Mrs. Wolf and Mrs. Hofstedt. I would highly recommend these women as loving, concerned, and caring 2nd parents. I do not know the other elementary teachers, but I am sure they match up. We need more programs like <u>DARE</u>. Kids need education in valuable life skills such as conflict resolution and problem solving. Find funding someplace to keep these programs going.
- I think my children have received a wonderful education here. I have always felt that their teachers really <u>CARE</u> about them.
- Too much time is spent on TAAS. My child still spells words how they sound. Correct spelling, math, and proper English is important.
- All kids should learn Spanish, beginning in the 1st grade.
- My child has special needs and has been treated with dignity and respect. Every need has been met, and teachers and administration have gone out of their way to provide them. GREAT SCHOOL!!
- Core curriculum is sound overall. Special areas are addressed. Delivery of instruction could be broadened to address students who learn through different methods.
- I think the Gifted and Talented program should be explained better to the parents so they can explain to their child when they don't get accepted. Because every child is gifted and talented in some area.
- McDade addresses each of the issues well. Curriculum is challenging. Some of these are done by individual's needs. Not a whole school experience. The special needs children are handled well.

- McDade ISD is a small but well-rounded school. There are fewer students to a teacher, so students who are of higher need do get the help and attention that they need.
- The school is very small, which allows the teachers to at least know the names of most of the students. This makes the students feel welcome and appreciated.
- [McDade is a good school because it offers] small class sizes.
- The Athletic Program is in need of facilities and equipment.
- Ability to keep qualified teachers on staff is a challenge for the district.
- [The district should charge] tuition for transfer students.
- The district should offer all day pre-K - open enrollment.
- Families are often involved with campus work (parents) on campus and are seen on campus.
- Teachers are given a great deal of classroom freedom.
- Also, we need lots more support in our special education areas. I have a student with special needs. Being unfamiliar with this syndrome, I asked for additional training for my aide and myself. This was outright denied. The only training I received was from reading books.
- Please note that the few teachers who have been here many years (10+) haven't taught at any other school. They don't have a clue what other districts do. For example, [one teacher] has been here a number of years, but never taught anywhere else. [The teacher] was hired to teach without any previous experience. Therefore, all [that the teacher] teaches is what [that teacher] believes is best. But, whenever any staff requests [this teacher] be "updated", the administration ignores it. I know, from teaching at other districts, that our lower grades are way below other schools. I have taught at [several] other districts. When I was hired, I asked for the grading policy. There is no grading policy for the school. I was asked to make up my own. As teachers, we don't have to turn in lesson plans, grade books, or anything that reflects what we are teaching. There is no accountability. I have never seen this lack of leadership in any other school.
- My major concern is that many of the items that I have voiced that need to be addressed keep being ignored. Many of the things-Mentor Days, Spring Fling, Turkey Trot-that we have cut into learning and instructional time. It's nice to have these customs that have been in place for some time, but with the TAAS and TEKS, it's very difficult to "fit" in the curriculum required without having to push the students to their limit!
- [I] would like to see some of the people that have never had the wonderful (ha! ha!) opportunity to teach in a large school or school district realize how nice it is to teach here and have them put forth

more effort in their teaching and not stay in the same old rut that they have been in since they started here.

- Another concern is that I can't understand why our assistant superintendent <u>listens</u> to the teachers in the <u>lower grades</u> about having Mentor Days every other Friday. I was told that a survey went out the parents, and it showed they wanted more art activities. I have asked many parents about this and they stated that they did not receive a survey. We need the time to instruct our students-<u>not</u> complete art activities on Mentor Days. We had Mentor Days even during the weeks before TAAS.
- Why can't we rotate Music, Art and P.E. days like most schools? The children are not getting Music and Art to accompany our subject areas. That is why I believe we need teachers with Teachers Degrees from an accredited university. It is <u>so</u> different working with people that did not get their Teaching Certification the "Old Fashioned Way."
- Our Hispanic population faces greater pressures to fully prepare for TAAS. Teachers must continue to keep abreast of whatever is necessary to keep up and help all children achieve success.
- The school would benefit from changes/adaptations/approaches to instruction for children who learn differently.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- There are MANY parents in this district who try to stay involved in their child's education, have on numerous occasions asked a teacher to communicate with them about their child's progress and have offered to assist in any way possible from home in the process. Unfortunately, several teachers have ignored the pleas of these parents, sending home poor progress reports and grades. Grades on a report card are difficult, at best, to change. When a parent wants to get involved, why are we turned away or ignored? This makes parents angry and creates conflicts between teacher/student/parent which should not have even happened. Why is it the teachers are always the first to complain that they never get support from home when it has been there all along and they choose to ignore it?
- Be open to all religions and beliefs. Stop canceling programs/holidays/events because they don't "fit" someone's personal belief system. Celebrate them all. Canceling these events in many cases punishes the majority of children.
- School is strong in this area and tries or works hard at establishing Parent Involvement in the district.
- Our school works hard at trying to establish community involvement.

- Parents feel welcome at our school. It is a community school that fosters a community feeling.
- No Community Relations Program to my knowledge.
- Parent Involvement is very rare.
- Community involvement is growing.
- Need more parental involvement.
- Community as a whole is supportive.
- Needs more open house!
- A lot of parents do try to be involved, but there have been many occasions where teachers have chosen not to let them.
- As a bus driver, I see lots of improvements in parents' involvement in field trips.
- Parent participation would be higher if they were accepted more and felt wanted.
- PTI meeting attendance could be higher, but I have found that when parents, teachers and the community are asked to help with fundraising, the response is good.
- Area needs clarification. Who, how, when can some activities be allowed [while] not violating someone else's personal rights?
- Be open, sensitive to personal rights, beliefs, religion, etc. Celebrate them all. Canceling or renaming to some totally unrelated event/occasion only causes hurt feelings and a sense of not caring.
- I feel, as a member of this faculty, that we are sensitive to all community members and their beliefs. I know we try to address as many calendar events as possible and tie it in with the curriculum at the same time. It takes a very creative staff to do this! And [an] even more creative [staff], to collaborate and bring these events together as a school.
- Although we may not have big attendance for PTI meetings, the crowds that come out to participate are big. Thank goodness for dedicated parents who put these on.
- Because of the small community, there is closeness between parents and teachers. The communication is very open, and the parents offer much support.
- Family oriented staff, community.
- Community support is a challenge for the district.
- Communication with administration. Overall, I feel is positive, but there is always room for improvement.
- We need to have our classroom and school Rules of Conduct posted. There needs to be feedback between all involved in conduct problems. (Ex.: parents, admin., teachers, students.)

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

- Policies for resolving grievances are severely out of date and contain numerous loopholes.
- There is the appearance of favoritism when choice assignments are always given to a few select teachers when there are other teachers who also me[e]t the qualifications.
- A 6th/7th grade teacher recently resigned for undisclosed reasons to parents/students. Word is it was because the teacher had been hitting students. On several occasions, I actually observed both students and the teacher exchanging contact (in play). Also, I noted the administrators, teachers, parents, and students for over 18 months before the teacher was forced to resign. I understand a teacher is ultimately responsible for never hitting back. But these questions still remain unanswered, especially when our district struggles with retaining qualified teachers. Q:1) Why wait 18 months before correcting the problem? Q:2) Why wait until the children register a complaint to do something about the situation? Q:3) Why were the children never counseled about hitting a teacher? This situation could have been prevented without escalating to the point of losing a teacher under the circumstances. Our district is small enough and discipline is fairly good and under control. So, what happened?
- District has trouble retaining qualified teachers. Teacher tenure is very low. Suspect problem relates to salary and location (far from bigger city with larger population of teachers). Why can't the district pay our teachers better?
- Weak area for this district!
- Pay is not high enough to warrant top hiring practices.
- Hiring practices are always within employees already here. (Qualified or not.)
- There is no structure, it's always word of mouth.
- We need to make sure that all our new hires are fully qualified to do the job they are being hired for.
- Teachers have to be paid better.
- More active recruitment of qualified teachers is needed.
- Our district needs to provide better increases for teachers.
- Need to be consistent with HR policies, discipline/counseling of teachers and staff.
- Favoritism with certain teachers doesn't allow for personal growth among teaching staff.
- School administrators should never discipline or correct teachers/staff in front of students!
- Spend a little more money and get experienced teachers. We have a few great teachers. Pay them.
- Consideration on qualifications are foremost, for area of employment, salaries were adjusted + $3,000 last year. Staff receives training during school year when time should be in

classroom with students. In a way, they get enough pay for their profession.

- Continue teachers mentoring new teachers. Good practice. Keep administrators involved as needed to make critical decisions.
- Employee salaries need to be adjusted to match the economy.
- If teachers here didn't want to be here with these children, we wouldn't be here for these salaries.
- We have a site-base committee that's helping to develop the school - community relations. Recruitment of dedicated-qualified teachers.
- Need to see pay scale for state.
- An incentive for teachers to stay would be nice.
- The major challenge is having the administration to support our teaching and aide staff. Currently, some of the teachers feel that our principal/future superintendent isn't the professional leader she needs to be. Please note the high amount of staff turnover we have each year. We have daily issues especially with discipline where our aides aren't given the support they need.
- Things that should be changed immediately would be the teacher insurance situation as well as adequate pay
- Salaries and benefits are major challenges. Being a small district, it is harder to secure insurance at a reasonable rate
- Better pay for all - aides are underpaid. To keep a top staff, we need to find a way to pay better. Aides [and others] could make more working at McDonalds. Children are one of the most precious resources we have...let's not cheat them.
- Teacher pay is very low - creates high turnover - we have a lot of "young" teachers come and then leave
- There is too big of a discrepancy between administrators pay and teacher pay.
- Pay raises stop after 5 years - this seems to say "we don't appreciate experience."
- It is well known that this pay issue has not been addressed in many years.
- This pay issue is a real moral issue with all teachers, since Elgin, Bastrop, teachers make considerably more money.
- The district needs to recruit teachers more actively. Also, we need more bilingual personnel.

FACILITITES USE AND MAINTENANCE

- Need a bigger gym.
- Difficult to share/schedule lunchroom and gym facilities between elementary and middle school.
- Need better forethought and supervision.
- We need to begin construction on a High School.

- Need a separate lunch room/gym. Gym needs A/C. Restroom in current building is outdated. Need state dollars for sports facility.
- Poor arrangement of facility.
- We need to build a new gym with adequate facilities for ALL of our students. We need to have control over our ball field, which belongs to the McDade Watermelon Festival Association (MWFA). The MWFA doesn't maintain it because they don't use it, and the school won't repair it because we don't own it. As a result, our children get hurt on it.
- The district seems to be addressing this issue. As we continue to grow, I hope to see adequate facilities for all students and teachers.
- All the [above] issues are in discussion. The best interest of the students always comes first!
- Lately, MISD has been fortunate, many facilities improvements through tax budget, grants, community help and PTI. New playground equipment, new building in '97, new library seven years ago, new 7th grade building. Generally, Superintendent does a good job getting most for tax dollars and does good work for children.
- The major current challenge is growth of students to room space. Classes are split in two, but there are not enough rooms. This is an old school and has been here for a long time and is not large enough for the capacity of the current student population.
- [A sufficient number of] classrooms [is a challenge] due to quick growth.
- Need to improve parking around the buildings.
- We need facilities and equipment to improve the existing athletic program.
- We need wheelchair accessibility to white building and middle school.
- We need something to fix down-sloping sidewalk on way to cafeteria. It becomes very slick when wet.
- Parking is poor, poor, poor, poor.
- An immediate concern is wheelchair/handicapped accessible buildings.
- Another immediate concern is the remodeling or mold removal in old building and kindergarten.
- Growth in the community: This school will have to come up with the money to add on more grades, a gym, a bigger Early Childhood Center, and a P. E. Program. All these things will require lots of money.
- With the addition of 6th, 7th and 8th grades in middle school, facilities will be a problem. Staff also. Gym.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- Need better management and planning in this area.
- Be more active in researching/applying for grants and other funding for various programs. There is a <u>lot</u> of money out there if we just look for it!
- Don't know...in the dark!
- Review this. An audit is needed. We all pay taxes and have a right to know how our money is spent.
- Many grants have been researched and applied for (i.e. The playscape). Keep up the good work.
- I've witnessed excellent usage of grant funds. Again, it's used in the best interest of the students. As far as other financial issues, we are kept informed, somewhat, on upcoming concerns and thoughts from board meetings.
- Who is responsible for researching funding sources for the district? One person, committee? Is there a process by which this is done? What is it?
- One major challenge that I think will occur is financial disturbance. McDade is both a small and low financial community/district. My opinion is that it will continue in that direction.
- Adequate funding for the district is a challenge.
- Funds for supplies need to be separate from funds for classroom things.
- We need better management of funds and accountability as to actual spending.

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- Employee insurance is an issue that needs to be looked into. The present insurance does not meet the needs of the whole group; however, employees <u>must</u> be provided with some type of coverage.
- Employee Health Insurance is an issue needing to be addressed to be a true <u>benefit</u> to employees.
- This area needs to be improved greatly in order to attract and maintain quality teachers.
- As a parent of two children at this school, and as a spouse of a teacher at this school, I have first-hand knowledge of the inadequacy of the healthcare coverage/insurance.
- Give school employees the same insurance as other state employees.
- Employees need better coverage that does not come out of their pockets.
- Teachers are <u>underpaid</u> as it is. Health insurance should not be an <u>issue</u>!
- ISD does supplement employees insurance. [This] maybe a problem with every Taxpayer Joe.

- Not enough!
- Is there a larger pool of teachers to join/share insurance?

PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSE SERVICES

- Nonexistent!
- Why, with only twenty-one kids in 7th grade, do they have to share textbooks?
- Don't think school administrators know about the many, many opportunities out there for buying commodities. There are a lot of statewide procurement opportunities that are not being explored, i.e. purchasing from state agencies such as Dept. of Information Resources for computer hardware/software. Also, sharing costs with other similar districts to bring more technology into the classroom.
- Keep our kids textbook up to date. They are our Future. Give them every opportunity we can offer. Spend the money and use the resources available.
- Cooperative purchasing is used to ISD advantage - Good. Best books for subjects are picked yearly by appointed committees and passed by board.
- Storage and warehousing problems may be addressed by the possibility of future site-growth.
- Agree with [above] statement one hundred percent.

CHILD NUTRITION SERVICES

- Food is acceptable.
- Middle school students should be given larger quantities or selection.
- Greatly needs improvement.
- Low fat items need to be included as well as variety.
- Too many processed foods!
- My children love the food here.
- It flat out stinks!!!!!
- Need new updated facility. Quality of food prepared needs improvement. Constant complaints from kids. Milk is sour.
- The middle school kids get the small trays! When we have pizza, they don't eat it cause pineapple juice is all over it!!!!
- More variety needed.
- Problems scheduling both elementary and middle school students for lunch. Limited space and time. Middle school [students] have to walk over from other building.
- Flies
- Would like to see more fresh foods offered. Too much sugar at breakfast!!

- In morning, orange juice tastes like some sort of alcohol!!! Apple juice has mold in it!
- Some kids don't bring their lunch, but the food is so bad, they don't eat lunch at school either!!
- They don't give the older kids enough food for breakfast!
- Foods are not balanced. They are too starchy, full of carbohydrates and noticeably energy drainers! The vegetables are soggy, and the meat is not as identified on menus.
- All foods are microwaveable.
- The hamburgers are mostly soybean.
- The red box in the kitchen should say, "In case the microwave catches fire, _____".
- How do you address cooking for grade school children? Mom's cooking not here.
- Perhaps there is a difference between a healthy well-balanced meal (that should be provided) and a meal that is just made from "stuff" and clogs our children's colon! FACT: 98% of all diseases start in the colon!
- [There are] good hamburgers on Friday.
- Inexpensive lunches.

TRANSPORTATION

- Bus drivers are excellent and good, safe drivers. They should be commended for their safe driving and bus discipline.
- Fairly well managed but need improvement.
- Great bus drivers!
- Great bus drivers! All school buses statewide need to be equipped with safety belts.
- Great bus drivers, but need new buses.
- Bus maintenance needs to be greatly improved.
- The bus needs an air conditioner.
- I have never seen any practices of unsafe driving. Behavior issues are handled accordingly. I've witnessed very happy students exit the bus.
- Need to monitor the substitute bus drivers - not always safe.
- Consider moving bus "enclosure" to Middle School area to allow much needed playground space for kids.

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

- Need a current IT plan which focuses on the future.
- Involve the community in the planning process. Don't just have school personnel involved in the process.
- Poor choice of technology platform (MAC). Will become more expensive and difficult to support due to current industry trends.

District does not have the funding to support this more expensive and less supported platform.

- Apply for Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund Board (TIFB) grants to fund transition to PC-compatible platform.
- Research other available funding for technology platforms.
- Put more computers in the classrooms.
- Implement a more intensive technology program in the middle school as part of the enrichment program. Computer skills command high salaries in the current marketplace and would be VALUABLE skills to teach the majority of our students, rather than how to make videos. Computer people are in high demand in today's market, not people who make videos. This is an opportunity to teach quantity AND quality.
- Technology coordinator doesn't always seem to know where to look for IT opportunities such as free stuff, grants, etc.
- School and faculty really work hard to strengthen this area. The district has come a long way.
- Technology is a strong area in our district. Teachers and staff try hard to provide current technology to our students.
- Current technology needs to be consistent with what the job market is looking for, i.e. PC compatible rather than MAC-based systems.
- Technology is fine here. It is comparable to other school districts.
- How many jobs are there out there for MAC-trained people versus PC-trained people? We are a small community that needs to offer CURRENT skills training to our children, rather than train on a platform that offers fewer opportunities. Besides that, a PC-compatible costs about HALF the price!
- Students deserve the opportunity to explore all possible forms of technology.
- With the addition of 7th and 8th grades, we need to provide the same educational skills and technology as larger schools, e.g. Drafting, Construction Skills and Homemaking.
- I feel students are taught well with the equipment available to the community. As students grow, so will their experiences with technology. I find myself learning with students in this area and support strongly what I see, hear and experience.
- Recent grant allowed MISD to upgrade systems-good!
- [There is] much technology offered to faculty and teachers.
- Great technology services.
- I feel we are losing some technology due to the change toward digital cable.
- A Major challenges facing the school district are finances necessary to keep up with changes in technology.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

- Small school with minimal security concerns.
- Biggest problem seems to be with children who are "bullies." School personnel sometimes ignore situations and allow them to continue too long before intervening (if they even do). School personnel should identify these children and provide other "opportunities" for them to channel their anger, resentment and behavior (ISS, expulsion, conflict resolution classes, etc.).
- We seem to be well covered in these areas. I feel the school has good policies in these areas, but often there is no good backup or support from administration in discipline.
- Discipline can be inconsistent at times.
- I feel this is a strong area for this school. My children know there are consequences for their behavior. The DARE cop is here practically every day and the children all know him.
- Management discipline is not consistent for the Middle School.
- New employees need to have a security (criminal) check done. These employees are around our children for eight hours.
- As a State employee of another employer, employees should have a background check and drug testing.
- Middle School is lacking in discipline. All kids should be treated equally.
- Inconsistent application of dress code.
- We encourage our children to respect their teachers and other school employees and administrators. What kind of lesson are we teaching when they learn that these people are involved in drugs or have past criminal records? We have to be certain that the role models we provide them with on a daily basis are worthy of the respect we are asking from them. Let's not let the opportunity to teach a lesson be lost.
- Good in this area.
- This area has been addressed by faculty a lot and enforced. However, I don't see support of those picking up students after school, e.g. crossing street with young students [and students] riding dangerously in the back of trucks unprotected.
- Parents drive too fast in front of school at dismissal time. Please be more careful!
- Consider making the road in front of school one way during school hours.
- As the school has grown, so has the number of cars picking up children. Supervision during this time is very important. The school has the DARE Program, which helps emphasize safety and awareness to the children. The school has an alternative plan for (real) discipline problems.
- We could use some outdoor lighting that stays on, e.g. flood lights for night time safety at events.

- I think the discipline at our school is terribly inconsistent. The teachers, parents, and students never know what to expect as a consequence for behavior.
- Inconsistent discipline.
- Safety is an issue when principal is gone all the time.
- I would like to see the speed limit enforced and a loading and unloading of students assigned.
- I believe that because we are in a smaller district, we do know the students personally. Because of that, individual discipline is enforced and encouraged. Now, I understand it's inconsistent. It's a No Win situation.
- I feel a dress code needs to be enforced.

GENERAL COMMENTS

- McDade ISD, although small, has a huge heart. The class sizes are small, which amounts to lots of attention per child. Due to the pay (state base), I feel like the teachers who really want to be here are here, rather than at a school because of the money. This causes turnover. Being a new teacher, I was embraced by the faculty and the community. I would think the same would be true for a new student. I feel like this is a safe campus. It is enclosed by a small fence and dirt roads, and lots of wonderful members of the community. It is a place where I would want my children.
- I have been in a school with a principal who made me hate my job in one month! When I moved to McDade, I was accepted and listened to. It took six months for my confidence to build what [the former district] destroyed in one.
- I love my job, my co-workers, kids and my administrators.
- Teachers and staff are very willing to work together and help one another.
- Students move in to McDade, but it seems like few leave (creates a stable environment).
- I would (and have) tell a parent thinking of moving a child to McDade school that one of the greatest assets that McDade has to offer children is that they get to be known personally by teachers and staff members. Children here get personal attention and needs are met per student, not just blanket instruction. Teachers here truly care about the whole child and are excited with the child when we see learning and growth. Also, teachers are encouraged to have the most up-to-date staff development and the district finances. Teachers are able to stay current and informed with education trends and new procedures.
- The size of classes is small enough to allow for a lot of individualized instruction, based on each student's need. The faculty and staff truly care about the children and generally get to

know the whole family, which makes it easier to service the "whole" child's needs. The faculty also, as a rule, works very well together for the shared goal of achieving the best results for each child and helping each reach their full potential.

- The way that Austin continues to expand into the surrounding areas, I feel that McDade will be challenged to adjust to the continued rapid growth and still maintain the priorities that are currently in place - small class size, individualized care, and increased growth in servicing special needs population.
- Faculty needs more respect from administration
- Principal needs to be more open to suggestions. Often we feel left out of the decision making process. Often we are asked for input only to discover that decisions have already been made. Our principal is good, but she is a rookie and needs to be more open to constructive criticism and the ideas of others, both more experienced teachers, and parents.
- I would move my children to McDade ISD because of the small class size, low student to teacher ratio, caring and capable staff, excellent superintendent, opportunities for all types of children (at risk as well as gifted).
- I believe there are many positive reasons to move a child to McDade ISD. First of all, my children have always gone to a larger ISD and although it is okay, they are not nurtured the way McDade does. The faculty knows every student and most families. Therefore, communication is very good. Class size is also a big plus. We are small, but the job this school does is large. As a new aide, I am very impressed!!! Kids are #1!!!

Appendix B
TEACHER SURVEY

Demographic Data

TOTAL RESPONSES AS OF July 12, 2000: 12

Circle Answer

1.	Gender (Optional)	Male	Female	N/R
		8%	92%	0%

2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	N/R
		92%	0%	8%	0%	0%	0%

3.	How long have you been employed by McDade ISD?	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	N/R
		75%	8%	17%	0%	0%	0%

4.	What grade(s) do you teach this year (circle all that apply)?				
	Pre-Kindergarten	Kindergarten	First	Second	Third
	12%	15%	12%	15%	9%
	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth
	12%	12%	6%	9%	0%
	Ninth	Tenth	Eleventh	Twelfth	
	0%	0%	0%	0%	

A. District Organization & Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	0%	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%
2. School board	0%	67%	17%	17%	0%	0%

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
	members listen to the opinions and desires of others.						
3.	School board members work well with the superintendent.	0%	92%	8%	0%	0%	0%
4.	The school board has a good image in the community.	0%	58%	42%	0%	0%	0%
5.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	33%	67%	0%	0%	0%	0%
6.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	42%	50%	8%	0%	0%	0%
7.	Central administration is efficient.	8%	75%	8%	8%	0%	0%
8.	Central administration supports the educational process.	17%	58%	17%	8%	0%	0%
9.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	0%	58%	17%	25%	0%	0%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response

10.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	33%	50%	0%	17%	0%	0%
11.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	17%	67%	0%	17%	0%	0%
12.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	0%	42%	33%	25%	0%	0%
13.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	0%	42%	33%	25%	0%	0%
14.	The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	8%	42%	25%	25%	0%	0%
15.	The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	8%	25%	33%	33%	0%	0%
16.	The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	8%	17%	33%	33%	8%	0%
17.	The district has effective educational						

programs for the following:						
a) Reading	17%	58%	8%	8%	8%	0%
b) Writing	8%	42%	17%	25%	8%	0%
c) Mathematics	8%	67%	8%	8%	8%	0%
d) Science	0%	50%	8%	25%	8%	8%
e) English or Language Arts	8%	58%	8%	17%	8%	0%
f) Computer Instruction	8%	58%	8%	25%	0%	0%
g) Social Studies (history or geography)	8%	42%	17%	25%	8%	0%
h) Fine Arts	8%	33%	8%	33%	8%	8%
i) Physical Education	8%	58%	8%	8%	8%	8%
j) Business Education	0%	0%	83%	17%	0%	0%
k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	0%	0%	83%	17%	0%	0%
l) Foreign Language	0%	0%	50%	33%	17%	0%
The district has effective special programs for the following:						
a) Library Service	33%	58%	0%	8%	0%	0%
b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	8%	33%	0%	42%	17%	0%

c) Special Education	25%	67%	0%	8%	0%	0%
d) Head Start and Even Start programs	8%	8%	83%	0%	0%	0%
e) Dyslexia program	0%	25%	58%	17%	0%	0%
f) Student mentoring program	0%	8%	58%	25%	8%	0%
g) Advanced placement program	0%	8%	67%	25%	0%	0%
h) Literacy program	0%	50%	33%	8%	8%	0%
i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	0%	33%	50%	8%	8%	0%
j) Summer school programs	0%	8%	50%	25%	17%	0%
k) Alternative education programs	0%	8%	58%	17%	17%	0%
l) "English as a second language" program	42%	50%	0%	8%	0%	0%
m) Career counseling program	0%	0%	50%	33%	8%	8%
n) College counseling program	0%	0%	50%	33%	8%	8%
o) Counseling the parents of students	0%	17%	25%	33%	17%	8%
p) Drop out	0%	8%	58%	25%	8%	0%

	prevention program						
18.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	0%	17%	42%	42%	0%	0%
19.	Teacher turnover is low.	0%	0%	8%	50%	42%	0%
20.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	0%	33%	8%	42%	17%	0%
21.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	0%	83%	0%	8%	8%	0%
22.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	0%	8%	0%	58%	33%	0%
23.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	0%	25%	25%	42%	8%	0%
24.	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	0%	83%	0%	0%	17%	0%
25.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	0%	42%	25%	25%	8%	0%

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
26.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	42%	58%	0%	0%	0%	0%
27.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	17%	67%	8%	8%	0%	0%

C. Personnel

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
28.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	0%	0%	8%	17%	75%	0%
29.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	0%	33%	17%	33%	17%	0%
30.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	0%	50%	25%	25%	0%	0%
31.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	0%	33%	25%	42%	0%	0%
32.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	0%	17%	25%	50%	8%	0%
33.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	0%	33%	17%	42%	8%	0%

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
34.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	17%	67%	17%	0%	0%	0%
35.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	0%	8%	25%	50%	17%	0%
36.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	0%	25%	25%	50%	0%	0%
37.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	0%	42%	17%	42%	0%	0%
38.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	0%	0%	25%	17%	58%	0%

D. Community Involvement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
39.	The district regularly communicates	8%	67%	0%	25%	0%	0%

	with parents.						
40.	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	0%	0%	42%	50%	8%	0%
41.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	0%	67%	17%	8%	8%	0%
42.	District facilities are open for community use.	17%	67%	0%	8%	8%	0%

E. Facilities Use and Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
43.	The district plans facilities far enough in the future to support enrollment growth.	8%	75%	8%	8%	0%	0%
44.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	0%	50%	17%	33%	0%	0%
45.	The architect and construction	0%	25%	67%	8%	0%	0%

	Survey Questions						
	managers are selected objectively and impersonally.						
46.	The quality of new construction is excellent.	0%	25%	58%	17%	0%	0%
47.	Schools are clean.	0%	25%	17%	42%	17%	0%
48.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	0%	33%	25%	33%	8%	0%
49.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	0%	33%	25%	33%	8%	0%
50.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	0%	42%	25%	25%	8%	0%

F. Financial Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
51. Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	8%	25%	42%	25%	0%	0%
52. Campus administrators are well trained in	0%	25%	33%	33%	8%	0%

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
	fiscal management techniques.						
53.	Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	0%	42%	25%	25%	8%	0%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
54.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	0%	67%	17%	17%	0%	0%
55.	Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	0%	50%	42%	8%	0%	0%
56.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	0%	67%	25%	8%	0%	0%
57.	Vendors are selected competitively.	0%	33%	50%	17%	0%	0%
58.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	0%	25%	42%	33%	0%	0%

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
59.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	0%	83%	17%	0%	0%	0%
60.	Textbooks are in good shape.	0%	92%	8%	0%	0%	0%
61.	The school library meets the student needs for books and other resources.	8%	67%	8%	17%	0%	0%

H. Food Services

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
62. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	0%	25%	25%	50%	0%	0%
63. Food is served warm.	8%	33%	25%	33%	0%	0%
64. Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	8%	58%	8%	25%	0%	0%
65. Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	17%	83%	0%	0%	0%	0%
66. Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	0%	50%	0%	50%	0%	0%
67. Cafeteria staff is	17%	83%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
	helpful and friendly.						
68.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	0%	17%	17%	50%	8%	8%

I. Safety and Security

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
69.	School disturbances are infrequent.	0%	92%	8%	0%	0%	0%
70.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	25%	67%	8%	0%	0%	0%
71.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	8%	83%	8%	0%	0%	0%
72.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	0%	83%	8%	0%	8%	0%
73.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	0%	25%	67%	0%	0%	8%
74.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	0%	17%	75%	0%	0%	8%
75.	A good working arrangement exists between	8%	67%	25%	0%	0%	0%

		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
	the local law enforcement and the district.						
76.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	0%	8%	8%	58%	25%	0%
77.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	0%	33%	33%	8%	25%	0%

J. Computers and Technology

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
78.	Students regularly use computers.	25%	58%	0%	17%	0%	0%
79.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	25%	58%	0%	17%	0%	0%
80.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	17%	75%	0%	8%	0%	0%
81.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	17%	83%	0%	0%	0%	0%
82.	The district meets student needs in classes in	17%	75%	0%	8%	0%	0%

	computer fundamentals.					
83.	The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.	17%	50%	17%	17%	0%	0%
84.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	17%	58%	17%	8%	0%	0%

Teacher Survey Verbatim Comments

- The students at McDade receive a lower education than other schools in the area. The teachers have little or no guidance of what to teach, esp. new teachers. There is no grading policy, and lesson plans aren't required for approval. There is no accountability required of teachers. It's a free for all, whatever "feels" good campus. As a result, teachers can teach and do whatever they want.
- McDade ISD is a very pleasant working environment for the most part. We need to make changes based on our growing population. Many things are done a certain way because they have always been done that way. Administration needs to outline goals and expectations then delegate responsibility and authority to carry out those plans. We need more cooperation and less "territorialism." We need to make better use of the wealth of experience and knowledge we have at hand to serve our children the very best we can.
- Most of the problems I see are due to changes and growth in the district. Changes include growth in staff numbers, facility growth to meet student population growth, and growth in administrative staff. Otherwise, our school environment is very healthy and positive. The children are the priority and they know it.
- I believe that Mr. Baca is a very valuable asset to our district. Most of us do not want him to retire because of his teaching and administrative experience. It is evident that several teachers who have taught at McDade for a long time do the least amount of effective teaching but "get their way" about school activities. It is not in the best interest of our school to have teachers complete their internship as a classroom teacher and/or student teaching at McDade.

Appendix C
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY (CAMPUS)

Demographic Data

TOTAL RESPONSES AS OF June 7, 2000: 5

Circle Answer

1.	Gender (Optional)	Male	Female	N/R
		0%	80%	20%

2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	N/R
		20%	0%	60%	0%	0%	20%

3.	How long have you been employed by McDade ISD?	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	N/R
		0%	20%	0%	0%	0%	80%

4.	Are you a(n):	a. administrator	b. clerical staffer	c. support staffer (i.e., transportation, food services, etc.)	N/R
		0%	80%	0%	20%

5.	How long have you been employed in this capacity by McDade ISD?	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	N/R
		0%	20%	0%	0%	0%	80%

A. District Organization & Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	0%	20%	60%	0%	0%	20%

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	0%	20%	60%	0%	0%	20%
3.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	20%	80%	0%	0%	0%	0%
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	20%	80%	0%	0%	0%	0%
5.	Central administration is efficient.	20%	80%	0%	0%	0%	0%
6.	Central administration supports the educational process.	40%	60%	0%	0%	0%	0%
7.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	20%	80%	0%	0%	0%	0%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
8.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	60%	40%	0%	0%	0%	0%
9.	Teachers are given an opportunity to	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%

	suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.						
10.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	0%	20%	40%	0%	0%	40%
11.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	0%	80%	0%	0%	0%	20%
12.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	20%	80%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	b) Writing	20%	80%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	c) Mathematics	20%	80%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	d) Science	20%	80%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	e) English or Language Arts	20%	80%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	f) Computer Instruction	20%	80%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	20%	80%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	h) Fine Arts	20%	80%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	i) Physical Education	0%	80%	0%	0%	20%	0%
	j) Business Education	0%	0%	40%	20%	0%	40%
	k) Vocational	0%	0%	40%	20%	0%	40%

	(Career and Technology) Education						
	l) Foreign Language	0%	0%	20%	40%	0%	40%
13.	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a) Library Service	20%	80%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	20%	60%	0%	20%	0%	0%
	c) Special Education	20%	80%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	20%	60%	20%	0%	0%	0%
	e) Dyslexia program	0%	0%	80%	0%	0%	20%
	f) Student mentoring program	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	g) Advanced placement program	0%	0%	60%	0%	0%	40%
	h) Literacy program	0%	60%	20%	0%	0%	20%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	0%	20%	40%	20%	0%	20%
	j) Summer school programs	0%	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%
	k) Alternative	0%	40%	40%	0%	0%	20%

	education programs						
	l) "English as a second language" program	40%	60%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	m) Career counseling program	0%	0%	40%	20%	0%	40%
	n) College counseling program	0%	0%	60%	0%	0%	40%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	0%	20%	40%	20%	0%	20%
	p) Drop out prevention program	0%	0%	60%	20%	0%	20%
14.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	0%	40%	40%	0%	0%	20%
15.	Teacher turnover is low.	20%	0%	40%	20%	0%	20%
16.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	20%	40%	40%	0%	0%	0%
17.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	0%	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%
18.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	0%	60%	20%	20%	0%	0%
19.	Teachers are counseled about less than	0%	40%	40%	20%	0%	0%

	Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
		satisfactory performance.						
20.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.		20%	80%	0%	0%	0%	0%
21.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.		20%	80%	0%	0%	0%	0%
22.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.		20%	80%	0%	0%	0%	0%
23.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.		60%	40%	0%	0%	0%	0%

C. Personnel

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
24.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	0%	0%	40%	60%	0%	0%
25.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	0%	80%	0%	20%	0%	0%
26.	Temporary workers are	40%	20%	0%	40%	0%	0%

	rarely used.						
27.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	0%	40%	60%	0%	0%	0%
28.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	0%	40%	60%	0%	0%	0%
29.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	0%	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%
30.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
31.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	0%	20%	60%	20%	0%	0%
32.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	0%	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%
33.	The district has a fair and	0%	60%	40%	0%	0%	0%

	Survey Questions						
	timely grievance process.						
34.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	0%	0%	0%	60%	40%	0%

D. Community Involvement

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
35. The district regularly communicates with parents.	40%	60%	0%	0%	0%	0%
36. The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	0%	0%	80%	20%	0%	0%
37. Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	20%	60%	20%	0%	0%	0%
38. District facilities are open for community use.	20%	60%	0%	20%	0%	0%

E. Facilities Use and Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
39. Parents,	0%	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
	citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.						
40.	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	0%	40%	60%	0%	0%	0%
41.	Schools are clean.	20%	60%	0%	20%	0%	0%
42.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	20%	60%	0%	20%	0%	0%
43.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	20%	60%	0%	20%	0%	0%
44.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	40%	60%	0%	0%	0%	0%

F. Financial Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
45. Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and	0%	60%	0%	20%	0%	20%

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
	teachers.						
46.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	0%	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%
47.	The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	0%	60%	20%	0%	0%	20%
48.	Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	0%	60%	20%	0%	0%	20%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
49.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
50.	Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	0%	60%	40%	0%	0%	0%
51.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	0%	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
52.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
53.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
54.	Textbooks are in good shape.	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
55.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources for students.	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%

I. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
56.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	60%	40%	0%	0%	0%	0%
57.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	40%	60%	0%	0%	0%	0%
58.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	20%	80%	0%	0%	0%	0%
59.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and	0%	0%	40%	0%	0%	60%

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
	teachers.						
60.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	0%	0%	40%	0%	0%	60%
61.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	0%	40%	60%	0%	0%	0%
62.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	0%	0%	0%	80%	20%	0%

J. Computers and Technology

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
63.	Students regularly use computers.	40%	60%	0%	0%	0%	0%
64.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	40%	40%	20%	0%	0%	0%
65.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	60%	40%	0%	0%	0%	0%
66.	Computers are new enough to	40%	60%	0%	0%	0%	0%

	be useful for student instruction.						
67.	The district meets students needs in computer fundamentals.	40%	60%	0%	0%	0%	0%
68.	The district meets students needs in advanced computer skills.	60%	40%	0%	0%	0%	0%
69.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	40%	60%	0%	0%	0%	0%

District Administrative and Support Staff Survey (Campus) Verbatim Comments

- McDade ISD is a great place when it comes to educating kids. However, health insurance and salaries of paraprofessionals is poor, especially health insurance.
- Discipline is a must on campus, especially since we now have a Middle School this year. It's not carried out effectively. The consequences paid for misconduct in class and sports events amount to a "slap on the hand" so to speak.
- A small school environment has done wonders for the cultural and social needs of at-risk students.

Appendix D
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY (CENTRAL)

Demographic Data

TOTAL RESPONSES AS OF June 7, 2000: 4

Circle Answer

1.	Gender (Optional)	Male	Female	N/R
		25%	75%	0%

2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	N/R
		100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

3.	How long have you been employed by McDade ISD?	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	N/R
		0%	25%	25%	0%	25%	25%

4.	Are you a(n):	a. administrator	b. clerical staffer	c. support staffer (i.e., transportation, food services, etc.)	N/R
		50%	50%	0%	0%

5.	How long have you been employed in this capacity by McDade ISD?	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	N/R
		0%	0%	0%	0%	25%	75%

A. District Organization & Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	50%	0%	50%	0%	0%	0%

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	50%	25%	25%	0%	0%	0%
3.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	50%	25%	25%	0%	0%	0%
5.	Central administration is efficient.	50%	0%	50%	0%	0%	0%
6.	Central administration supports the educational process.	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%
7.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	50%	25%	25%	0%	0%	0%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
8.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%
9.	Teachers are given an opportunity to	50%	25%	25%	0%	0%	0%

	suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.						
10.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	0%	0%	25%	0%	0%	75%
11.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	0%	0%	25%	0%	0%	75%
12.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	b) Writing	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	c) Mathematics	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	d) Science	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	e) English or Language Arts	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	f) Computer Instruction	50%	25%	0%	25%	0%	0%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	25%	75%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	h) Fine Arts	50%	0%	0%	25%	25%	0%
	i) Physical Education	25%	50%	0%	25%	0%	0%
	j) Business Education	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
	k) Vocational	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%

	(Career and Technology) Education						
	l) Foreign Language	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
13.	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a) Library Service	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	25%	75%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	c) Special Education	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%	75%
	e) Dyslexia program	25%	25%	0%	25%	0%	25%
	f) Student mentoring program	25%	50%	0%	25%	0%	0%
	g) Advanced placement program	0%	0%	25%	0%	0%	75%
	h) Literacy program	0%	0%	50%	0%	0%	50%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	25%	25%	25%	0%	0%	25%
	j) Summer school programs	0%	25%	25%	0%	25%	25%
	k) Alternative	25%	0%	0%	0%	25%	50%

	education programs						
	l) "English as a second language" program	50%	25%	0%	25%	0%	0%
	m) Career counseling program	0%	0%	25%	0%	0%	75%
	n) College counseling program	0%	0%	25%	0%	0%	75%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	0%	0%	25%	0%	25%	50%
	p) Drop out prevention program	0%	0%	25%	0%	0%	75%
14.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	0%	75%	0%	25%	0%	0%
15.	Teacher turnover is low.	0%	50%	25%	25%	0%	0%
16.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	25%	25%	25%	25%	0%	0%
17.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	25%	75%	0%	0%	0%	0%
18.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	25%	25%	25%	0%	25%	0%
19.	Teachers are counseled about less than	25%	75%	0%	0%	0%	0%

	Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
	satisfactory performance.							
20.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.		50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%
21.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.		75%	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%
22.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.		50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%
23.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.		0%	50%	0%	25%	25%	0%

C. Personnel

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
24.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	0%	25%	0%	25%	50%	0%
25.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	25%	25%	0%	0%	50%	0%
26.	Temporary workers are	0%	25%	25%	0%	25%	25%

	rarely used.						
27.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	0%	50%	0%	25%	0%	25%
28.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	0%	25%	25%	0%	25%	25%
29.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	0%	75%	0%	25%	0%	0%
30.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	0%	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%
31.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	50%	0%	0%	50%	0%	0%
32.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	50%	0%	0%	50%	0%	0%
33.	The district has a fair and	50%	0%	25%	0%	25%	0%

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
	timely grievance process.						
34.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	0%	25%	25%	0%	50%	0%

D. Community Involvement

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
35.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%
36.	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	25%	25%	50%	0%	0%	0%
37.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	0%	25%	25%	50%	0%	0%
38.	District facilities are open for community use.	25%	25%	50%	0%	0%	0%

E. Facilities Use and Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
39.	Parents,	50%	0%	0%	50%	0%	0%

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
	citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.						
40.	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	50%	0%	0%	50%	0%	0%
41.	Schools are clean.	25%	25%	25%	0%	25%	0%
42.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	50%	25%	25%	0%	0%	0%
43.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%
44.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%

F. Financial Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
45. Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and	50%	25%	0%	25%	0%	0%

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
teachers.						
46. Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	50%	0%	50%	0%	0%	0%
47. The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	50%	25%	25%	0%	0%	0%
48. Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	50%	25%	0%	25%	0%	0%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
49. Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	25%	75%	0%	0%	0%	0%
50. Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	50%	25%	0%	0%	25%	0%
51. Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%

	Survey Questions						
52.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	0%	0%	50%	25%	25%	0%
53.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	25%	75%	0%	0%	0%	0%
54.	Textbooks are in good shape.	50%	25%	25%	0%	0%	0%
55.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources for students.	50%	25%	0%	25%	0%	0%

I. Safety and Security

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
56. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
57. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%
58. Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	25%	50%	25%	0%	0%	0%
59. Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
	teachers.						
60.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
61.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	25%	75%	0%	0%	0%	0%
62.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	25%	25%	0%	25%	25%	0%

J. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
63.	Students regularly use computers.	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%
64.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	50%	25%	0%	0%	0%	25%
65.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	50%	25%	0%	25%	0%	0%
66.	Computers are new enough to	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%

	be useful for student instruction.						
67.	The district meets students needs in computer fundamentals.	50%	25%	0%	25%	0%	0%
68.	The district meets students needs in advanced computer skills.	0%	75%	0%	25%	0%	0%
69.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Appendix E
PARENT SURVEY

Demographic Data

TOTAL RESPONSES AS OF July 12, 2000: 39

Circle answer

1.	Gender (Optional)	Male	Female	N/R
		25%	75%	0%

2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	N/R
		67%	0%	21%	0%	0%	13%

3.	How long have you lived in McDade ISD?	0-5 years	6-10 years	11 years or more	N/R
		56%	23%	21%	0%

4.	What grade level(s) does your child(ren) attend (circle all that apply)?			
	Pre-Kindergarten	Kindergarten	First	Second
	12%	15%	13%	12%
	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth
	3%	20%	5%	12%
	Seventh	Eighth	Ninth	Tenth
	7%	0%	2%	0%
		Eleventh	Twelfth	
		0%	0%	

A. District Organization & Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/R
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	3%	44%	31%	10%	3%	10%

	Survey Questions						
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	3%	38%	36%	8%	5%	10%
3.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	13%	49%	21%	8%	8%	3%
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	8%	41%	31%	10%	5%	5%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/R
5.	The district provides a high quality of services.	13%	64%	8%	10%	5%	0%
6.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	13%	46%	23%	8%	8%	3%
7.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	10%	15%	38%	15%	0%	21%
8.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	10%	26%	41%	8%	0%	15%
9.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	10%	77%	0%	8%	0%	5%

	b) Writing	10%	72%	3%	10%	3%	3%
	c) Mathematics	13%	74%	3%	5%	0%	5%
	d) Science	13%	67%	3%	10%	0%	8%
	e) English or Language Arts	13%	69%	5%	5%	0%	8%
	f) Computer Instruction	15%	59%	10%	8%	3%	5%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	13%	64%	10%	3%	0%	10%
	h) Fine Arts	10%	56%	8%	21%	3%	3%
	i) Physical Education	10%	67%	5%	10%	5%	3%
	j) Business Education	5%	8%	51%	5%	5%	26%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	3%	10%	46%	5%	10%	26%
	l) Foreign Language	5%	5%	36%	13%	13%	28%
10.	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a) Library Service	15%	64%	5%	10%	0%	5%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	8%	51%	21%	8%	5%	8%
	c) Special Education	10%	33%	38%	8%	0%	10%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	13%	36%	38%	0%	0%	13%
	e) Dyslexia program	8%	15%	54%	5%	3%	15%
	f) Student	15%	44%	26%	5%	0%	10%

	mentoring program						
	g) Advanced placement program	5%	31%	38%	13%	5%	8%
	h) Literacy program	8%	33%	33%	5%	0%	21%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	8%	13%	54%	3%	3%	21%
	j) Summer school programs	3%	28%	41%	8%	8%	13%
	k) Alternative education programs	5%	18%	44%	13%	3%	18%
	l) "English as a second language" program	8%	36%	36%	5%	0%	15%
	m) Career counseling program	5%	5%	54%	10%	5%	21%
	n) College counseling program	5%	5%	46%	8%	8%	28%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	8%	31%	38%	8%	8%	8%
	p) Drop out prevention program	8%	5%	49%	8%	5%	26%
11.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	13%	28%	21%	18%	13%	8%
12.	Teacher turnover is low.	13%	36%	23%	13%	13%	3%
13.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	10%	46%	15%	13%	13%	3%
14.	A substitute teacher rarely teaches my child.	10%	67%	8%	10%	5%	0%
15.	Teachers are knowledgeable in	18%	59%	15%	5%	3%	0%

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/R
	the subject areas they teach.						
16.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	15%	44%	15%	15%	5%	5%
17.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	23%	49%	5%	15%	8%	0%
18.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	23%	56%	15%	5%	0%	0%
19.	The district provides a high quality education.	10%	59%	13%	8%	8%	3%
20.	The district has a high quality of teachers.	10%	56%	13%	13%	5%	3%

D. Community Involvement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/R
21.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	15%	46%	3%	23%	13%	0%
22.	District facilities are open for community use.	13%	44%	23%	8%	13%	0%
23.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help students and school programs.	13%	33%	21%	23%	5%	5%

E. Facilities Use and Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/R
24. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff, and the board provide input into facility planning.	13%	38%	23%	18%	5%	3%
25. Schools are clean.	15%	69%	8%	5%	3%	0%
26. Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	13%	64%	18%	3%	3%	0%
27. Repairs are made in a timely manner.	10%	51%	23%	8%	3%	5%
28. The district uses very few portable buildings.	15%	64%	10%	5%	0%	5%
29. Emergency maintenance is handled expeditiously.	8%	31%	59%	0%	0%	3%

E. Asset and Risk Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/R
30. my property tax bill is reasonable for the educational services delivered.	10%	44%	21%	5%	10%	10%
31. Board members and administrators do a good job explaining the use of tax dollars.	13%	26%	33%	15%	8%	5%

F. Financial Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/R
32. Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	8%	21%	56%	5%	5%	5%
33. Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	8%	23%	56%	5%	3%	5%
34. The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	8%	18%	49%	13%	3%	10%
35. Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	5%	26%	51%	8%	0%	10%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/R
36. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	13%	67%	13%	0%	3%	5%
37. Textbooks are in good shape.	13%	67%	13%	3%	0%	5%
38. The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	10%	74%	0%	13%	3%	0%

H. Food Services

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/R
39. My child regularly purchases his/her meal from the cafeteria.	23%	64%	3%	3%	3%	5%
40. The school breakfast program is available to all children.	28%	64%	8%	0%	0%	0%
41. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	10%	46%	15%	15%	13%	0%
42. Food is served warm.	13%	51%	10%	21%	3%	3%
43. Students have enough time to eat.	8%	62%	10%	13%	8%	0%
44. Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	8%	72%	8%	8%	5%	0%
45. Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	10%	72%	13%	3%	0%	3%
46. Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	15%	64%	8%	13%	0%	0%
47. Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	21%	62%	8%	10%	0%	0%
48. Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	18%	51%	8%	13%	8%	3%

I. Transportation

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/R
49. My child regularly rides the bus.	10%	26%	15%	13%	8%	28%
50. The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	8%	26%	33%	15%	5%	13%
51. the length of the student's bus ride is reasonable.	8%	33%	21%	21%	5%	13%
52. the drop-off zone at the school is safe.	15%	54%	15%	3%	0%	13%
53. the bus stop near my house is safe.	10%	41%	31%	0%	3%	15%
54. The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	13%	36%	26%	5%	5%	15%
55. Buses arrive and depart on time.	15%	46%	26%	3%	0%	10%
56. Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	8%	51%	26%	0%	0%	15%
57. Buses seldom break down.	8%	36%	28%	8%	3%	18%
58. Buses are clean.	8%	44%	31%	3%	0%	15%
59. Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	10%	51%	28%	0%	0%	10%
60. The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	5%	26%	51%	0%	3%	15%

J. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/R
61.	Students feel safe and secure at school.	26%	69%	0%	5%	0%	0%
62.	School disturbances are infrequent.	33%	59%	3%	5%	0%	0%
63.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	54%	41%	5%	0%	0%	0%
64.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	51%	38%	10%	0%	0%	0%
65.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	44%	44%	8%	3%	0%	3%
66.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	8%	5%	59%	0%	0%	28%
67.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	10%	10%	49%	3%	0%	28%
68.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	18%	41%	31%	0%	3%	8%
69.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	13%	56%	23%	0%	8%	0%
70.	Safety hazards do	8%	44%	28%	13%	8%	0%

		not exist on school grounds.					

K. Computers and Technology

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/R
71.	Teachers know how to teach computer science and other technology-related courses.	13%	56%	15%	0%	10%	5%
72.	Computers are new enough to be useful to teach students.	15%	59%	18%	5%	0%	3%
73.	The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	10%	54%	18%	10%	8%	0%
74.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	8%	38%	26%	13%	8%	8%
75.	Students have easy access to the internet.	5%	31%	23%	15%	10%	15%

Parent Survey Verbatim Comments

- McDade needs "honor" classes for the well-advanced child. My child is "bored" with the daily lessons and routine and she is not enhancing her skills with new material. Being bored is not why I pay taxes in McDade. I would like to see more opportunities offered to small ISD's. 2. Need to dispose of restrictions on Pre K classes. We were informed of specific criteria in order to be enrolled in the Pre K class - and informed my 4 yr. old could not attend because we were over the poverty criteria and spoke "English". But in fact, there are children enrolled who have been residents longer and the "criteria" was "waived". This needs to be corrected - or the children need to be taken out if they are not poor

and speak "English". This has been addressed and continues to occur.

- McDade has an exceptional supporting staff. I know this first hand. They just need a full time Special Ed. dept. and upgrade the school buildings. They also need a bigger library.
- The only problems I see is Teachers do not come to me about my childs problems, they go to his grandmother who is also a teacher there. This is very frustrating and I have asked it to stop and it hasn't. They are a bit disorganized in areas (office). But other than that it is a great school!
- School District does not need both a principle and superintendent. 2. Money is not used wisely. 3. Cafeteria needs major improvements. 4. Food served is Awful per students; Spoiled milk; Flies. 5. Bus Driver - Drives too Fast! 6. Few real good teachers - need more qualified teachers. 7. My six grader still cannot write complete sentences. 8. School leader need random Drug screens. 9. Needs A Band Director/A real Athletic coach.
- This is our first year with McDade school district and my children have had a great year. My Pre-k child had adjusted well to school and the teacher is great. My 7th grader had needed special help with some subjects to get on grade level. The help was terrific and improvement was seen in the first semester. All people involved in this school go above and beyond to help the children.
- I feel as though their are some teachers that work at our school who are not qualified to be teachers. And to get a job with the school you have to be real good friends with the principle. If she does not like you, you can forget having a job with the school.
- The McDade Middle School has NO Band program and these students wishing to participate in such a program will be left out even when they move to high school elsewhere. They will be too far behind to participate in UIL competition, marching shows, etc. without proper instruction in music. I don't know of ANY other school that does NOT PROVIDE band or orchestral instruction.
- I have been happy with the McDade school for Pre-K through 1st grade. Both of my children excel in academics, therefore, I do not have an opinion on how the school handles those who are challenged. I think that many children/parents choose a lack of education. The students don't want to learn and are not faced with many consequences when grades are low. I think the teachers take some responsibility, but are limited on actions taken. More discipline is necessary.
- Information on planned trips and other activities comes way too late! Cafeteria food is poor quality, taste terrible.
- I feel that the McDade ISD is one of the best schools that I could ever send my child to. The staff all have the best interest of the kid at the top of the list.

- I feel they improved on teaching, but some of the Teachers don't watch to make sure the child go to their parents when school lets out. To me they need to make sure the child goes with the right person There's so much kidnapping these days.
- Like many schools, too much time is being spent on TAAS preparedness. Computer tech is not up to the standards of other district schools. There appears to be segregation by a teacher in 1 grade with more than one class for that grade - there is also no relaxation (recess) time for this class in the elementary school. more supervision is needed on the playground by the teachers, they need to sit where they can see the whole area - some teachers need to be more professional in their teach - keep personal anger to themselves versus telling the class how "P.O'd" they are.
- Teachers are qualified but under paid. The TAAS test is over emphasized and time is wasted on studying for the test - teach the basics well and the rest will fall into place. If a student does poorly on the TAAS Test let him/her study and re-test NOT the whole class. And furthermore I don't feel the Test is in a logical form or emphasis.
- B-25 - La Cafeteria esta lumpa pero el problema es por falta de reparacion pedimos que nos escuchen porque dos nino Cuando estan Comiendo sus Comidas andan muchas moscas badando y para nosotros Como padres eso do vemos muy mal para nuestros ninos que comen sus alimentos en la escueta.
- B-25 - No es por falta de limpieza sino por falta de reparacian Cuando es la bora Comida bay muchas moscas. I-50 - No bay diciplina en el autobus porque ban parandoce y juganda y asentandoce papedes. I-51 - El nino sales 3.30 mp deda escuela y yega a las 5.0 mp paxel motivo que no seva Cominando porque bay un Camino peligroso y bive una milla fuera de me Dade.
- I am pleased with the quality of education that my children receive. I am concerned about safety, however. Maintenance of the school facilities does not appear to be at the high level it was just a few years ago. Classrooms are not cleaned as thoroughly, bathrooms are often filthy and smelly (my sons refuse to go into some bathrooms), and outside school grounds are often mowed while children are present on the playground. I would like to see the building and grounds maintenance moved to hours when children are not present on campus.
- The cafeteria does not allow enough time for students to eat. My child eats at 10:45 and comes home hungry. There is not enough background checks done on aides in the school. There were two people in particular who were caught stealing from the school. Thank God this wasn't a child molestation incident. I think in depth background checks should be a requirement.

- I feel that the principal is partial to some students and not others and this is how the school is run. I also believe that this is the same for teachers as well. I f anyone reads this not my child is in 4th grade at McDade ISD and would like to remain their But Staff at a high level threat people unfairly.
- In this district we work and pay tax (too much). Let keep this money here. Let other districts - work for their own kid - why are we having to pay for peoples kids who thinks the county is suppose to help them - keep our taxes at home. No Robin Hood.
- McDade has always been an excellent school system until last year. The teachers rarely smile anymore. Something is wrong in administration. We just began a 7th grade this year - it was not very well thought out. Big gaps in curriculum. The school board has voted in a 8th grade beginning next year when we are not even on solid ground with our 7th grade yet. Assistant Superintendent does not back up teachers on discipline issues. She try to be the kids' best friend. She has chewed out teachers in front of students - this in truth make the teacher lose any control over their classroom. She does not want to discuss issues with parents and fix them. She just smiles and says okay and then does nothing about it. She does not enforce the dress code across the board. She lets some students get away with wearing anything. She does not always hire qualified personnel. This woman will be our next superintendent when the current one retires in a year or two. I am scared for our teachers and our students. There was an incident this week where the Middle School boys were told by someone on staff that a video camera had been installed in their bathroom to catch whomever was making messes in there. There were a lot of upset parents at school this morning over this. (Two boys say they actually caught the female janitor watching it.) Isn't this against the law? The Middle School girls in outrage checked their bathroom thoroughly - even ceiling tiles to check for camera. If this was just a joke or a threat it was done in very poor taste! I personally received a phone call from the Assist. Superintendent at home chewing me out for publicly airing my views about her and the school. She told me to cease and desist and that if I had a complaint I needed to go to the board. I have already tried this avenue and was shot down by both the Superintendent and his Assist. I resorted to calling (and talking in person) to teachers, parents, and board members about how it felt. I believe this woman has what is commonly referred to as a "God Complex". Now, we are facing having another unqualified person as her assistant when she moves up to Superintendent. Where is the justice in this? We used to have a great school system with happy children and teachers who were not afraid to speak their minds. We have become something that is scary. Teachers should have a say about the place they work without being afraid

of losing their jobs! I don't understand why our current Superintendent has let this go on - unless he just doesn't care anymore because he will soon retire and he had been training his replacement for two years and doesn't want to start over. I sincerely hope that the Comptrollers performance review will change things around here. I would like to see happy teachers again who love to come to work.