

# TRANSMITTAL LETTER

April 9, 2002

The Honorable Rick Perry  
The Honorable William R. Ratliff  
The Honorable James E. "Pete" Laney  
Members of the 77th Legislature  
Commissioner Felipe T. Alanis, Ph.D.

Fellow Texans:

I am pleased to present my performance review of the Raymondville Independent School District (RISD).

This review is intended to help RISD 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 teachers and children, where it belongs. To aid in this task, I contracted with Trace Consulting Services, Inc.

I have made a number of recommendations to improve RISD's efficiency. I have also highlighted a number of "best practices" in district operations-model programs and services provided by the district's administrators, teachers, and staff. This report outlines 75 detailed recommendations that could save RISD nearly \$4.4 million over the next five years, while reinvesting more than \$214,000 to improve educational services and other operations. Net savings are estimated to reach nearly \$4.2 million that the district can redirect into the classroom.

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

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



Carole Keeton Rylander  
Texas Comptroller

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2002, Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Rylander began a review of the North Forest Independent School District (NFISD). Based upon more than five months of work, this report identifies NFISD's exemplary programs and suggests concrete ways to improve district operations. If fully implemented, the Comptroller's 140 recommendations could result in net savings of more than \$4 million over the next five years.

## **Improving The Texas School Performance Review (TSPR)**

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 TSPR more valuable to the state's school districts. With the perspective of a former teacher and school board president, the Comptroller has vowed to use TSPR to increase local school districts' accountability to the communities they serve.

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

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

- Ensure students and teachers receive the support and resources necessary to succeed;
- Identify innovative ways to address the district's core management challenges;
- Ensure administrative duties are performed efficiently, without duplication, and in a way that fosters education;
- Develop strategies to ensure the district's processes and programs are continuously assessed and improved;
- Challenge any process, procedure, program or policy that impedes instruction and recommend ways to reduce or eliminate obstacles; and
- Put goods and services to the "Yellow Pages Test": government should do no job if a business in the Yellow Pages can do that job better and at a lower cost.

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

*For more information, contact TSPR by calling (512) 475-3676, or see the Legislative Budget Board's Web site at [www.lbb.state.tx.us](http://www.lbb.state.tx.us).*

## **TSPR In North Forest ISD**

In 1999, soon after taking office, Comptroller Rylander selected North Forest for a review, but at the request of the former superintendent, delayed the review until stability could be restored to the district. In early 2002, Comptroller Rylander again selected North Forest for a review, noting that a review at this point in the district's history could provide guidance for the new superintendent and board. In March 2002, work began with two public forums held at Shadydale Elementary on March 19 and 21, 2002 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. TSPR began onsite work in April 2002. The Comptroller's office selected Gibson Consulting Group, Inc., an Austin-based consulting firm, to assist the agency with the review at a cost to the Comptroller's office of \$175,000. The review team interviewed district employees, school board members, parents, business leaders and community members.

To obtain additional comments, the review team conducted focus group sessions with teachers, principals, parents and community members. To ensure that all stakeholder groups had input, TSPR sent surveys to students, parents, teachers, campus and central administrators and support staff.

A total of 114 respondents answered surveys. Thirteen administrative and support staff; eight principals and assistant principals; 37 teachers; 15 parents and 41 students completed written surveys as part of the review. Details from the surveys and public forums appear in **Appendices A through F**.

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

NFISD selected peer districts for comparisons based on similarities in student enrollment, student performance and community and student demographics. The selected peer districts were Eagle Pass, Edgewood, Port Arthur, and South San Antonio ISDs. TSPR also compared NFISD to district averages in TEA's Regional Education Service Center IV (Region 4), to which North Forest ISD belongs, and to the state as a whole.

During its five-month review, TSPR developed 140 recommendations for improving operations and saving taxpayers more than \$23.4 million by 2006-07. Cumulative net savings from all recommendations (savings minus recommended investments or expenditures) would reach more than \$4 million by 2006-07.

A detailed list of costs and savings by recommendation appears in **Exhibit 4**. Many TSPR recommendations would not have a direct impact but would improve the district's overall operations.

### **Acknowledgments**

The Comptroller's office and Gibson Consulting Group, Inc., wish to express appreciation to the NFISD Board of Trustees, Superintendent Dr. Edwin Walker, district employees, students, parents and community residents who helped during the review. Special thanks go to Ms. Jackie Tolbert, who served as NFISD's liaison. She arranged for office space, equipment and meeting rooms, organized the findings meeting, responded to data requests and accommodated the review team's needs.

### **North Forest ISD**

NFISD is located in Harris County and encompasses 33.6 square miles inside the Houston city limits. NFISD is a property-poor school district, with per-pupil property values in 2001-02 of \$75,058, compared with the state average of \$215,232 per pupil. NFISD's students are 79.1 percent African American, 20.1 percent Hispanic and less than 1 percent Anglo. About 80 percent of the students are economically disadvantaged.

**Exhibit 1** details the demographic characteristics of NFISD, Region 4, the state and NFISD's peer school districts.

**Exhibit 1**  
**Demographic Characteristics of Students**  
**NFISD, Peer Districts, Region 4 and the State**  
**2001-02**

District	Student Enrollment	Racial/Ethnic Percentage				Economically Disadvantaged
		African American	Hispanic	Anglo	Other	
Eagle Pass	12,778	0.1%	97.1%	1.3%	1.5%	91.1%
Edgewood	13,435	1.6%	97.0%	1.2%	0.1%	96.3%
<b>North Forest</b>	<b>11,699</b>	<b>79.1%</b>	<b>20.1%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>80.1%</b>
Port Arthur	10,823	56.8%	24.7%	10.8%	7.6%	73.8%
South San Antonio	9,970	1.7%	94.9%	3.0%	0.4%	89.5%
<b>Region 4</b>	<b>900,198</b>	<b>21.7%</b>	<b>38.1%</b>	<b>34.8%</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>48.8%</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>4,150,741</b>	<b>14.4%</b>	<b>41.7%</b>	<b>40.8%</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	<b>50.5%</b>

Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 2001-02.

NFISD served 11,699 students during 2001-02, a decrease of more than 13.8 percent over the last five years (**Exhibit 2**).

**Exhibit 2**  
**NFISD Student Enrollment History**  
**1997-98 through 2001-02**

School Year	Actual Student Enrollment	Percent Change from 1997-98
1997-98	13,579	NA

1998-99	13,416	(1.2%)
1999-2000	12,603	(7.2%)
2000-01	12,487	(8.0%)
2001-02	11,699	(13.8%)

*Source: TEA, AEIS, 1997-98 through 2001-02.*

Student enrollment in the district peaked in 1996-97 with 13,758 students. In 2000-01, NFISD's enrollment dropped more than 9 percent to 12,487. In 2001-02, enrollment declined by nearly 800 students to 11,699; Tropical Storm Allison in June 2001 is thought to have caused many families to leave the district. Allison also caused \$21 million in damage to district buildings.

In 2001-02, the district had 12 schools, including two high schools, two intermediate schools, two middle schools and six elementary schools. Two schools were not operational because of the flood. The district's 2001-02 budget was more than \$78.7 million and NFISD had more than 1,500 full-time employees; 45.1 percent were teachers.

In February 2001, the district's accountability rating was lowered to Unacceptable: Data Quality due to reporting and accounting errors for students who dropped out of school. TEA reinstated the district's Academically Acceptable rating after reporting problems were remedied.

The percentage of students in the district who passed the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) reading test rose slightly between 1995-96 and 2000-01, from 74.9 percent to 76.1 percent. In mathematics, the percentage of students passing increased from 66.8 percent to 75.3 percent. The passing rate on the TAAS writing test, however, declined from 80.9 percent to 75.3 percent. The percentage of NFISD students who passed all tests rose from 58.1 percent to 62.6 percent. NFISD's passing rates in 2000-01 were among the lowest 30 districts in the state on all tests, as well as math and reading tests, and were consistently lower than statewide scores in all categories.

On August 1, 2002, TEA released the TAAS results for the 2001-02 school year. NFISD received an overall Academically Acceptable rating; the same as the 2000-01 rating. According to these reports, the district has one Recognized School, Forest Brook High School, and eight Academically Acceptable schools. The district has an alternative education school but it was not rated. The district also had two Low Performing schools, Smiley High School and Tidwell Elementary, and another two schools, Lakewood Elementary and Elmore Middle School were not rated because the students had been relocated as a result of the flood in 2001. Because this information came late in the review process, and because information regarding the cumulative test results will not be available until November 2002, the AEIS data presented throughout the rest of this report reflects information from the 2000-01 school year.

In April 2001, after months of searching, the district filled the vacant superintendent position by hiring Dr. Edwin Walker. At the same time, TEA assigned a monitor to help the district straighten out its financial and governance problems.

What follows is a series of key findings and recommendations designed to assist the board, superintendent and administration to address and overcome a number of challenges, including:

- provide board and organizational leadership;
- improve student performance;
- efficiently manage personnel;
- strengthen financial control; and
- improve operations.

## **Key Findings and Recommendations**

### ***Provide Board and Organizational Leadership***

***Develop and implement a Board Code of Conduct and standard operating procedures.*** Despite the adoption of an ethics policy for board members, board members continue to perform activities that are inappropriate and beyond the role of board members. For example, the board president and secretary are signing selected checks to vendors. The TEA monitor reports inappropriate discussions among board members and individual board members are contacting the district's legal counsel without the consent of the board as a whole. Strong leadership from the board must begin with every board member understanding their roles and responsibilities and what is acceptable conduct during board meetings and in communications with district administrators, staff and the community.

***Establish a management team to assist staff in rebuilding core business functions.*** The district has lost a number of key management personnel in the last year, which has left the district without experienced organizational leadership in core business areas such as finance, personnel and facilities. Consequently, district staff are not being held accountable at all levels; internal controls are weak or non-existent in some cases; and many core services such as personnel hiring and construction oversight are inefficient and are having a direct impact on the ability of schools to focus on the education of students. By bringing in a temporary management team the district can ensure that core functions are being performed while the board and superintendent seek to fill key staff positions and train them for their various tasks.

***Form a long-range planning committee.*** NFISD does not have an established planning process, a current long-range plan or a long-range planning committee. The district has not set goals and performance measures for all areas of the district since the 1997 Long Range Plan, and there is no evidence that the district has used those measures to assess progress. District and campus improvement plans, that primarily address instructional issues, are not coordinated and none of these planning documents are linked directly to the budget or budget priorities. By forming a long-range planning committee made up of representatives from inside and outside the district, the district should be able to focus its efforts on universally supported goals and objectives.

### ***Improve Student Performance***

***Establish vertical teams and align schools under high school feeder systems.*** Schools are aligned organizationally by grade level instead of by feeder system. Secondary schools report to one executive director, and elementary schools report to another. Alignment by high school feeder system supports

better coordination among the schools, and provides for a smoother educational transition between schools. Individual campuses would then be held accountable for preparing students for the next step in their educational careers.

***Create and implement a schedule for developing and updating curriculum guides.*** While there is conflicting information on the number of courses offered, it appears that curriculum guides do not support more than half of the courses offered at the high school. And, despite planning documents that call for summer curriculum development in 2001 and 2002, only limited efforts have been undertaken to follow-through with those plans. By ensuring that all courses have an updated curriculum guide and by coordinating curriculum efforts, NFISD can ensure that all students are taught the same concepts for the same course. This would cost the district an estimated \$149,440 over the five-year period.

***Establish an academic alternative education program offering a high school diploma.*** The district does not have an academic alternative education program (AAEP) for students requiring a non-traditional learning environment. The NFISD Dropout Recovery Program prepares students to take the graduate equivalency diploma (GED) examination, but does not offer students the opportunity for a high school diploma. Without an AAEP, NFISD students with special needs or extenuating circumstances must choose between a GED and dropping out. Neither alternative will allow the student to access state grants for college tuition or provide critical skills needed for today's workforce. An AAEP would allow NFISD students to graduate with a high school diploma while maintaining the flexibility they need. The estimated annual cost will be about \$616,000 for 10 teachers, one principal, one counselor and two support staff per year.

***Encourage graduation under the Recommended High School Program.*** Less than 1 percent of NFISD students take the courses required to graduate under either of the state's most rigorous programs, the Recommended High School Program or the Distinguished Achievement Program. Board policy may be deterring students because NFISD requires two additional electives over and above those required under any of the state's graduation programs. To encourage economically disadvantaged students to attend college, the Texas Legislature has made two grant programs available: Toward Excellence, Access and Success (TEXAS) Grant and Teach for Texas. However, 99 percent of NFISD graduates are not eligible for these grants because they have not completed the Recommended or Distinguished Achievement high school graduation programs. If the board raises the standard for graduation, NFISD students that graduate with a Recommendation or Distinguished Achievement Program will receive grant money for college.

### ***Efficiently Manage Personnel***

***Raise salaries to compete with neighboring school districts.*** NFISD's salaries, especially teacher salaries, are significantly lower than neighboring districts and statewide averages. According to a study conducted for the district, average annual teacher salaries should be raised by \$1,600 across the board. Increasing salaries will make the district more competitive and enable the district to recruit and retain highly qualified staff. This recommendation would cost \$2.4 million per year beginning in 2003-04.

***Use staffing allocation formulas that are linked to enrollment.*** Although the district uses staffing allocation formulas for teachers, NFISD does not use staffing allocation formulas to effectively manage staffing at other levels. Student enrollment decreased almost 13.8 percent between 1997-98 and 2001-02

and the number of teachers decreased 17.1 percent, but total staffing decreased only 5 percent. When comparing the district with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools standards, the district is overstaffed by 29 assistant principal, secretary and clerk positions. By using staffing formulas and reducing the number of staff positions in these categories, the district could save more than \$4 million over five years. Related recommendations include staffing standards for custodial and food service staff, which could result in additional savings of more than \$1 million per year, when fully implemented.

***Implement strategies to recruit and retain highly qualified staff.*** Human Resource staff are having difficulty fulfilling their key mission of recruiting, hiring and retaining qualified employees at all levels. The area of greatest concern is the teaching staff, but the problem extends to all levels of district management and support. In 2001-02, the district had 86 teaching positions filled by long-term substitutes, an indication that insufficient numbers of certified teachers could be found to fill vacancies. Attempts to fill key administrative vacancies have also proved difficult. Through better management strategies that begin with the development of a Human Resources strategic plan, NFISD will be able to identify internal weaknesses and develop goals, objectives and timelines for attracting and retaining highly qualified staff.

### ***Strengthen Financial Control***

***Obtain qualified and experienced financial staff.*** The district does not have sufficient staff in the Finance Department to ensure the day-to-day accounting operations are carried out in a timely and accurate manner. With the chief accountant position vacant since 1999-2000 and the recent resignation of the assistant superintendent of Finance and Operations, many of the routine operations are not performed, including a monthly review of the general ledger and accurate recording of deposits. By filling the positions, adding an additional accountant position and obtaining interim assistance from outside the district for accounting services, NFISD will ensure its financial processes are handled timely and accurately.

***Establish and maintain a target general fund balance.*** NFISD's \$2 million general fund balance is \$4.5 million below TEA's calculated optimum fund balance. In addition, NFISD's workers' compensation fund also has a large deficit that when combined with the general fund leaves the district with a net reserve of more than \$55,000. Based on an annual budget of more than \$78.7 million, this is unacceptable. While the district has brought its fund balance up from a deficit of \$2.03 million in 1999-2000 by making accounting adjustments and reductions in expenditures, the board has not shown its willingness to address the hard issues that are necessary if the district is to regain control of its finances. By establishing a board policy that establishes a fund balance goal and by receiving regular financial information, the board will be in a better position to improve the district's financial condition.

***Regain control of the Workers' Compensation Plan.*** NFISD had 49 employees receiving workers' compensation pay as of May 2002. Of these, 21 have been off work for more than a year. And, contrary to board policy, NFISD has paid an employee both workers' compensation payments for injuries sustained while on the job plus the employees' regular pay. The district has a deficit fund balance of nearly \$1.9 million in its workers' compensation fund. NFISD switched to a self-insurance program for workers' compensation in 2000-01 due to the high premium cost proposed by their previous workers' compensation insurance provider. The \$1.9 million deficit occurred in one year, and although district administrators said they anticipate the deficit will be eliminated over a period of years, they have not



diagnosed the reason that expenditures exceeded revenues, nor have they established a formal plan to reduce the deficit. A planned approach to eliminating the deficit balance in its workers' compensation fund will help ensure the impact to the district's general fund and other funds are managed in a systematic manner.

***Develop procedures to ensure compliance with provisions of the Public Funds Investment Act.*** The district's annual external audit for 2001 cited four areas of noncompliance with the Public Funds Investment Act including a failing to: provide quarterly investment reports to the board for review and approval, provide an annual investment report to the board; conduct annual reviews of its investment policy; and investing funds in unauthorized instruments. By developing written procedures and ensuring that the district has a board-designated investment officer, the district can provide assurance to taxpayers that their money is being handled appropriately.

### ***Improve Operations***

***Create and staff a facility planning and construction monitoring function in the district.*** In 1998 and 2000, NFISD issued \$46.9 million and \$42.4 million in bonds, respectively, and has a \$21 million program to repair flood damage, yet the district has no organized facility planning division. Following the completion of four newly constructed schools, lingering problems exist, including poor building drainage and problems with exterior walls and roofs. The lack of accountability for facility planning, monitoring and controlling results in increased costs and poor performance by some contractors. By developing a long-range facilities management plan and hiring professional construction management to provide oversight of its construction projects, NFISD's resources will be better managed. The five-year cost will be more than \$634,000, but considerable savings can be expected if construction projects are given careful oversight.

***Establish a school-based technician (SBT) program.*** The limited staff in the Technology Department supports the entire district with only informal help available at each school. The lack of trained SBTs at the schools greatly reduces the ability of the Technology Department to meet the support needs of the district. SBTs help resolve many of the reported problems and prevent other additional technology problems and can assist the Technology Department with inventory control, training, software upgrades and installation of new technology. The annual cost of adding a SBT to each of the 14 schools is \$14,000 annually.

***Develop purchasing policies and procedures and ensure all district staff and board members comply with the law.*** NFISD is not conducting its purchasing practices in accordance with state law or board policy. In some cases, the district did not properly seek bids or quotes or accepted bids after bid deadlines passed. Additionally, bid files and documentation are not adequately maintained in an organized filing system. The district should develop bid acceptance policies and procedures and train all staff to use those procedures, develop a filing system to ensure that bid documentation is organized and kept on file and develop self-regulating practices.

***Evaluate the cost-effectiveness of outsourcing student transportation .***The Transportation Department is poorly managed, with high operating costs and poor customer service. Children are routinely late to school or are left at school for several hours after classes have ended. The district has 90 bus driver positions: 61 are available to drive and 29 are out on workers' compensation claims. Drivers and other

staff routinely work overtime to cover routes because of missing drivers and high driver absenteeism. By outsourcing transportation through a controlled step-by-step process, the district could save more than \$600,000 in operational costs annually, or \$1.8 million over three years. If the district chooses to continue to operate the Transportation Department, it can improve Transportation operations by eliminating 22 unnecessary driver positions, improving bus routing and scheduling, reducing absenteeism and improving overall operations management. Implementing these changes could save the district more than \$3 million over five years.

## **Exemplary Programs and Practices**

TSPR identified numerous "best practices" in NFISD. Through commendations in each chapter, the report highlights model programs, operations and services provided by district 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 include:

- ***Students gain real life technology skills in the Media Technology and Travel and Tourism programs.*** The Media Technology and the Travel and Tourism programs provide students with an opportunity to gain real-life skills in technology by offering students hands-on learning using commercial software and hardware for specific industries. In the Media Technology program, students work on multimedia projects from concept to final editing using state-of-the-art workstations, digital video recorders and professional editing software. Team members perform tasks such as recording events, conducting interviews, producing drafts and editing video. The Travel and Tourism program teaches students skills needed to work in the travel industry. Students learn to make travel reservations on airline computer reservation systems, and learn business etiquette and job-search skills. After completing the program, students qualify for entry-level employment with a travel agency or airline.
- ***NFISD has merged education, civil responsibility and discipline into a program run by students with special assistance from the local justice of the peace court.*** NFISD combines a high school career and technology program with a justice court program to provide discipline in an educational setting. The justice of the peace provides judicial assistance and oversight of court proceedings held at the career and technology center. Students in the law enforcement career program serve as court personnel. The program provides the district with an alternative to suspension or other disciplinary measures.
- ***The Department of Public Relations provides information to the public in a variety of ways, and has received awards for several of its publications.*** NFISD uses 15 programs and publications to establish communication with staff, students and the community. The district has received awards for several of its programs, such as the Listening Session and Parent Academy Program.
- ***NFISD provides comprehensive training and information to substitute teachers.*** NFISD provides substitute teachers with training and a handbook. Training for substitute teachers is held at the beginning of the school year and includes an introduction to the district's expectations, a motivational session, a description of procedures, a question-and-answer session and information on evaluations. There is also a section that provides basic survival tips for the substitute teachers.

The combination of a formal training session and a handbook give new substitutes the opportunity to receive information and ask questions and still have a written reference for any unanswered or recurring questions-allowing the substitute teacher to focus on the students.

- ***NFISD effectively refunded bonds to reduce interest costs.*** NFISD refunded \$1.4 million of bonds in 2000 to take advantage of declining interest rates and saved interest costs by refunding the bonds. The district also issued refunding bonds in prior years to restructure outstanding debt associated with selected general obligation bonds.
- ***NFISD effectively used promotions as an incentive for students to return applications for free and reduced-price meals.*** NFISD increased its federal reimbursement due to a variety of promotions offered in all schools. The district sponsored drawings for prizes, including a \$200 gift certificate for shoes for each high school; five football tickets to a NFISD high school football game for middle school students and at the elementary school level offered movie tickets. In addition, there was a drawing for \$100 for the first teacher with 100 percent of the applications returned to their homeroom. As a result of these promotions, 10,391 students, 84 percent of the total enrollment, returned applications that were received and certified.

### **Savings and Investment Requirements**

Many TSPR recommendations would save money or result in increased revenues that the district could use to improve classroom instruction. The savings estimates identified in this report are conservative and should be considered minimums. In sections where TSPR recommended spending money, the changes should improve efficiency productivity and effectiveness.

TSPR recommended 140 ways for NFISD to save more than \$23.4 million over a five-year period. Recommendations that include additional spending will cost the district more than \$19.3 million during the same period. Implementing all the recommendations in this report could produce net savings of more than \$4 million by 2006-07 (**Exhibit 3**).

**Exhibit 3**  
**Summary of Net Savings**  
**TSPR Review of North Forest Independent School District**

Year	Total
2002-03 Initial Annual Net Savings	\$1,186,346
2003-04 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$526,484
2004-05 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$598,404
2005-06 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$658,528
2006-07 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$1,281,709
One Time Net Savings (Costs)	(\$243,596)
<b>TOTAL SAVINGS PROJECTED FOR 2002-07</b>	<b>\$4,007,875</b>

A detailed list of costs and savings by recommendation appears in **Exhibit 4**. The page number for each recommendation is listed in the summary chart. 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 NFISD board ask district administrators to review the recommendations, develop an implementation plan and monitor progress. As always, TSPR staff is available to help implement proposals.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Summary of Costs and Savings by Recommendation (Exhibit 5)

## Exhibit 5 Summary of Costs and Savings by Recommendation

Recommendation		2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	Total 5-Year (Costs) or Savings	One Time (Costs) or Savings
<b>Chapter 1: District Organization and Management</b>								
1.	Develop and implement standard board operating procedures that are aligned with the RISD Board Code of Ethics. p. 24	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2.	Restructure the district's organization following management principles of functional grouping and span of control. p. 27	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3.	Conduct district business in compliance with district policies and procedures. p. 29	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4.	Establish a long-range, five-year strategic planning committee and update the district's strategic plan. p. 30	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5.	Develop and implement an intra-district communication process. p. 31	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
6.	Create a districtwide public relations committee to research alternatives for regularly communicating	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	with the public. p. 32							
7.	Develop a districtwide safety plan and evaluation procedures. p. 34	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8.	Conduct annual exercises of the crisis intervention plans. p. 35	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
9.	Develop a district policy that covers the responsibilities and reporting structure of the campus police. p. 36	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	<b>Totals-Chapter 1</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

**Chapter 2: Educational Service Delivery**

10.	Develop goals and strategies to target the academic needs of students who are retained. p. 47	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
11.	Develop strategies to increase the numbers of students taking ACT/SAT exams and to improve student performance on the tests. p. 48	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
12.	Develop and implement a plan to update curriculum guides. p. 50	(\$6,270)	(\$6,270)	(\$6,270)	(\$6,270)	(\$6,270)	(\$31,350)	\$0
13.	Develop a vocational education program to meet the needs of work-bound students. p. 54	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
14.	Expand curricular options for gifted and talented students that will qualify the district's Gifted and Talented Program as "exemplary". p. 57	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
15.	Bring the district's use of State Compensatory Education funds into	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	compliance with state law. p. 66							
16.	Establish an Alternative Education Program for students who need a non-traditional learning environment. p. 67	(\$27,379)	(\$27,379)	(\$27,379)	(\$27,379)	(\$27,379)	(\$136,895)	\$0
17.	Re-open the Parent Resource Centers to all parents and staff with parent volunteers. p. 70	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
18.	Standardize parent/student handbooks. p. 71	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
19.	Develop district procedures that ensure DAEP students' academic needs are met. p. 75	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
20.	Develop and implement a drug and violence prevention plan that includes prevention, intervention and enforcement strategies. p. 76	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
21.	Develop a district truancy plan that includes procedures and performance measures to improve attendance. p. 78	\$34,272	\$34,272	\$34,272	\$34,272	\$34,272	\$171,360	\$0
	<b>Totals-Chapter 2</b>	<b>\$623</b>	<b>\$623</b>	<b>\$623</b>	<b>\$623</b>	<b>\$623</b>	<b>\$3,115</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**Chapter 3: Personnel Management**

22.	Develop a Human Resources procedures manual. p. 86	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
23.	Develop a districtwide employee handbook and distribute it to all employees. p. 87	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
24.	Develop job descriptions for new positions. update	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	existing job descriptions and review all positions every three years. p. 88							
25.	Create procedures, criteria and timelines for evaluating all district employees. p. 89	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
26.	Implement staffing allocation formulas and reduce staff based upon those formulas. p. 95	\$357,570	\$715,141	\$715,141	\$715,141	\$715,141	\$3,218,134	\$0
	<b>Totals-Chapter 3</b>	<b>\$357,570</b>	<b>\$715,141</b>	<b>\$715,141</b>	<b>\$715,141</b>	<b>\$715,141</b>	<b>\$3,218,134</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Chapter 4: Facilities Use and Management</b>								
27.	Collect fees for the community use of district facilities. p. 102	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
28.	Create a comprehensive facilities master plan and monitor the district's progress toward implementation on an annual basis. p. 103	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
29.	Develop and distribute written work order priorities and provide a list of typical maintenance work for each priority level. p. 106	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
30.	Conduct a safety inspection of all classrooms and ensure all safety hazards are corrected. p. 107	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
31.	Coordinate custodial cleaning activities at all schools. p. 108	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
32.	Request a utility audit from the State Energy Conservation Office. p. 109	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0



33.	Involve schools in district wide energy efficiency and conservation efforts. p. 111	\$1,422	\$1,422	\$1,422	\$1,422	\$1,422	\$7,110	\$0
<b>Totals-Chapter 4</b>		<b>\$1,422</b>	<b>\$1,422</b>	<b>\$1,422</b>	<b>\$1,422</b>	<b>\$1,422</b>	<b>\$7,110</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**Chapter 5: Asset and Risk Management**

34.	Develop a tax collection policy that includes a progressive goal of increasing the tax collection rate by 0.5 percent each year for three years. p. 118	\$19,281	\$38,563	\$57,844	\$57,844	\$57,844	\$231,376	\$0
35.	Designate an investment officer and an assistant investment officer. p. 123	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
36.	Monitor pledged securities on a daily basis using the bank's online services and prepare a monthly report. p. 124	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
37.	Reconcile all district bank accounts and make necessary corrections within 30 days following receipt of bank statements. p. 125	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
38.	Implement TASB's safety recommendations and develop a formal district safety plan. p. 127	\$0	\$7,678	\$7,678	\$7,678	\$7,678	\$30,712	\$0
39.	Establish a Safety Review Board to evaluate serious on-the-job accidents. p. 130	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
40.	Establish a committee to review the state health plan and develop a plan for an orderly conversion. p. 132	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
41.	Develop procedures to ensure all fixed assets are	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	immediately tagged when received, added to the inventory listing and recorded in the accounting system. p. 134							
42.	Assign principals and department management staff custody for fixed assets and conduct an annual physical inventory. p. 134	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
43.	Obtain GASB 34 training for key business office personnel and develop plans to ensure compliance. p. 135	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
44.	Use the fixed asset module in the district's existing financial accounting system. p. 136	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	<b>Totals-Chapter 5</b>	<b>\$19,281</b>	<b>\$46,241</b>	<b>\$65,522</b>	<b>\$65,522</b>	<b>\$65,522</b>	<b>\$262,088</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Chapter 6: Financial Management</b>								
45.	Obtain training for the district's business manager and other business office staff and adjust future postings to require school district experience. p. 145	(\$1,600)	(\$1,600)	(\$1,600)	(\$1,600)	(\$1,600)	(\$8,000)	\$0
46.	Reorganize the business office with two chief accountants who report to the business manager. p. 147	\$44,534	\$44,534	\$44,534	\$44,534	\$44,534	\$222,670	\$0
47.	Implement a budget process that includes a budget calendar and involves campus administrators and program supervisors in budget development and monitoring. p. 150	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

48.	Develop a calendar and strategy for preparing for annual financial and compliance audits. p. 152	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
49.	Provide the board with funding scenarios that maximize Tier II funding during budget development. p. 154	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
50.	Establish a general fund balance management policy and require the business manager to report fund balance levels to the board. p. 155	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
51.	Combine campus activity bank accounts into a single account and centralize management and reconciliation. p. 157	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Totals-Chapter 6</b>		<b>\$42,934</b>	<b>\$42,934</b>	<b>\$42,934</b>	<b>\$42,934</b>	<b>\$42,934</b>	<b>\$214,670</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**Chapter 7: Purchasing and Contract Management**

52.	Develop and implement a comprehensive purchasing procedures manual and provide training to district personnel. p. 165	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
53.	Revise purchasing policies to establish multiple levels of purchasing authority. p. 166	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
54.	Designate a purchasing agent and obtain training in state purchasing laws and school district purchasing procedures. p. 167	(\$400)	(\$400)	(\$400)	(\$400)	(\$400)	(\$2,000)	\$0
55.	Establish interlocal agreements with neighboring school districts in order to make	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	purchases using each other's bids. p. 168							
56.	Obtain training for key district personnel on effective contract development and management. p. 170	(\$600)	(\$400)	(\$400)	(\$400)	(\$400)	(\$2,200)	\$0
57.	Draft contracts that are performance-based including performance standards, measures and incentives. p. 172	\$24,600	\$24,600	\$24,600	\$24,600	\$24,600	\$123,000	\$0
58.	Designate a district employee as the district's textbook coordinator. p. 174	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
59.	Develop a textbook manual that includes policies and procedures for performing textbook activities. p. 175	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	<b>Totals-Chapter 7</b>	<b>\$23,600</b>	<b>\$23,800</b>	<b>\$23,800</b>	<b>\$23,800</b>	<b>\$23,800</b>	<b>\$118,800</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Chapter 8: Food Services</b>								
60.	Give cafeteria managers the authority and responsibility for managing their kitchens. p. 182	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
61.	Establish a meals per labor hour standard, improve productivity and reduce labor to meet the standard. p. 185	\$27,096	\$27,096	\$27,096	\$27,096	\$27,096	\$135,480	\$0
62.	Develop a plan for food service training that will enhance job performance. p. 186	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
63.	Modify personnel procedures including a standardized method to	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	determine pay raises. p. 187							
64.	Disable the vending machines located outside the cafeteria during serving hours. p. 190	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Totals-Chapter 8</b>		<b>\$27,096</b>	<b>\$27,096</b>	<b>\$27,096</b>	<b>\$27,096</b>	<b>\$27,096</b>	<b>\$135,480</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**Chapter 9: Transportation**

65.	Establish a staggered bell schedule for all schools in the district. p. 200	\$26,312	\$26,312	\$26,312	\$26,312	\$26,312	\$131,560	\$1,600
66.	Evaluate bus driver workload and optimize work schedules to minimize employee downtime. p. 202	\$14,800	\$14,800	\$14,800	\$14,800	\$14,800	\$74,000	\$0
67.	Adjust the bus driver salary schedule to be more competitive with local school districts. p. 203	(\$5,877)	(\$5,877)	(\$5,877)	(\$5,877)	(\$5,877)	(\$29,385)	\$0
68.	Develop and implement a formal school bus replacement plan. p. 206	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$50,000	\$0
<b>Totals-Chapter 9</b>		<b>\$45,235</b>	<b>\$45,235</b>	<b>\$45,235</b>	<b>\$45,235</b>	<b>\$45,235</b>	<b>\$226,175</b>	<b>\$1,600</b>

**Chapter 10: Computers and Technology**

69.	Develop an organizational chart that accurately reflects the reporting structure in Instructional Technology and Administrative Technology. p. 211	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
70.	Activate the District Technology Committee. p. 212	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
71.	Designate and train an Administrative Technology coordinator and an Instructional	(\$1,100)	(\$800)	(\$800)	(\$800)	(\$800)	(\$4,300)	\$0

	Technology coordinator for the district. p. 213							
72.	Inventory current hardware and software at each school and at central administration and create districtwide inventories. p. 214	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
73.	Collect and maintain computer hardware and software maintenance statistics. p. 215	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
74.	Develop a comprehensive disaster recovery plan and test it periodically. p. 217	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
75.	Train RISD high school students to maintain and expand the district Web site. p. 219	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	<b>Totals-Chapter 10</b>	<b>(\$1,100)</b>	<b>(\$800)</b>	<b>(\$800)</b>	<b>(\$800)</b>	<b>(\$800)</b>	<b>(\$4,300)</b>	<b>\$0</b>
	<b>Total Savings</b>	<b>\$559,887</b>	<b>\$944,418</b>	<b>\$963,699</b>	<b>\$963,699</b>	<b>\$963,699</b>	<b>\$4,395,402</b>	<b>\$1,600</b>
	<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>(\$43,226)</b>	<b>(\$42,726)</b>	<b>(\$42,726)</b>	<b>(\$42,726)</b>	<b>(\$42,726)</b>	<b>(\$214,130)</b>	<b>\$0</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$516,661</b>	<b>\$901,692</b>	<b>\$920,973</b>	<b>\$920,973</b>	<b>\$920,973</b>	<b>\$4,181,272</b>	<b>\$1,600</b>

<b>Total Savings</b>	<b>\$4,397,002</b>
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>(\$214,130)</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$4,182,872</b>

# Chapter 1

## DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines the Raymondville Independent School District's (RISD's) organization and management in four sections:

- A. Board Governance
- B. District Management and Planning
- C. Communication and Public Relations
- D. Safety and Security

The organization and management of a school district require the board and superintendent and all district personnel to become a team with its focus on student education. The board's responsibilities include setting goals, objectives and policies for the district. The superintendent's responsibilities are to manage the day-to-day operations of the district and implement board policy.

### **BACKGROUND**

On May 5, 2001, two new members were elected to the RISD Board of Trustees. On May 30, 2001, staff from Regional Education Service Center I (Region 1) presented a financial workshop for the board, at the former superintendent's request. The Region 1 staff provided an overview of the district's financial status, addressed the 2001-02 budget and suggested the following five decision points:

- Increase tax collection rate for current year and future years to 100 percent.
- Sell all or part of \$3 million unsold bonds to reimburse the General Fund.
- Submit IFA Application to Texas Education Agency (TEA).
- Reduce number of staff and teachers for 2001-02 to meet minimum acceptable ratios.
- Implement district's Reduction in Force policy.

Interviews with board members and the interim superintendent revealed that several of them believe that the dramatic steps that they began to take in June were the appropriate response to the severity of the report they received from Region 1 on May 30, 2001.

On June 7, 2001, the board voted unanimously to declare the district to be in a state of financial exigency requiring the discharge or non-renewal of contracts with one or more employees. In the same board meeting, the board presented a letter from the superintendent tendering his resignation

and appointed a new interim superintendent; terminated the district financial advisor and employed a new financial advisor; terminated the district auditor and employed a new auditor and accepted the resignation of the district law firm.

Significant personnel changes followed the June 7 board meeting. Many contracts were not renewed and realignment of duties took place districtwide, often effecting long-time district employees. Board meeting minutes from May through October 2001 show the board accepted 54 resignations. Personnel realignments within the district effected another 35 personnel or more than nine percent of the 2001-02 staff, including principal, assistant principal, counselor, special education, program coordinator, teacher and secretarial positions. The turmoil created by these massive realignments, significant loss of personnel and the addition of new personnel has impacted not only district employees and students but also the community.

In response to complaints from RISD personnel and other citizens, the TEA sent representatives to the RISD board meeting on June 19 and subsequently conducted an investigation of the district's governance and finances. At that meeting the district's chief financial officer reported that RISD presently had a \$2.5 million deficit that did not include the \$1.1 million in payroll costs for June, July and August. In order to assure that employees would be paid, the district had secured a \$2 million line of credit. Further cost-saving steps were presented by the assistant superintendent and approved by the board.

On September 5, 2001, TEA sent its preliminary report to the district and it became final on October 5, 2001. The investigation revealed that RISD has severe governance problems in addition to its financial difficulties. As a result of the findings, TEA assigned a monitor to guide the actions of the Board of Trustees and the superintendent. The monitor was scheduled to start his duties on November 13, 2001. However, the district filed an injunction to stop the monitor from entering the district and a local judge ruled in the district's favor. The TEA then appealed that decision in federal court where it was dismissed in February 2002.



# Chapter 1

## DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines the Raymondville Independent School District's (RISD's) organization and management in four sections:

### **A. BOARD GOVERNANCE**

Under Texas Education Code (Education Code) Section 11.151(b), the Board of Trustees of a Texas independent school district is a corporate body, elected by the public with the exclusive power and duty to oversee the management of the district's public schools. The board, as a legal agent of the State of Texas, derives its status from the Texas Constitution and the Legislature. It must function in accordance with applicable state and federal statutes, as well as regulations interpreting those statutes and relevant court decisions. Specific powers granted to the board under the Education Code include the power and duty to:

- adopt rules and bylaws necessary to govern and oversee management of the public schools of the district;
- acquire and hold real and personal property, sue and be sued and receive bequests and donations and other money or funds;
- dispose of property no longer necessary for the operation of the school district;
- levy and collect taxes; issue bonds, including determining the rate of tax to be levied within the dollar limits voted and specified by law (in instances when a specific tax rate has not been adopted at an election authorizing a tax);
- adopt and file a budget for the next fiscal year and file a report of disbursements and receipts for the preceding fiscal year;
- ensure district accounts are annually audited at district expense by a certified public accountant following the close of each fiscal year;
- approve a district-developed plan and campus-level plan for site-based decision-making (SBDM) and provide for implementation;
- publish an annual report describing the district's educational performance, including school performance objectives and the progress of each school toward the objectives; and
- adopt policies providing for the employment and duties of district personnel.

The function of the board is to set policy. As chief executive officer for the district, the superintendent has the responsibility to implement board-approved policies.

RISD has a seven-member board governing the district. Each trustee is elected at large by the entire district, holds a three-year term and is listed in **Exhibit 1-1**. Board elections are held annually on the first Saturday in May for about one-third of its members.

**Exhibit 1-1  
RISD Board Members  
November 2001**

Member	Years of Experience	End of Term
Victor Rubalcaba, President	2	2002
Oscar Gutierrez, Vice President	3	2004
Ray Solis, Secretary	0	2004
John Kellog, Assistant Secretary	4	2003
Zacarias Gonzales	3	2004
Ramiro Rincones	2	2002
Harry Cavazos	7	2003

*Source: RISD Superintendent's Office, November 2001.*

RISD policy BBF (Local) sets the ethical standards for all board members. This policy was adopted on September 12, 2000 and applies to all sitting board members. **Exhibit 1-2** is a copy of the ethical standards contained in RISD policy BBF (Local).

**Exhibit 1-2  
Ethical Standards  
Raymondville ISD**

Function	Standard
Equity in Attitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I will be fair, just and impartial in all my decisions and actions.</li> <li>• I will accord others the respect I wish for myself.</li> <li>• I will encourage expressions of different opinions and listen with an open mind to others' ideas.</li> </ul>
Trustworthiness in Stewardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I will be accountable to the public by representing District policies, programs, priorities and progress accurately.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I will be responsive to the community by seeking its involvement in District affairs and by communicating its priorities and concerns.</li> <li>• I will work to ensure prudent and accountable use of District resources.</li> <li>• I will make no personal promise or take private action that may compromise my performance or my responsibilities.</li> </ul>
Honor in Conduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I will tell the truth.</li> <li>• I will share my views while working for consensus.</li> <li>• I will respect the majority decision as the decision of the Board.</li> <li>• I will base my decisions on fact rather than supposition, opinion or public favor.</li> </ul>
Integrity of Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I will refuse to surrender judgment to any individual or group at the expense of the District as a whole.</li> <li>• I will consistently uphold all applicable laws, rules, policies and governance procedures.</li> <li>• I will not disclose information that is confidential by law or that will needlessly harm the District if disclosed.</li> </ul>
Commitment to Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I will focus my attention on fulfilling the Board's responsibilities of goal setting, policy-making and evaluation.</li> <li>• I will diligently prepare for and attend Board meetings.</li> <li>• I will avoid personal involvement in activities the Board has delegated to the Superintendent.</li> <li>• I will seek continuing education that will enhance my ability to fulfill my duties effectively.</li> </ul>
Student-Centered Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I will be continuously guided by what is best for all students of the District.</li> </ul>

*Source: RISD policy BBF (Local).*

**FINDING**

Some members of the RISD board have not followed state law or district policy. The TEA School Governance investigation found that individual board members acted independently without board authorization. Individual board members approached an individual filling the interim superintendent position without board approval. Board members also consulted with the superintendent on actions regarding a board-hired consultant without board approval. TEC, section 11.151 (a) and (b) states the board constitutes a corporate body and individual board members have no legal authority to act on behalf of the board.

The investigation also substantiated board members involving themselves in the day-to-day operation of the district. Individual board members have contacted school principals, district security personnel and the district's chief financial officer directly to discuss items such as the number of teachers accompanying field trips and vendor payments. These actions undermine the superintendent's position and are in violation of the TEC, section 11.201.

The board president has not permitted the discussion of agenda items prior to the board vote. At the board meetings of June 7th and June 19th of 2001, the board president refused discussion by board members prior to voting on agenda items. Local policy BE states the board shall follow parliamentary procedures found in Robert's Rules of Order which specifies a two-thirds vote required to dispose of a motion without debate. Board ethical standards, policy BBF (Local) also encourages expression of different opinions by others.

Policy BBF (Local) states board members shall promote the best interests of the district as a whole and shall adhere to the ethical standards listed in the policy. Results of surveys issued by TSPR indicate district personnel and parents do not see the board abiding by these standards. Responses reflect dissatisfaction with the way the board functions and is seen by the community. **Exhibit 1-3** shows comments made by district and campus administrators, teachers and parents on the surveys.

**Exhibit 1-3**  
**Comments from Administrator, Teacher and Parent Surveys**  
**October 2001**

- Ever since the new administration came in, the schools have changed dramatically. We have no discipline, the teachers' morale is down and everyone is afraid to voice their opinion in fear of losing their jobs. The school board members are seen on weekends at the business office with the superintendent.
- Morale seems to be at an all-time low. School board members are running in blocks to rush through their personal agendas. The lack of respect

shown between school board members, administrators and teachers is affecting our students. A quality education for all students does not seem to be the priority of school board members or administrators.

- In school board meetings, if a person tried to speak to the board they would most likely be told to leave (not asked but told). Raymondville ISD is in need of leadership.
- The school board should work together in getting the parents more involved in the decision-making process. A parent should be able to tell his son or daughter what is happening at the board meetings and what is being done to improve our school.
- I feel that many staff members feel insecure about teaching positions because they are not "friends" with the right board members. I want to be able to do my best, but I feel very worried about some of the decisions that are made by the school board.
- Things here are shaky. New board members have changed how things operate. I assume once they settle in and figure things out it will get better. We as teachers knew this was coming. Some things the board could have handled differently, but to blame them for all our problems is silly. Same tactics, different board.

*Source: TSPR Survey Results, October 2001.*

**Exhibit 1-4** shows that parents and district staff have serious concerns about the school board's actions. Responses to the survey were received from more than 45 percent of the district staff and more than 200 parents.

**Exhibit 1-4  
RISD Survey Results  
Quality of District Leadership and Management  
October 2001**

Survey Statement	Agree/Strongly Agree	No Opinion	Disagree/Strongly Disagree
<b>The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.</b>			
Parents	22.8%	16.5%	60.6%
Teachers	11.6%	15.8%	72.6%
District Administrators and Support Staff	22.2%	0.0%	77.8%
Campus Administrators and Support Staff	11.6%	17.4%	63.8%
<b>The school board has a good image in the community.</b>			

Teachers	7.4%	6.3%	86.3%
<b>School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.</b>			
Parents	20.9%	12.7%	66.3%
Teachers	10.6%	11.7%	77.7%
District Administrators and Support Staff	22.2%	11.1%	66.6%
Campus Administrators and Support Staff	34.8%	11.6%	46.4%
<b>School board members understand their role as policymakers and stay out of the day-to-day management of the district.</b>			
Campus Administrators and Support Staff	5.8%	17.4%	69.6%

*Source: TSPR Survey Results, October 2001.*

The Navarro ISD (NISD) Board of Trustees developed a Code of Conduct similar to RISD's ethical standards. However, the NISD board went a step further and also developed a set of standard board operating procedures that are aligned with the Code of Conduct. These operating procedures govern conduct in 26 areas and provide a mechanism for members to monitor their actions by giving specific direction as to how the Code of Conduct can be upheld. **Exhibit 1-5** provides a list of the areas addressed by the NISD's Standard Operating Procedures.

**Exhibit 1-5  
Standard Board Operating Procedures  
Navarro ISD**

<b>Subjects Addressed</b>
Developing the board meeting agenda
Member conduct during board meetings
Voting
Individual board member request for information or reports
Citizen request/complaint to individual board member
Employee request/complaint to individual board member
Board member visit to school campus
Communications

Communication with Legal Counsel
Evaluation of the superintendent
Evaluation of the board
Criteria and process for selecting board officers
Role and authority of board members and/or board officers
Role of board in executive session
Media inquiries to the board
Media inquiries to individual board members
Phone calls/letters
Response to signed letter requests or complaints
Required board member training
Board members as parents
Reimbursable expenses
Campaigning for election or reelection
Goal setting
Election of board officers
Violations and Sanctions
Board review of Code of Conduct and Board Operating Procedures

*Source: Navarro ISD, December 2001.*

NISD's Procedure 25 includes the process and sanctions available to the board for member violations of the Code of Conduct, other board operating procedures or board policies. The decision to use any or all of the sanctions is left to the board. Since the implementation of its Code of Conduct and Board Operating Procedures, Navarro ISD's campuses have improved their accountability ratings.

RISD's board is in a tenuous position, with detractors on all sides and TEA monitoring its governance and finances. To be effective leaders and regain public trust will require significant effort and self-restraint.

**Recommendation 1:**

**Develop and implement standard board operating procedures that are aligned with the RISD Board Code of Ethics.**

Members of the school board should develop these operating procedures as a group. References that should be used are the RISD Code of Conduct, the Texas Education Code and district policies regarding their roles and responsibilities. Formalizing these expectations in a written document will allow for objective assessment of board member conduct, participation and performance by fellow board members. The operating procedures should include sanctions for board members that persist in behavior that is contrary to the Code of Ethics and operating procedures. Sanctions might include the requirement of additional training, removal from a leadership position or committee membership, a public reprimand or suspension from the board. Through a serious commitment to the development and implementation of these procedures the board will earn the trust and confidence of the public.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES**

1.	The board drafts Standard operating procedures that are aligned with its Code of Ethics.	April 2002
2.	The board reviews the first draft of the Standard operating procedures and makes any necessary changes.	May 2002
3.	The board adopts its Standard operating procedures.	June 2002
4.	The board, individually and as a body, implements the Standard operating procedures.	June 2002 Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.



# Chapter 1

## DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines the Raymondville Independent School District's (RISD's) organization and management in four sections:

### **B. DISTRICT MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING**

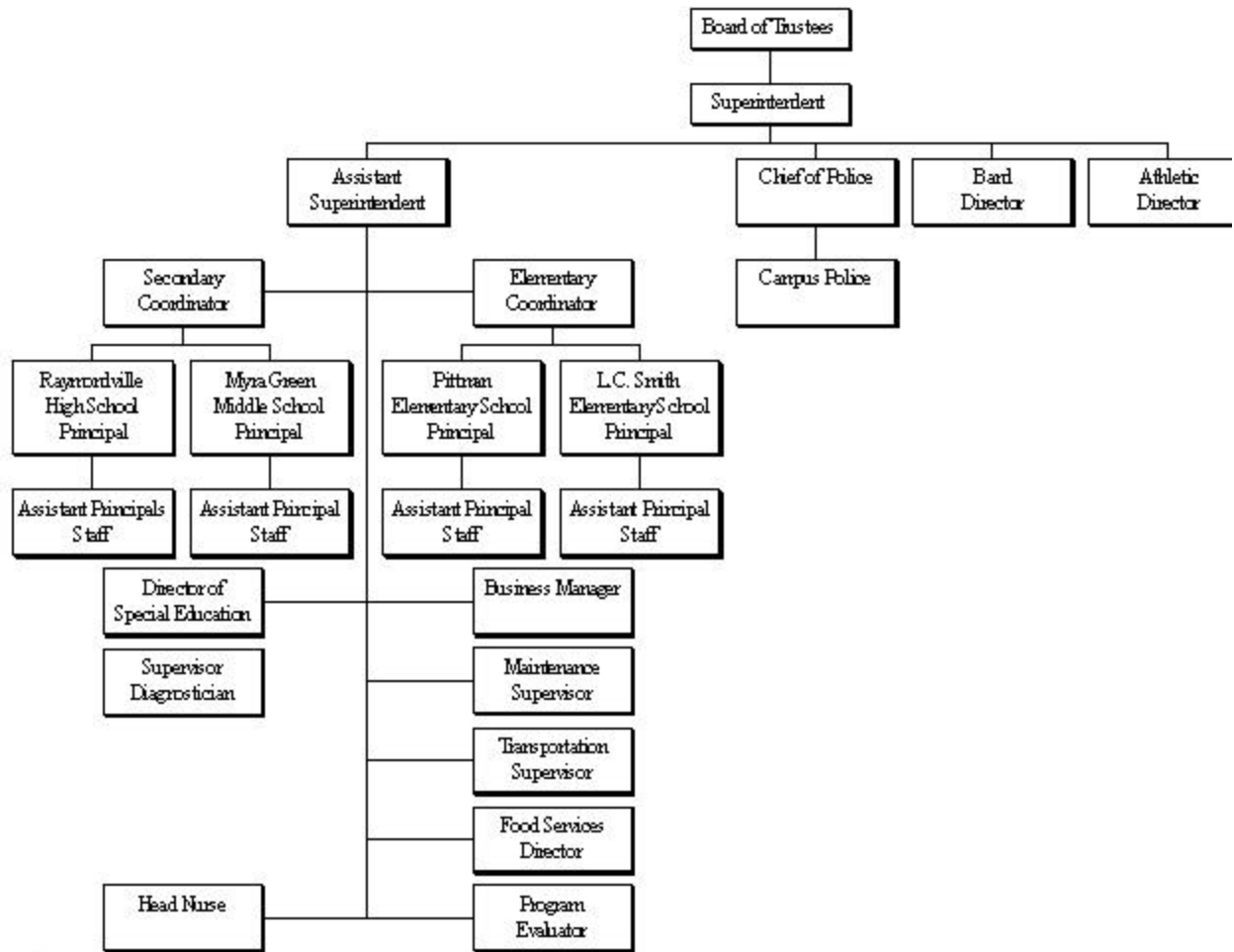
This section addresses the effectiveness of the superintendent as the chief executive officer and educational leader of the district, managing its day-to-day operations as well as the necessity and effects of planning.

As specified in Section 11.201 of the Texas Education Code, the superintendent is responsible for:

- assuming administrative responsibility and leadership for the planning, operation, supervision and evaluation of the educational programs, services and facilities of the district, and for the annual performance appraisal of the district's staff;
- assuming administrative authority and responsibility for the assignment and evaluation of all personnel of the district other than the superintendent;
- making recommendations regarding the selection of district personnel other than the superintendent as provided by Section 11.163 of the Texas Education Code;
- initiating the termination or suspension of an employee or the non-renewal of an employee's term contract;
- managing the day-to-day operations of the district as its administrative manager;
- preparing and submitting to the Board of Trustees a proposed budget as provided by Section 44.002 of the Texas Education Code;
- preparing recommendations for policies to be adopted by the Board of Trustees and overseeing the implementation of adopted policies;
- developing or causing to be developed appropriate administrative regulations to implement policies established by the Board of Trustees;
- providing leadership for the attainment of student performance in the district based on indicators adopted under Section 39.051 of the Texas Education Code and other indicators adopted by the State Board of Education or the district's Board of Trustees;
- organizing the district's central administration; and
- performing any other duties assigned by action of the Board of Trustees.

A superintendent manages RISD with an assistant superintendent and a staff made up of a secondary coordinator, an elementary coordinator, a director of Special Education and a business manager. The board approved organization structure, policy BKA (Exhibit) approved on July 12, 2001, for RISD is shown in **Exhibit 1-6**.

**Exhibit 1-6  
RISD Organization  
2001-02**



*Source: RISD Superintendent's office, November 2001.*

The assistant superintendent, chief of police, athletic director, and band director report to the superintendent. The secondary coordinator, elementary coordinator, director of Special Education, business manager, program evaluator and head nurse report to the assistant superintendent. The assistant superintendent is also responsible for human resources, curriculum and federal programs. The high school and middle school principals report to the secondary coordinator and the two elementary school principals report to the elementary coordinator.

## **FINDING**

RISD's Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) submission process ensures error-free submission of data to TEA. RISD has received recognition from Region 1 for a zero rejection rate of PEIMS submission since 1995. RISD runs its data through several internal and external reviews to ensure errors are identified and corrected prior to submitting it to TEA. First, the PEIMS district clerk inputs data received from the schools. Then each campus clerk responsible for PEIMS entry at the campuses and each principal review the data and notify the PEIMS district clerk of any corrections that are needed. The superintendent then reviews the data, and it is submitted to Region 1 for review. If Region 1 staff identify any errors, they notify the district. RISD corrects the errors and completes their submission to TEA.

## **COMMENDATION**

**RISD uses multiple internal reviews and a review by Region 1 to ensure that its PEIMS submission to TEA is error-free.**

## **FINDING**

The assistant superintendent has many unrelated duties and responsibilities spread across the education and business functions of the district. The assistant superintendent is responsible for the following educational delivery functions of the district: the secondary coordinator, elementary coordinator, curriculum and school principals. He is also responsible for the following business aspects of the district; human resources, business management, finance and accounting, maintenance, food services, transportation, construction, health services and federal programs. Although the assistant superintendent intends to transfer more responsibilities to the new business manager, at the time of the report every major function of the district is the assistant superintendent's responsibility.

The assistant superintendent's responsibilities create functional grouping and span of control problems for effective and efficient management. Functional grouping and span of control refer to management principals used throughout industry. Functional grouping is the grouping of related tasks assigned to an individual. The knowledge and skill required for one task should also be required or aid in the performance of the other tasks. Span of control refers to the number of people or functional areas a person can supervise and be responsible for in an efficient and effective manner. One of the limiting factors in both functional grouping and span of control is the relationship of functions and activities performed for which the individual is responsible. An individual can be responsible for a broad

range of functions that are closely related, however as the functions become more unrelated to each other, the number of areas a person can effectively control decreases.

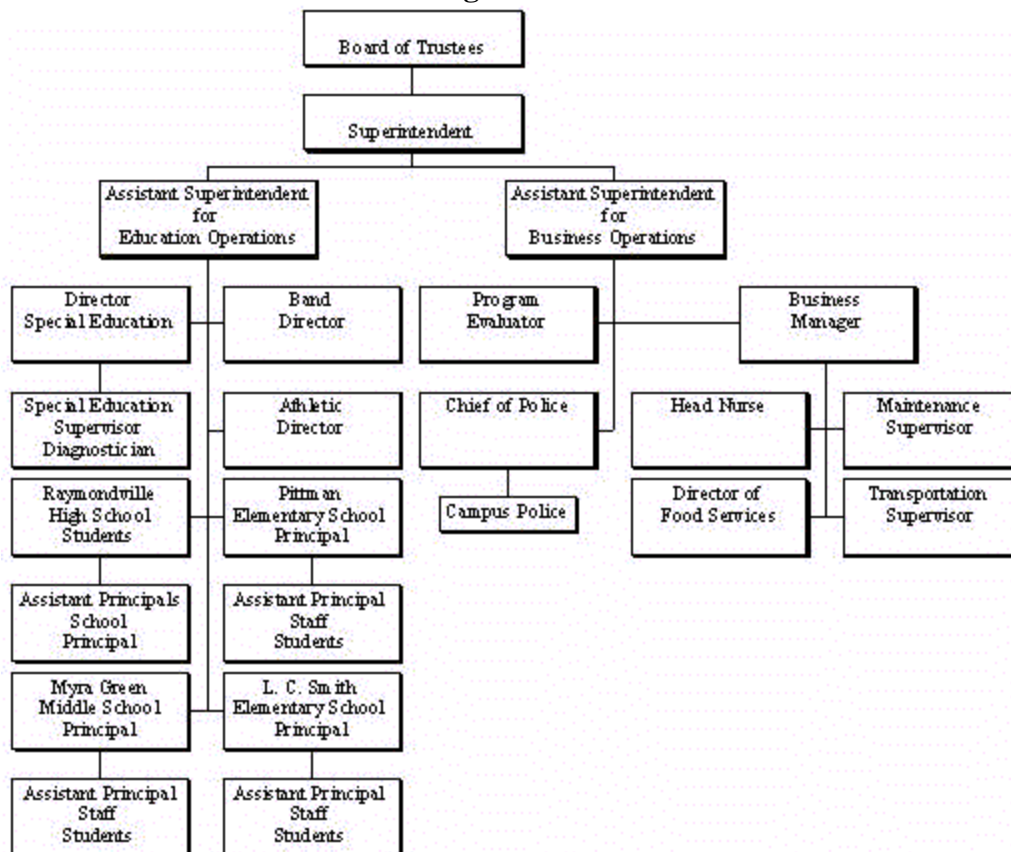
Effective managers assign multiple duties to a single individual. If the duties are not related, inefficiency results and the quality of work drops. An employee with numerous unrelated tasks will have a harder time becoming proficient at each task than if the tasks were related.

**Recommendation 2:**

**Restructure the district's organization following management principles of functional grouping and span of control.**

The recommended organization structure for RISD divides responsibility of educational services and business services between two assistant superintendents. **Exhibit 1-7** shows the organization structure recommended by the review team.

**Exhibit 1-7  
Recommended Organization Structure**



Source: TSPR.

This organization places responsibility for separate and distinct functions of the district under two different individuals and follows the management principals of functional grouping and span of control. The assistant superintendent for educational operations is responsible for educational delivery while the assistant superintendent for business operations is responsible for the business aspects of the district.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent develops a plan to reorganize the district's structure and realign reporting responsibilities.	April 2002
2.	The board approves the district's reorganization plan.	May 2002
3.	The superintendent implements the new organization structure.	June 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

During this highly volatile time in RISD's history, the superintendent has failed to follow district policy regarding personnel appointments and assignments. Although district policy DK gives the superintendent final placement authority for teacher transfers due to enrollment shifts or program changes, district policies DK (legal and local), DC (Legal) and DP (Legal) state that the principal shall approve all teacher and staff appointments for the campus. Prior to the start of the 2001-02 school year, the superintendent appointed an assistant principal and special program coordinator for Myra Green Middle School with no input from the campus principal.

While some personnel actions may require immediate action, operating outside of district policy has led to distrust by district personnel and parents and dissatisfaction with the overall management of the district.

**Recommendation 3:**

**Conduct district business in compliance district policies and procedures.**

The superintendent should review all laws and district policies pertaining to the duties and responsibilities of a superintendent and ensure that his actions comply. During board meetings the superintendent should explain

his decisions and recommendations in the context of law and district policy. This will not only demonstrate his knowledge and understanding but also inform the board and build trust.

### **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent reviews all laws and district policies pertaining to a superintendent's duties and responsibilities of a superintendent.	April 2002
2.	The superintendent references law and district policy when necessary to educate board members regarding his recommendations.	May 2002

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

### **FINDING**

The district's strategic plan has been ignored since December 2000. The district's five year strategic plan was approved by the board on February 8, 2000. The approval of the strategic plan culminated a very thorough process that began in January 1999 and included all stakeholders in the district - administrators, teachers and other district staff, parents and community members. In February 1999 the district received help from the Texas Association of School Boards with the formulation of its mission, beliefs, parameters, goals, objectives and strategies. These were then reviewed by all administrators and the board. In March 1999 a public meeting was held to inform the public of the work done to that point and to recruit community members for Action Planning Teams. Action plans were written, reviewed and rewritten between April and December 1999 when the Action Plans were approved and an implementation schedule was drafted. Tracking Reports were designed for reporting on the status of Action Plans.

The strategic plan includes four strategies and each strategy has four to six action plans with a total of 19. Progress was reported on all but three of the 19 action plans with some entries pointing out reasons why the activity was stalled. However, there is no progress reported on any Action Plan Tracking Reports after December 2000.

In interviews TSPR learned that the strategic plan and the process used to write it enthusiastically endorsed by the district and community but early in 2001 the district's financial problems surfaced and staff changes began to take place. In June 2001 the superintendent and other district administrators left the district including the individual who had

spearheaded the strategic planning process. It has not been a priority of the new administration and board.

Because strategic plans typically include plans for five years, it is not uncommon for future boards and superintendents to have priorities that differ from those individuals that preceded them. In such cases the strategic plans are reviewed and updated to match the current leadership of the district.

**Recommendation 4:**

**Establish a long-range, five-year strategic planning committee and update the district's strategic plan.**

The superintendent should form a committee of district personnel, parents and local community members to update the district's strategic plan. The strategic plan should focus on a five-year schedule and include goals, objectives and resources needed to meet the goals and objectives.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent forms a strategic planning committee made up of district personnel, parents and local community members.	April 2002
2.	The committee researches the strategic planning processes used by RISD in the past and by other school districts and determines the process it will use.	May 2002
3.	The planning process takes place	June 2002 - March 2003
4.	The board approves the updated strategic plan.	April 2003
5.	The superintendent implements the district's updated strategic plan.	May 2003

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources

# Chapter 1

## DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines the Raymondville Independent School District's (RISD's) organization and management in four sections:

### **C. COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS**

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

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

### **FINDING**

The district does not have a formal communication process to ensure that information flows back and forth between the superintendent and all personnel.

In interviews conducted by the review team, the lack of communication within the district was a frequently stated concern. District personnel stated that staff meetings were scheduled during 2000-01 on a weekly basis and were now conducted only sporadically.

Lack of communication within any organization creates fear and uneasiness in subordinates and increases the likelihood of rumors being started and spread within the organization. Numerous district staff personnel and teachers have been reassigned for 2001-02 without explanations or discussions. This has resulted in resentment towards the administration, distrust and various explanations of the changes flowing throughout the district.

Ricardo ISD has created effective lines of communications between the superintendent, principals and the faculty. The superintendent meets weekly with the staff to keep abreast of activities and share concerns. Also, they have a high level of communication between the campus



principals and their staff. The principals meet weekly with their staff and teachers.

**Recommendation 5:**

**Develop and implement an intra-district communication process.**

The superintendent must ensure he communicates with the campus principals on a regular basis. The superintendent should implement weekly staff meetings with all principals and central office personnel to disseminate information and provide interactive discussion between the participants. This will ensure accurate information is made available to all personnel, alleviate possible misunderstandings and allow for concerns to be brought to the attention of the superintendent. After these meetings, the campus principals should conduct staff meetings with their personnel, to ensure all personnel receive information from the superintendent and allow campus personnel to discuss their concerns with the principals, which can then be shared at the district level meeting. These types of meetings establish a critical link between the administration and school personnel and allow for a two-way flow of communication.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES**

1.	The superintendent and campus principals establish a schedule and format for the superintendent/principal meetings.	April 2002
2.	The campus principals establish a schedule and format for each of the campus meetings.	April 2002
3.	The superintendent and principals notify their personnel of the scheduled meetings.	May 2002
4.	The superintendent and campus principals begin conducting regularly scheduled meetings.	May 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

RISD does not consistently disseminate districtwide information to parents and community members. The individual campuses are responsible for submitting news about activities directly to the newspapers. They are doing a good job, submitting items as frequently as twice monthly. However, there is no districtwide newsletter or any other means of sharing

central administration and board news. No one is responsible for submitting districtwide news to the newspapers.

Parents, teachers, district staff and campus staff indicated an overall dissatisfaction with the district's communication with parents. **Exhibit 1-8** shows TSPR survey results.

**Exhibit 1-8**  
**TSPR Survey Results**

<b>"The district regularly communicates with parents"</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
Campus Administrative and Support Staff	7.2%	28.9%	23.2%	46.4%	0.0%
District Administrative and Support Staff	22.2%	11.1%	11.1%	44.4%	11.1%
Parents	9.1%	23.6%	15.4%	30.3%	21.6%
Teachers	5.3%	32.6%	10.5%	40.0%	11.6%

*Source: TSPR Survey Results, October 2001.*

*Note: Results may not total 100 percent due to rounding.*

Keeping the public informed about board activities and decisions is particularly important when a district is undergoing change. If the district does not send information to the newspapers the newspapers write uninformed articles and the public is forced to rely on stories that may be inaccurate or incomplete. To prevent this, many districts assign one individual the responsibility of dealing with media representatives. That person makes sure that media representatives have copies of the information they need to write their reports of board meeting and make themselves available to answer media questions.

Round Rock ISD has worked out an arrangement with the *Austin American-Statesman* to print a full-page newsletter on the first Friday of each month. The paper does not charge the district for space, but rather sells ads at the bottom of the page to businesses that are located in or around Round Rock ISD. These businesses have a vested interest in promoting a positive image for the district because their businesses benefit when the school district attracts new residents to Round Rock.

**Recommendation 6:**

**Create a districtwide public relations committee to research alternatives for regularly communicating with the public.**

There are many ways to communicate with the community and with parents. A districtwide public relations committee could research the alternatives available. This should include contacting all local newspapers to determine if there are low cost or no cost options available.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent forms a public relations committee to research ways for the district to communicate with the community.	April 2002
2.	The public relations committee researches the types of publications in other districts and develops ideas for RISD.	May 2002
3.	The public relations committee submits recommendations to the superintendent.	July 2002
4.	The superintendent reports the committee's recommendations to the board for approval.	August 2002
5.	The board's decision is implemented.	August 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented using existing resources.

# Chapter 1

## DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines the Raymondville Independent School District's (RISD's) organization and management in four sections:

### D. SAFETY AND SECURITY

Safety and security of students, teachers and school district staff are primary concerns of everyone and a basic requirement for an environment conducive to teaching and learning. School districts must develop effective policies, procedures, and programs to adequately address the security not only of the students but the district staff alike.

### FINDING

RISD does not have an overall district safety plan with objectives, procedures or evaluation methods to target district safety issues. Although the district has a Crisis Intervention Plan, that does not serve the purpose of addressing safety on a day-to-day basis. While the campus and district Site-Based Decision-Making (SBDM) committees and the district and campus improvement plans address safety, there is no single plan or program to cover all aspects of safety in the district and the efficient use of resources. Each school principal establishes safety practices independently with no structured interaction among the four principals or district personnel.

The Texas Comptroller of Public Account's publication *Keeping Texas Children Safe in School* is based on the results of its numerous school performance reviews. Districts with the most effective security programs have a safety plan that includes prevention, intervention and enforcement strategies. The report states districts should prepare a comprehensive plan that considers districtwide security requirements and utilizes the local community to the maximum extent possible. An effective program includes the steps shown in **Exhibit 1-9**.

**Exhibit 1-9**  
**Keeping Texas Children Safe in School**  
**January 2000**

Strategy	Steps to be Taken
Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Know your goals and objectives: where your district is going and what you want to accomplish.</li><li>• Establish clear expectations for students, parents, teachers</li></ul>

	<p>and administrators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address warning signs before they turn into trouble.</li> </ul>
<b>Intervention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look for trouble before it finds you.</li> <li>• Recognize trouble when you see it.</li> <li>• Have individuals in the right place and at the right time to intervene.</li> <li>• Have a plan of action appropriate for the occasion and practice it.</li> </ul>
<b>Enforcement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leave no room for double standards.</li> <li>• Ensure that discipline management extends inside and outside the classroom.</li> <li>• Alternative programs are not just a matter of compliance with the law; they are many students last chance at success.</li> </ul>

*Source: Comptroller of Public Accounts, Keeping Texas Children Safe in Schools, January 2000.*

The first three steps comprise an effective prevention strategy, the next four provide intervention strategies and the last three steps comprise enforcement. Taken individually, the steps outlined in the law or those used by successful districts don't seem dramatic, but when districts apply these measures in a comprehensive system, they can and do get significant results.

The Attorney General's *School Violence Prevention Task Force Report*, May 2000, identifies three key components of a security plan and program. First, schools should conduct an assessment of their needs to highlight major problem areas. Second, schools should work with community organizations, businesses and other community institutions to share their expertise. This would maximize the schools' efficiency and avoid duplication of each other's efforts by having the different community organizations focus on the area of their expertise. It would also allow the district to focus critical resources on areas not covered by the local community. Third, personnel implementing specific programs should receive continuous training to ensure they have the latest information on techniques and practices. The report also identifies program evaluation as an important part to ensure the plan adapts to changing needs.

**Recommendation 7:**

**Develop a districtwide safety plan and evaluation procedures.**

The superintendent forms a committee of personnel from each campus, community members, campus police and local police department leadership. The superintendent should chair the committee. The safety committee will be responsible for developing a district needs assessment and a district safety plan. The district plan should cover all aspects of safety and include regular evaluation procedures for the plan's effectiveness. The district safety plan should be incorporated into the district improvement plans.

### **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent forms a safety committee of personnel from each campus, community members, campus police and local police department leadership.	April 2002
2.	The committee conducts a needs assessment of the district.	May 2002
3.	The committee develops a safety plan based on the results of the needs assessment.	June 2002
4.	The committee reports to the board the findings of the district needs assessment and the proposed safety plan.	June 2002
5.	The superintendent implements the safety plan.	June 2002
6.	The committee evaluates the plan's results and modifies the plan as required.	September 2002 and Quarterly Ongoing
7.	The committee reports results of the plan quarterly to the board.	October 2002 and Quarterly after each evaluation

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

### **FINDING**

RISD does not test its Crisis Intervention Plans. The district and campus crisis intervention plans cover numerous crisis situations that could occur during the school year, such as bomb threats, explosions and natural disasters and provide specific directions as to whom to call, where to go and how to perform first aid.

Teachers, staff and students need to know what to do and where to go for different types of situations. Mock exercises of crisis situations enable all

personnel involved to become familiar with the actions required and allow the district to evaluate the plan and procedures established.

**Recommendation 8:**

**Conduct annual exercises of the crisis intervention plans.**

The superintendent and campus principals should conduct a mock exercise of their crisis intervention plan at least annually. The exercise should involve different crisis situations so the staff and students are aware of what takes place in each situation. Each campus should conduct one exercise annually, and the district should conduct a districtwide exercise once a year.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	Campus principals work together to develop crisis situation scenarios for the different situations in their crisis intervention plans.	April 2002
2.	The superintendent notifies parents that the district will exercise the crisis intervention plans throughout the year.	May 2002
3.	The superintendent directs campus principals to exercise their crisis intervention plans at their discretion.	June 2002
4.	The superintendent and appropriate campus principal evaluates the exercise.	Immediately after each exercise

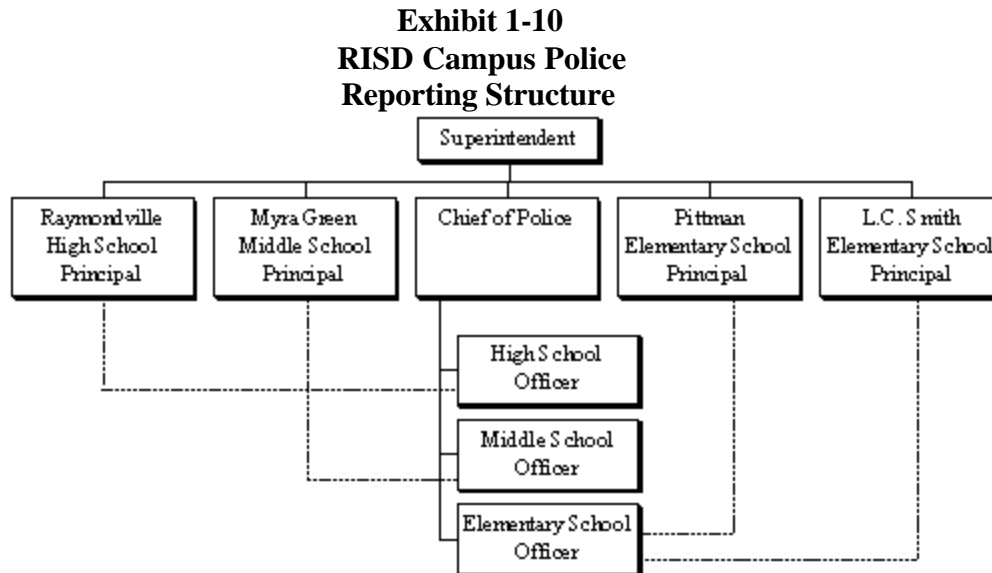
**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

The district lacks a policy that addresses the duties and responsibilities of the campus police. RISD's campus police which includes four certified police officers, was instituted in January 2001 through a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) in Schools. The program pays up to \$125,000 per authorized police officer over a three-year period. After the three-year period, the school district assumes responsibility for all costs associated with the program. The district plans to set up a fund to ensure continuation of this program, setting aside an amount of funds to be determined by the board. Due to the financial status of the district, this fund had not been established as of November 1, 2001.

**Exhibit 1-10** shows the direct and indirect reporting relationships of the campus police.



*Source: RISD chief of police, November 2, 2001.*

*Note: Dotted lines represent indirect control.*

The chief of police reports directly to the superintendent, and the police officers report to the chief and indirectly to the school principals while they are patrolling the campuses. The campus principal can assign duties to the police officer assigned to that campus without going through the chief of police. The high school and middle school each have a police officer assigned, and the two elementary schools share one police officer. The campus police also provide traffic control and foot patrols for extracurricular activities when requested by the superintendent.

Interviews with campus police and district personnel revealed confusion about the police officers' roles and responsibilities for the campuses. The police officers believe their responsibilities are primarily law enforcement, while the campus personnel believe the officers should address classroom behavior, monitor the halls and direct traffic at the end of the school day. The police officers are trying to accommodate the campuses' desires and enforce the law through drug intervention and investigate into other incidents within the district. Additionally, the police officers are establishing instructional materials on a wide range of topics, including drug and alcohol abuse and violence prevention so that they can give classroom instruction in the future.

**Recommendation 9:**



**Develop a district policy that covers the responsibilities and reporting structure of the campus police.**

The superintendent, with input from each campus principal and the chief of police, must develop clear district policy for the campus police. The roles and responsibilities must follow the conditions as stated in the COPS in Schools Grant Owner's manual and narrative addendum submitted by the district with the COPS 2000 application. These two documents specify the campus police officers' main roles will include community policing and drug, violence and crime prevention. The campus police duties and responsibilities should maximize the qualifications and experience of the campus police personnel. Once the responsibilities are clearly defined, the superintendent should ensure all personnel are aware of the campus police duties and responsibilities within the district.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent, with input from campus principals and the chief of police, will develop a district policy for the campus police.	April 2002
2.	The board approves the policy.	May 2002
3.	The superintendent, with input from campus principals and the chief of police, will develop procedures, duties and specific responsibilities for the campus police.	June - July 2002
4.	The superintendent implements the district policy and procedures and notifies all personnel within the district of the campus police duties and responsibilities.	August 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# Chapter 2

## EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

This chapter examines Raymondville Independent School District's (RISD) educational service delivery and student performance in five sections.

- A. Student Performance
- B. Instructional Resources
- C. Special Programs
- D. Parent Involvement
- E. Student Discipline Management

The delivery of educational services is the focus of all school districts. If a school district is to meet the needs of its students, it must have a well-designed and well-managed process for directing instructors, maintaining a curriculum, evaluating and monitoring the success of its educational programs and for providing the resources needed to support its educational mission.

### BACKGROUND

Raymondville is located in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas. The town has a population of 9,733 and is located in what is primarily an agricultural region. RISD has four campuses that served 2,654 students in 2000-01 in two elementary schools, one middle school and one high school. For the purpose of comparison in this report, RISD selected four peer districts: Lyford ISD, Mathis ISD, Taft ISD and West Oso ISD. TSPR obtained school district information and state-mandated student achievement test scores from the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) and Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) databases.

**Exhibit 2-1** shows the distribution of RISD's student enrollment for 2000-01.

**Exhibit 2-1**  
**RISD Enrollment**  
**2000-01**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>
Early Education	6
Pre-Kindergarten	90
Kindergarten	198
First	211
Second	222
Third	214

Fourth	212
Fifth	193
Sixth	168
Seventh	189
Eighth	167
Ninth	252
Tenth	196
Eleventh	164
Twelfth	172
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,654</b>

Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 2000-01.

RISD spends \$3,532 per student, which places the school midway among its peer districts in instructional expenditures per student and above the schools that make up the Regional Education Service Center I (Region 1) average. The district's expenditures per student also are above the state average (**Exhibit 2-2**.)

**Exhibit 2-2**  
**Budgeted Instructional Expenditures in RISD and Peer Districts**  
**2000-01**

District	Total Expenditures	Instructional Expenditure Per Student	Percent Regular	Percent Gifted and Talented	Percent Special Education	Percent Career and Technology	Percent Bilingual/ESL	Percent Compensatory
Mathis	\$7,108,943	\$3,395	61.3%	4.0%	7.9%	3.8%	4.0%	19.0%
Taft	\$5,146,429	\$3,470	76.5%	0.0%	8.5%	4.9%	0.5%	10.1%
Raymondville	\$9,376,317	\$3,532	60.0%	6.4%	11.0%	5.0%	7.1%	10.5%
West Oso	\$6,769,654	\$3,671	71.3%	1.9%	12.6%	4.7%	0.3%	9.2%
Lyford	\$5,706,113	\$3,848	72.0%	0.3%	11.1%	5.9%	1.1%	9.6%
Region 1	\$1,009,763,408	\$3,338	76.3%	1.7%	10.4%	4.5%	5.4%	1.7%
State	\$13,880,333,499	\$3,419	70.6%	1.8%	12.6%	4.1%	4.3%	6.6%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

Note: Percents may not equal 100 due to rounding.

**Exhibit 2-3** displays a breakdown of the district's teachers' experience as a percentage of the total teaching staff for RISD, peer districts, Region 1 and the state.

**Exhibit 2-3  
Teacher Experience  
RISD and Peer Districts  
2000-01**

<b>Years of Experience</b>	<b>Beginning</b>	<b>1-5 Years</b>	<b>6-10 Years</b>	<b>11-20 Years</b>	<b>Over 20 Years</b>
Mathis	7.0%	29.9%	25.5%	19.8%	17.7%
West Oso	8.2%	23.9%	24.2%	22.9%	20.9%
Lyford	2.5%	24.7%	23.8%	24.7%	24.2%
Taft	12.5%	28.3%	16.7%	18.3%	24.2%
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>7.1%</b>	<b>23.0%</b>	<b>19.4%</b>	<b>21.4%</b>	<b>29.1%</b>
<b>Region 1</b>	<b>8.0%</b>	<b>26.9%</b>	<b>19.8%</b>	<b>26.1%</b>	<b>19.1%</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>7.8%</b>	<b>27.4%</b>	<b>18.1%</b>	<b>25.3%</b>	<b>21.4%</b>

*Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.*

*Note: Percents may not equal 100 due to rounding.*

**Exhibit 2-4** compares RISD with its peer districts in average number of years of teacher experience and teacher turnover rates for 2000-01. RISD teachers have the most experience among the peer districts, the Region 1 average and the state average. The peer districts have a higher teacher turnover rate than RISD.

**Exhibit 2-4  
Teacher Average Years of Experience and Turnover Percentage  
RISD, Peer Districts and Region and State Averages  
2000-01**

<b>District</b>	<b>Average Years of Experience</b>	<b>Average Years of Experience with District</b>	<b>Annual Teacher Turnover Rate</b>
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>13.1%</b>	<b>9.4%</b>	<b>15.6%</b>
Lyford	13.2%	9.2%	17.7%
West Oso	11.5%	8.2%	18.1%
Mathis	10.9%	6.5%	21.8%
Taft	11.1%	8.0%	22.4%

<b>Region 1</b>	<b>11.6%</b>	<b>8.8%</b>	<b>13.6%</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>11.9%</b>	<b>7.9%</b>	<b>16.0%</b>

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

**Exhibit 2-5** displays the percentage of teachers with bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees for RISD, its peer districts and the state.

**Exhibit 2-5  
RISD and Peer Districts  
Teacher Levels of Education  
2000-01**

<b>District</b>	<b>No Degree</b>	<b>Bachelor</b>	<b>Master</b>	<b>Doctorate</b>
Taft	0.0%	88.3%	10.8%	0.8%
Mathis	0.0%	87.3%	12.1%	0.6%
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>84.2%</b>	<b>15.8%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
Lyford	0.9%	82.4%	16.8%	0.0%
West Oso	2.6%	71.5%	26.0%	0.0%
<b>State</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>74.7%</b>	<b>23.4%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

Note: Percents may not equal 100 due to rounding.

**Exhibit 2-6** provides the number of teacher permits in RISD and its peer districts.

**Exhibit 2-6  
Number of Teacher Permits  
RISD and Peer Districts  
2000-01**

<b>District</b>	<b>Emergency (certified)</b>	<b>Emergency (uncertified)</b>	<b>Non-renewable</b>	<b>Temporary Classroom Assignment</b>	<b>District Teaching</b>	<b>Temporary Exemption</b>
Lyford	0	2	0	0	0	0
Mathis	0	7	6	0	0	0
Taft	2	3	0	0	0	0

<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
West Oso	0	2	2	1	1	0

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

Exhibit 2-7 displays student demographic information for RISD, peer districts, Region 1 and the state.

**Exhibit 2-7**  
**Demographic Characteristics of RISD and Peer School Districts**  
**2000-01**

	<b>Student Enrollment</b>	<b>Ethnic Groups</b>				<b>Economically Disadvantaged</b>
<b>District</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>Percent African-American</b>	<b>Percent Hispanic</b>	<b>Percent Anglo</b>	<b>Percent Other</b>	<b>Percent of Student Enrollment</b>
Taft	1,483	2.7%	85.0%	12.3%	0.1%	75.5%
Lyford	1,516	0.3%	95.8%	3.9%	0.1%	81.8%
West Oso	1,844	15.8%	81.6%	2.4%	0.2%	68.7%
Mathis	2,094	0.9%	85.1%	14.0%	0.0%	79.5%
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>2,654</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>96.2%</b>	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>87.3%</b>
<b>Region 1</b>	<b>302,528</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>95.6%</b>	<b>3.8%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>82.7%</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>4,059,619</b>	<b>14.4%</b>	<b>40.6%</b>	<b>42.0%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>49.3%</b>

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

Note: Percents may not equal 100 due to rounding.

## Chapter 2

# EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

This chapter examines Raymondville Independent School District's (RISD) educational service delivery and student performance in five sections.

### A. STUDENT PERFORMANCE

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) uses the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) to measure student skills. TAAS gauges students' knowledge of the statewide curriculum in reading and mathematics at grades 3 through 8 and the exit level at tenth grade. Students are tested in writing at grades 4, 8 and the exit level at tenth grade; and in science and social studies at grade 8.

A Spanish version of TAAS is administered at grades 3 through 6.

Satisfactory performance on the exit-level TAAS is prerequisite for a high school diploma. TEA also measures student performance in Algebra I, Biology, English II and US History with an end-of-course exam in each subject area.

TEA assigns annual ratings to school districts and their individual schools based on their TAAS scores and dropout rates. Additional indicators are considered for supplementary recognition but are not used to determine ratings.

The categories assigned to districts are: Exemplary, Recognized, Academically Acceptable and Academically Unacceptable. The campus categories are Exemplary, Recognized, Academically Acceptable and Low-performing. An Exemplary rating requires at least 90 percent of students and 90 percent of the students in each student group (African-American, Hispanic, White and Economically Disadvantaged) to pass the TAAS reading, writing and mathematics tests.

A Recognized rating requires at least 80 percent of all students and of each student group to pass TAAS, and an Academically Acceptable rating requires 50 percent of all students and of each student group to pass TAAS.

From 1996-97 to 2000-01, RISD has been rated Academically Acceptable (**Exhibit 2-8**).

**Exhibit 2-8**  
**RISD and Peer Districts**  
**Accountability Ratings**  
**1996-97 through 2000-01**

<b>District</b>	<b>1996-97</b>	<b>1997-98</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-01</b>
Lyford	Academically Acceptable	Academically Acceptable	Academically Acceptable	Academically Acceptable	Academically Acceptable
Mathis	Academically Acceptable	Academically Acceptable	Academically Acceptable	Academically Acceptable	Academically Acceptable
Taft	Academically Acceptable	Academically Acceptable	Academically Acceptable	Recognized	Recognized
West Oso	Academically Acceptable	Academically Acceptable	Academically Acceptable	Academically Acceptable	Academically Acceptable
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>Academically Acceptable</b>	<b>Academically Acceptable</b>	<b>Academically Acceptable</b>	<b>Academically Acceptable</b>	<b>Academically Acceptable</b>

*Source: TEA, AEIS, 1996-97 through 2000-01.*

**Exhibit 2-9** shows the percentage of RISD students passing all TAAS exams in grades 3-8 and 10 compared to the peer districts, Region 1 and the state. In 1999-2001, RISD ranked the highest among its peer districts.

**Exhibit 2-9**  
**Percentage of Students Passing TAAS, All Tests Taken (Grades 3-8, & 10)**  
**1996-97 through 2000-01**

<b>District</b>	<b>1996-97</b>	<b>1997-98</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-01</b>	<b>Percent Change from 1997 to 2001</b>
Mathis	52.3%	54.1%	62.8%	68.6%	71.3%	26.7%
Lyford	60.6%	62.1%	67.3%	66.2%	73.7%	22.7%
West Oso	56.8%	64.8%	70.2%	73.7%	73.9%	3.0%
Taft	59.0%	64.8%	70.2%	76.3%	77.7%	3.2%
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>60.4%</b>	<b>63.0%</b>	<b>75.4%</b>	<b>78.1%</b>	<b>81.0%</b>	<b>34.1%</b>
<b>Region 1</b>	<b>66.5%</b>	<b>66.5%</b>	<b>73.9%</b>	<b>74.6%</b>	<b>77.9%</b>	<b>17.1%</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>73.2%</b>	<b>73.1%</b>	<b>78.3%</b>	<b>79.9%</b>	<b>82.1%</b>	<b>12.2%</b>



Source: TEA, AEIS, 1996-97 through 2000-01

**Exhibit 2-10** displays RISD campus accountability ratings for 2000-01. Three of the campuses were rated as Recognized.

**Exhibit 2-10**  
**RISD School Enrollments and Accountability Ratings**  
**2000-01**

School	Grade Levels	Enrollment	2000-01 TEA Rating
Raymondville High School	9-12	761	Acceptable
Myra Green Middle High School	6-8	516	Recognized
Pittman Elementary School	PK-5	770	Recognized
L. C. Smith Elementary School	PK-5	575	Recognized
<b>District</b>	<b>EE-12</b>	<b>2,654</b>	<b>Academically Acceptable</b>

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

**FINDING**

RISD exceeded the Region 1 and state retention rate averages as well as the rates of all its peers in 2000-01. Only in grades one and seven were the retention rates lower than the state and region's averages. In grades 4, 5 and 6 the retention rates were more than double the state average. **Exhibit 2-11** compares RISD retention rates with peer districts for 2000-01.

**Exhibit 2-11**  
**Retention Rates for Grades 1-8**  
**Regular Education**  
**RISD, Peer Districts, Region 1 and the State**  
**2000-01**

District	Grade Level							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Lyford	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	1.1%	0.0%	3.2%	0.0%	1.0%
Taft	3.2%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.0%	0.9%
West Oso	1.6%	3.3%	1.6%	1.0%	0.0%	1.8%	1.9%	2.8%

Mathis	6.9%	5.5%	1.3%	0.8%	1.4%	0.0%	5.7%	0.0%
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>6.1%</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>3.9%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>2.8%</b>
<b>Region 1</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>2.8%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>2.2%</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>5.8%</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>2.8%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

RISD's District Improvement Plan (DIP) and its Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs) do not contain goals or strategies to reduce the district's retention rates or specifically address the needs of students that have been retained in any way. Students who are below grade level have a difficult time in school and find little enjoyment or success in the regular education classes. These students are at a higher risk of dropping out.

RISD's dropout rate is almost three times higher than the state average and well above its peer district average (**Exhibit 2-12**). Additionally, the dropout rate has increased by more than 22 percent since 1995-96. Based on a 2001-02 enrollment of 1,106 students in grade 7 through grade 12 if the dropout rate of 3.8 percent remains the same, RISD will have approximately 42 students drop out during the 2001-02 school year.

**Exhibit 2-12**  
**Comparison of Dropout Rates**  
**RISD, Peer Districts and the State**  
**1995-96 through 1999-2000**

District	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	Percent Change
<b>Raymondville ISD</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>3.8%</b>	<b>22.5%</b>
West Oso ISD	4.4%	2.5%	1.1%	3.1%	3.1%	(29.5%)
Lyford ISD	1.9%	1.0%	0.8%	1.8%	1.5%	(21.0%)
Mathis ISD	0.1%	0.7%	4.2%	1.1%	1.3%	1200%
Taft ISD	1.1%	0.7%	0.9%	0.7%	0.7%	(36.3%)
<b>Peer Average</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>(15.8%)</b>
<b>State Average</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>(27.8%)</b>

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1996-97 through 2000-01.

The state average dropout rate for 1999-2000 was 1.3 percent, while RISD's rate was 3.8 percent, almost triple the state's average. Since 1995-

96, RISD has maintained a dropout rate 2 to 3 times higher than the state average.

Socorro Independent School District provides a mentoring program for students who are below grade level in reading and English language arts. The program serves first- through fifth-grade students who need additional help in reading and English language arts. Students are referred by a pre-referral committee and are educated in regular education classrooms. Individuals who work with students include teachers, parents, police officers and community volunteers. The most numerous mentors, though, are 37 student tutors who volunteer to work with students their own age or younger.

**Recommendation 10:**

**Develop goals and strategies to target the academic needs of students who are retained.**

The district should consider goals of lowering both the retention rate and the dropout rate through these strategies.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The elementary and secondary curriculum coordinators meet with the principals and the district Site-Based Decision Making (SBDM) committee to determine goals for meeting the academic needs of students who are retained.	August 2002
2.	Each campus decision making committee meets to determine strategies for meeting the goals set for the district and submits their strategies to the district SBDM committee for review.	September 2002
3.	The district SBDM committee submits its goals and the campus strategies to the superintendent for approval.	October 2002
4.	The superintendent submits the goals and strategies to the board for approval.	November 2002
5.	The committee monitors student performance, retention rates and strategies.	December 2002 and Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation could be implemented using existing resources

**FINDING**

RISD's class of 2000 had 4.5 percent of students meeting the ACT/SAT criteria score required for acknowledgment by TEA, compared to the class of 1999, which had 14.5 percent of students meeting the ACT/SAT criteria. The percent of students meeting criteria in the class of 2000 was less than half the Region 1 average and only one sixth of the state average (**Exhibit 2-13**). Additionally, the percent of RISD students in the class taking the exam was lower than all but one of its peers.

**Exhibit 2-13**  
**College Entrance Examination Participation and Scores**  
**RISD and Peer Districts**  
**Class of 2000**

<b>District</b>	<b>Percent of Students Meeting Criteria</b>	<b>Percent of Students Taking Examinations</b>	<b>Average SAT Score</b>	<b>Average ACT Score</b>
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>52.4%</b>	<b>884</b>	<b>18.1%</b>
Lyford	6.3%	63.0%	910	16.7%
Taft	7.3%	58.6%	950	18.0%
West Oso	8.6%	52.2%	826	17.2%
Mathis	12.1%	64.7%	988	17.4%
<b>Region 1</b>	<b>10.8%</b>	<b>51.9%</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>17.7%</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>27.3%</b>	<b>62.2%</b>	<b>990</b>	<b>20.3%</b>

*Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.*

Taking ACT/SAT exams provides students with experience in college entrance assessments that is valuable if they plan to continue their education. RISD's SAT and ACT scores for the last five years show that the district's success in this area has been sporadic. However, there is never been so dramatic a change as the class of 2000's 10 percent drop in the percent of scores at or above criteria (**Exhibit 2-14**). The high school's CIP for 2001-02 does not address any pre-college or college testing programs.

**Exhibit 2-14**  
**RISD SAT/ACT Scores and Statistics**  
**1996-97 through 1999-2000**

	<b>Class of 1996</b>	<b>Class of 1997</b>	<b>Class of 1998</b>	<b>Class of 1999</b>	<b>Class of 2000</b>

Percentage of Students Tested	53.9%	32.7%	39.6%	55.0%	52.4%
Mean SAT Score	911	948	887	922	884
Mean ACT Score	18.5%	19.2%	16.0%	18.4%	18.1%
SAT/ACT Results at or above Criteria for College Entrance	14.5%	12.5%	15.8%	14.5%	4.5%

*Source: TEA, AEIS, 1996-97 through 2000-01.*

Prior to 2000-01 an ACT/SAT class was mandatory for all RISD juniors who passed TAAS. The high school principal eliminated the class in 2000-01 in an effort to save money. In 2001-02, the district is offering a nine-week ACT/SAT class in conjunction with an Advanced Placement chemistry class. Only students in the chemistry class can be enrolled in the ACT/SAT class.

**Recommendation 11:**

**Develop strategies to increase the numbers of students taking ACT/SAT exams and to improve student performance on the tests.**

The secondary Curriculum coordinator should research programs that successfully encourage more students to take college entrance exams and help students improve their scores. Limited access to this preparation class leaves most RISD students with no help from the district in preparing for college entrance exams.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The Secondary Curriculum coordinator creates a plan to improve student performance on ACT/SAT tests after surveying several districts to gather information on programs and strategies that successfully improve student performance and increase the number of students taking college entrance exams.	June - August 2002
2.	The Secondary Curriculum coordinator submits the plan to the assistant superintendent for approval.	September 2002
3.	The assistant superintendent submits the plan to the superintendent and board for approval.	October 2002
4.	The Secondary Curriculum coordinator implements the plan and evaluates its success annually.	November 2002 and Ongoing Annually

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation could be implemented using existing resources.

## Chapter 2

# EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

This chapter examines Raymondville Independent School District's (RISD) educational service delivery and student performance in five sections.

### B. INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

Instructional resources are the materials, fiscal support and personnel that are available for student learning. For students to achieve, school districts must have a strong instructional management system.

**Exhibit 2-15** lists per-pupil instructional expenditures at RISD, the peer districts and the state for 2000-01. RISD ranks the highest among the peer districts and above the state average of 51.2 percent for instructional expenditures.

**Exhibit 2-15**  
**Percent Spent on Instruction**  
**RISD and Peer Districts**  
**2000-01**

<b>District</b>	<b>Instruction Expenditures</b>	<b>Total Budgeted Expenditures</b>	<b>Percent Spent</b>
Taft	\$5,146,429	\$10,206,309	50.4%
Lyford	\$5,706,113	\$11,618,226	49.1%
West Oso	\$6,769,654	\$13,064,500	51.8%
Mathis	\$7,108,943	\$13,422,739	52.7%
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>\$9,376,317</b>	<b>\$18,071,473</b>	<b>51.9%</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>\$13,880,333</b>	<b>\$26,948,681,7</b>	<b>51.2%</b>

*Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01*

### FINDING

Curriculum guides are not available for all subjects in RISD. Not all teachers interviewed had curriculum guides and many reported that the ones they had were outdated. In some cases teachers had never seen a curriculum guide for the subject they were teaching.

Survey results indicate that 49.4 percent of the teachers who responded to the TSPR survey either strongly disagreed or disagreed that *the district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects*. In addition, 39.3 percent of the teachers strongly disagreed or disagreed that *the curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated*. Forty four percent of the teachers strongly disagreed or disagreed that *the district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it*. **Exhibit 2-16** provides a list of high school curriculum guides that are complete.

**Exhibit 2-16**  
**High School Curriculum Guides**  
**2000-01**

Course	Year Written/Completed
Geometry	1997-98
Pre-calculus	1997-98
AP Calculus	1997-98
Spanish II and III	1997-98
Algebra I	1997-98
English I, II, III and IV	1997-98
ESL I, II and III	1997-98
Creative Writing	1997-98
U. S. History	1998-99
World History	1998-99
Physics I	1999-2000

*Source: Raymondville High School, Dean of Instruction, November 2001.*

Although RISD had plans to update the curriculum guides during the summer of 2001, no action was taken. The district improvement plan addresses curriculum development for the Gifted and Talented program but makes no reference to curriculum development in other courses or programs.

San Antonio ISD has a particularly detailed and thorough three-year process for keeping its curriculum guides current. The first year of the curriculum development process is called the development stage. In this year, "standard action teams" (teams of lead teachers in each subject area)



create district standards that incorporate the national standards, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and the district's local standards into a unified curriculum guide for each grade level and each subject area. Outside review teams composed of parents, university representatives and community members review and provide feedback on the proposed standards and curriculum guides. The second year is called the field-test year. In this stage, a scope and sequence(or a list of the skills to be covered and the order in which they will be covered)for each core subject is created. The standards developed in the first year are used, revised and refined as teachers provide feedback to the Division of Curriculum and School Support. The third year sees the full implementation of the revised standards. While Raymondville's size may prevent it from implementing every step of this process, it could model it's own process around these components, thus making sure that all guides are updated every three years.

**Recommendation 12:**

**Develop and implement a plan to update curriculum guides.**

Curriculum guides provide long-term goals for teachers to use in their classroom. The guides provide direction for teachers on student objectives, assessment, alignment to national, state, and district tests, prerequisite skills and instructional resources. Curriculum guides typically include a philosophy statement, scope and sequence information, suggested teaching/learning activities, resources, evaluation measures of student performance and alignment with the TEKS.

The elementary and secondary curriculum coordinators should form a curriculum committee with representatives from each grade level and subject to develop a process to update and align curriculum

to TEKS. This process should include a format, timeline for subject reviews and evaluation procedures to determine curriculum effectiveness. The curriculum alignment will provide teachers with a guide to meet student needs.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The Elementary and Secondary Curriculum coordinators form a committee with principals and teachers representing each grade level and subject to develop a process to update and align curriculum to TEKS.	April 2002
2.	The committee develops and recommends a process for curriculum development that includes a format. timeline and	May 2002

	evaluation procedures to determine curriculum effectiveness. The committee prioritizes the subjects that require new or updated guides.	
3.	The Curriculum coordinators present the process to the superintendent and school board for approval.	May 2002
4.	The Curriculum coordinators select a team of six teachers in the subject selected as most urgently in need of updating.	May 2002
5.	The curriculum writing team updates the curriculum guides.	June - August 2002
6.	The curriculum committee distributes drafts of guides to gather feedback from essential teaching personnel.	September 2002
7.	The curriculum committee gathers the feedback and completes the guides.	November, 2002 - February, 2003
8.	The curriculum committee distributes curriculum guides to teachers and trains teachers to use them.	March - April 2003
9.	The curriculum committee selects the team of teachers for the next subject and repeats the process.	May 2003
10.	The curriculum committee evaluates implementation of guides and makes necessary adjustments.	April 2004 and Ongoing

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This estimate is based on the assignment of one team of six teachers each summer to write curriculum guides. The estimate assumes that each teacher will be paid approximately \$209 per day (average teacher salary for ten months of \$38,611 divided by 185 days) for five days during the summer months. (Six teachers for 5 days at \$209 a day or  $6 \times 5 = 30 \times 209 = \$6,270$ .)

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>
Develop and implement a plan to update curriculum guides.	(\$6,270)	(\$6,270)	(\$6,270)	(\$6,270)	(\$6,270)

# Chapter 2

## EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

This chapter examines Raymondville Independent School District's (RISD) educational service delivery and student performance in five sections.

### C. SPECIAL PROGRAMS

School districts offer educational programs other than the regular education curriculum to meet the needs of students with special needs. Those programs include Bilingual programs and English as a Second Language (ESL), Career and Technology (CATE), Gifted and Talented (G/T), Migrant Education (ME) and Special Education. RISD's elementary curriculum coordinator is responsible for these programs at the two elementary schools, while the secondary curriculum coordinator is responsible for the programs at the middle and high school.

**Exhibit 2-17** illustrates the children that RISD identified for special programs and the 2,317 students who were classified as economically disadvantaged in 2000-01. RISD had a higher number of students identified as special education and economically disadvantaged than its peer districts.

**Exhibit 2-17**  
**Student Enrollment by Program**  
**2000-01**

District	Special Education	Bilingual/ ESL	Career/ Technology	Gifted/ Talented	Limited English Proficient	Economically Disadvantaged
Lyford	166	231	337	126	264	1,240
Taft	220	88	247	137	177	1,120
Mathis	246	102	273	182	163	1,665
West Oso	283	138	312	107	169	1,267
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>2,317</b>

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

#### *Bilingual/English as a Second Language*

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

When a child enrolls in RISD, the parents must complete a home language survey. If the home language is other than English, the child is tested for the bilingual program. The school district uses a variety of

assessments to identify bilingual students. After students have tested, a Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) reviews each student's scores and determines if that student needs LEP services.

The LPAC committee consists of an administrator, teacher and parent. Once a student is classified as a LEP student, the LPAC requests approval from the parent to place the child in the bilingual program. Parental permission must be granted before a student can be provided with LEP services.

If permission is granted, the district then uses state-adopted materials to serve Bilingual/ESL students in the regular classroom setting.

***Career and Technology***

The Career and Technology Education (CATE) department introduces students to various career options.

**FINDING**

RISD CATE classes are not adequately preparing students to enter the workplace after graduation. RISD offers a course in Personal and Protective Service System and after completion of this course, students who meet the legal age can take the state exam for correctional officer. However, there are no other courses that provide this kind of benefit to students.

**Exhibit 2-18** shows the CATE Program includes Transportation; Personal and Protective Services; Home Economics; Health Science Technology Education; Communication and Media Systems; Career Orientation; Business Education and Agricultural Science and Technology Education.

**Exhibit 2-18  
RISD Career and Technology Program Offerings by Career Clusters  
2001-02**

<b>Transportation Systems</b>
<b>Course Offerings</b> Automotive Technician I Introduction to Transportation Careers
<b>Personal and Protective Service Systems</b>
<b>Course Offerings</b> Correctional Systems and Practices Introduction to Security Systems Crime in America Introduction to Criminal Justice
<b>Home Economics</b>
<b>Course Offerings</b>

Personal and Family Dependents Nutrition and Food Science Food Science and Technology Child Development Family Health Needs
<b>Health Science Technology Education</b>
<b>Course Offerings</b> Anatomy and Physiology of Human Systems
<b>Communication and Media Systems</b>
<b>Course Offerings</b> Introduction to Media Technology Media Technology I
<b>Career Orientation</b>
<b>Course Offerings</b> Career Connections
<b>Business Education</b>
<b>Course Offerings</b> Business Computer Information Systems I Business Support Systems Keyboarding Accounting Business Image Management and Multimedia
<b>Course Offerings</b> Introduction to World Agricultural Science and Technology Applied Agricultural Science and Technology Agricultural Mechanics I Agricultural Mechanics II Plant and Animal Production (schedule for 2002-03) Animal Science (schedule for 2002-03) Plant and Soil Science (schedule for 2002-03)

*Source: Career and Technology Education, Raymondville ISD, Raymondville High School, 2001-02.*

In TSPR surveys, respondents indicated dissatisfaction with the CATE program's effectiveness (**Exhibit 2-19**).

**Exhibit 2-19**  
**Percent Who Strongly Disagree or Disagree or have No Opinion**  
**2001 TSPR Survey**

	<b>District Administrators</b>	<b>Principals</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Parents</b>
The needs of work-bound students are being met	55.5%	81.1%	65.9%	53.0%	69.5%
The district has effective vocational (career and technology) education programs	*	47.8%	72.0%	44.9%	51.7%

Source: TSPR Surveys October, 2001.

\*District Administrators are not asked this question.

The CATE program is not designed to meet local labor demands. The district does not know how many or what share of its work-bound students find employment locally or elsewhere. The district does not track its graduates and lacks information on the type of jobs work-bound students obtain and their degree of preparedness for employment.

In interviews, local business people agreed that the district does not communicate with businesses in the city about career opportunities for students or ask for their input on how to best prepare students for the workforce. Many expressed their concerns that students did not graduate with a readiness for work. Participants said they were eager to volunteer their time and expertise to the district in any way that they could be helpful.

Galveston ISD relates its CATE program to industry-specific themes and involves the business community. The themes are health, electronics, business or financial careers. The students gain transferable skills toward future education or employment. The district is also developing a partnership with a community college to provide college credit or work certificates for CATE classes taken during high school.

### **Recommendation 13:**

#### **Develop a vocational education program to meet the needs of work-bound students.**

District administrators should modify the Career and Technology program to include courses that prepare work-bound students for employment after graduation. The district should use the employment data that the Texas Workforce Commission compiles on public high school graduates and supplement these data with a survey of area employers, focusing on opportunities for high school graduates without a college education.

### **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The dean of Instruction works with CATE teachers to prepare a proposal for superintendent and board approval to modify the district's career and technology program to address the needs of work-bound students.	April 2002
2.	The dean of Instruction works with the CATE teachers to design a business and industry	May 2002

	survey and a survey of work-bound graduates.	
3.	The dean of Instruction conducts the surveys and collects data on employment opportunities in the county as well as the employment experiences of former students.	June 2002
4.	The dean of Instruction reviews the results of the surveys with the CATE teachers and identifies changes needed in the district's program, including the addition of new courses.	July 2002
5.	The high school principal makes changes to the CATE program and informs parents and students about the change.	August - September 2002
6.	The high school principal monitors enrollment in the new and modified courses.	October 2002 and Ongoing
7.	The dean of Instruction tracks graduating work-bound students.	Annually
8.	The dean of Instruction works with the CATE teachers to modify and update the program as needed.	Annually

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

### ***Gifted and Talented***

Since 1987, state law has required all Texas school districts to offer educational programs to serve the needs of gifted and talented (G/T) students. Gifted and talented students are those who show the potential to excel in one or both of the following areas: intellectual ability and subject matter proficiency. These students require additional educational programs compared to students in the regular classroom.

### **FINDING**

RISD's G/T program is not coordinated to ensure that gifted students are served consistently throughout their educational experience and it is limited at all levels. According to the *Texas State Plan for Education of Gifted/Talented Students*, meeting the curricular and instructional needs of gifted and talented students requires modifications to the regular school program. The plan outlines specific performance measures related to curriculum and instruction required by state law or State Board of Education (SBOE) rule for students in grades 1-12 in gifted and talented programs. The four required components for districts seeking status as a recognized or exemplary program are indicated in **Exhibit 2-20**.

**Exhibit 2-20**  
**Gifted and Talented Program Requirements**  
**Acceptable, Recognized and Exemplary**

<b>Component Required for Acceptable Status</b>	<b>Component Required for Recognized Status</b>	<b>Component Required for Exemplary Status</b>
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An array of appropriately challenging learning experience is offered emphasizing content from the four core academic areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities are provided for students to pursue areas of interest in selected disciplines through guided and independent research.</li> </ul>	Options are provided in intellectual, creative or artistic areas; leadership; and specific academic fields.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities are provided for career and leadership assessment and training in areas of student strength.</li> </ul>	
A continuum of learning experiences is provided leading to the development of advanced-level products or performances.	Students at all levels are involved in experiences resulting in development of advanced-level products or performances targeted to audiences outside the classroom.	Students in G/T programs for more than one year will develop advanced-level products evaluated by external evaluators knowledgeable about the area of the product.
Opportunities are provided for students to accelerate in areas of student strengths.	Flexible pacing is used allowing students to learn at the pace and level appropriate to their abilities and skills.	Scheduling modifications are used to meet the needs of individual students.
District and campus improvement plans include provisions related to the needs of gifted and talented students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum is modified based on annual evaluations.</li> <li>• Resources and release time for staff are provided for curriculum development.</li> <li>• Guidelines are developed and used for evaluating resources and in selecting appropriate materials.</li> </ul>	Collaboration occurs among appropriate staff in designing and evaluating curriculum for gifted and talented students.
	Release time or contract extensions are provided to enable teachers at all levels to collaboratively develop services for gifted and talented students.	
	Student progress or performance is periodically assessed and communicated to parents.	Student performance is assessed by standards developed by experts in the areas served in the district's program.

*Source: TEA, Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students, May 2000.*

RISD identifies its gifted and talented students during the spring semester. A teacher, counselor, administrator, staff, parent or other student can nominate a student/s for the G/T program. After the



nominations are received, the counselor requests parental permission to test the student. Other data are also collected and can include achievement test scores, grades, TAAS scores, assessment of individual abilities and teacher ratings. The G/T Selection Committee conducts the identification process. Parents are notified when the committee makes its decision. RISD has a waiver to exclude G/T testing until the end of the second grade, so no G/T students are identified until grade 3. **Exhibit 2-21** shows the number and percent of G/T students and teachers in RISD and its peer districts, as well as the Region 1 and state averages.

**Exhibit 2-21**  
**Gifted/Talented Students and Teachers**  
**RISD, Peer Districts, Region and State**  
**2000-01**

District	G/T Student Enrollment		G/T Teachers		Expenditures for G/T	
	Number	Percent**	Number*	Percent**	Amount Per Student	Percent***
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>\$6,199</b>	<b>6.4</b>
Mathis	182	8.7	0.7	0.5	\$1,551	4.0
West Oso	107	5.8	8.5	6.4	\$1,199	1.9
Lyford	126	8.3	1.3	1.2	\$155	0.3
Taft	137	9.2	2.1	1.8	\$13	0.0
<b>State Average</b>	<b>342,840</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>6,099.3</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>\$717</b>	<b>1.8</b>

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

\*Expressed in Full Time Equivalents.

\*\*Percent refers to G/T students as percent of all students, percent G/T teachers as percent of all teachers.

\*\*\*G/T expenditures as percent of total budgeted instructional program expenditures

According to the elementary curriculum coordinator, all teachers at L. C. Smith elementary school are G/T certified, but only the teachers who teach the core content areas are G/T certified at Pittman elementary school.

In grades 3-5, students are served in a homogeneous classroom setting. Middle school G/T students are grouped together for English, and the high school G/T students are served through Advanced Placement classes. To its credit, RISD has increased the percent of its students completing Advanced Placement courses so that it more than doubles the Region 1 and state averages (**Exhibit 2-22**).

**Exhibit 2-22**  
**Percent of RISD Students Completing Advanced Courses**  
**1997-98 through 2000-01**

	<b>1997-98</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>13.5%</b>	<b>16.1%</b>	<b>44.7%</b>
West Oso	13.5%	9.7%	28.4%
Taft	8.2%	14.2%	16.8%
Mathis	21.4%	8.7%	12.4%
Lyford	27.2%	10.3%	11.3%
<b>Region Average</b>	<b>20.2%</b>	<b>20.2%</b>	<b>19.7%</b>
<b>State Average</b>	<b>18.9%</b>	<b>20.1%</b>	<b>20.1%</b>

*Source: TEA, AEIS, 1998-99 through 2000-01.*

A number of districts have developed programs that meet the state plan guidelines including the Killeen, Fort Bend and Laredo Independent School Districts. Three districts, Crowley ISD, Highland ISD and La Porte ISD, have been recognized by TEA for providing "recognized" or "exemplary" gifted and talented programs. The approaches are different in each district based on locally identified needs, but all modify the general school program in ways that meet the needs of gifted and talented students.

**Recommendation 14:**

**Expand curricular options for gifted and talented students that will qualify the district's Gifted and Talented Program as "exemplary."**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES**

1.	The Elementary and Secondary coordinators recommend to the assistant superintendent district staff, parents and community members to serve on a committee to review options for expanding services to gifted and talented students.	June 2002
2.	The coordinators contact Region 1 and TEA's Division of Advanced Academic Services for the names of districts with recognized and exemplary programs for gifted and talented students and request program descriptions from each.	June 2002
3.	The coordinators secure from the TEA Web site or by contact with the Division of Advanced Academic Services the process for achieving "exemplary" status.	June 2002
4.	The assistant superintendent submits the proposed committee to the superintendent for approval.	July 2002
5.	The committee reviews the programs and submits recommendations for enhancements to	March 2003

	RISD's program and a plan for achieving "exemplary" status to the superintendent through the assistant superintendent.	
6.	The superintendent approves modifications to the district program and submits them along with timelines and cost estimates to the Board of Trustees for approval.	April 2003
7.	The superintendent includes the appropriate costs for program modifications in the 2003-04 budget.	May 2003
8.	The coordinators make modifications to the district program, monitor implementation and provides regularly scheduled status reports to the superintendent and Board of Trustees.	June 2003 and Ongoing

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

### ***Migrant Education***

The Office of Migrant Education (OME) in the United States Department of Education (USDE) allocates a grant through TEA based on the number of migrant students who are enrolled in the public education system in Texas. Under the *Improving America's Schools Act* of 1994, Congress authorized a state education agency to coordinate education programs for migrant students. Section 1301 of Title I, Part C of the *Improving America's Schools Act* of 1994 (Public Law 103-382) states migrant funds must support education programs to help reduce education disruptions that occur with moving and ensure migrant students receive the education that fits their needs.

## **FINDING**

RISD's Migrant Education Program (MEP) is an award-winning program that targets students districtwide. Its main goal is to help migrant students succeed academically by implementing instructional activities for core subjects to improve student performance. The district addresses student education, parental involvement and instructional strategies. RISD offers leadership training for middle and high school migrant students. The high school offers a tutorial class to students who need help. Teachers who have migrant students must submit data on how they have assisted migrant students beyond the core content areas.

The TEA Office of Migrant Education presents awards annually to school districts and campuses that have met specific criteria in serving migrant students. District awards are given in four categories, based on the number of migrant students served. In November 2001, RISD received one of only two awards presented in the 501 to 999 student category. The requirements are the same for every category - the district must have a migrant student passing rate of at least 80 percent in each TAAS subject area and a migrant student dropout rate of 5.5 percent or less.

Campus awards are given in for four levels of achievement; Exceptional, Excelling, Promising and Acknowledged. A campus rated Exceptional has 10 or more migrant students taking at least one TAAS exam , a migrant student passing rate of at least 90 percent in each subject area and a migrant student dropout rate of 1 percent or less. The campus that is Acknowledged has five or more migrant students

taking at least one TAAS exam , a migrant student passing rate of at least 70 percent in each subject area and a dropout rate of 5.5 percent or less.

**Exhibit 2-23** shows the RISD campus ratings received by TEA's Division of Migrant Education.

**Exhibit 2-23**  
**Recognition of RISD Campuses by TEA**  
**Division of Migrant Education**  
**2000-01**

<b>School</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Year of Award</b>
Pittman Elementary School	Promising	2001
Smith Elementary School	Excelling	2001
Myra Green Middle School	Excelling	2001
Raymondville High School	Promising	2001

*Source: RISD Elementary Curriculum Department, November 2001 and Annual Migrant Education Conference Web site.*

## **COMMENDATION**

**RISD'S Migrant Program has been recognized for keeping its students in school and targeting student performance.**

### *Special Education*

The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires districts to provide free and appropriate public education for all children with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their handicaps. This education must be provided in the least restrictive environment available. The act also requires students with disabilities to be included in state and district assessment programs. Based on the results of its assessments districts must develop an individualized education program (IEP) for each child receiving special education services. The IEP must include input from regular education teachers and run parallel to the educational plans for children in general population classrooms.

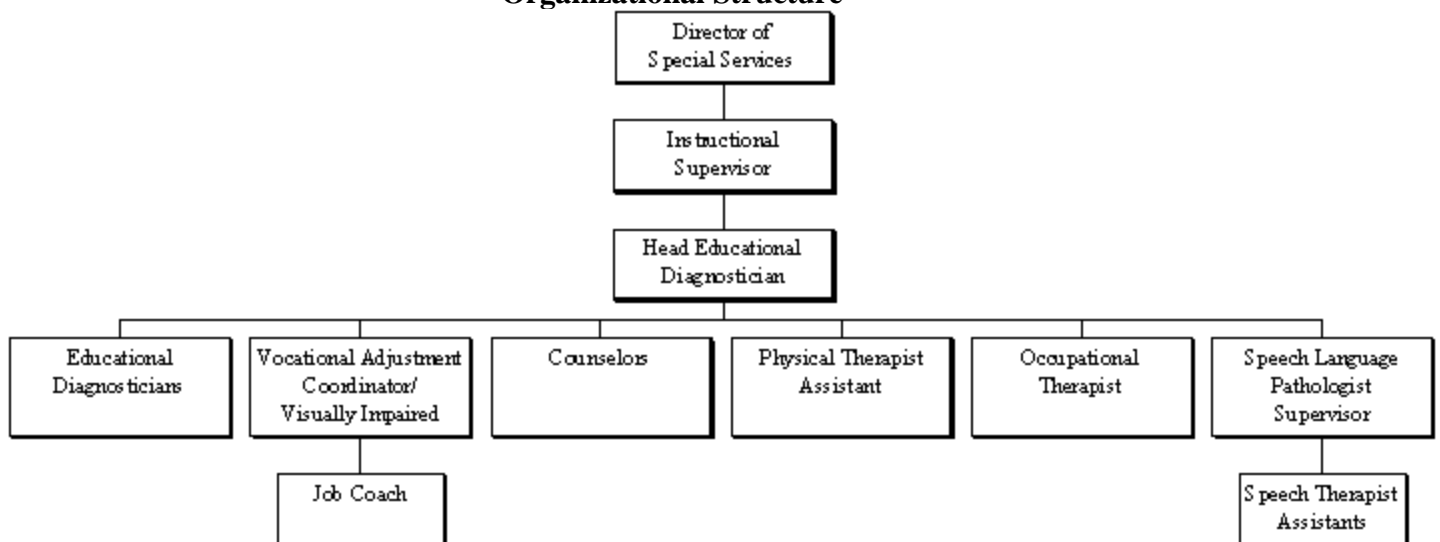
To serve the diverse needs of all students with disabilities and comply with IDEA requirements, a special education program should feature the following:

- Pre-referral intervention in regular education. When a student experiences an academic problem in the regular education program, intervention should occur to resolve the problem(s). If steps taken by the regular education teacher do not yield satisfactory results, the problem(s) should be referred to special education staff.

- Referral to special education for evaluation. Referring a student to special education involves an official, written request supported by documentation. The referral must include an explanation of steps that have been taken in regular education to solve the student's problems prior to the referral.
- Comprehensive nondiscriminatory evaluation. Once a student has been referred to special education, the district must provide a comprehensive non-discriminatory evaluation or assessment within a prescribed amount of time.
- Initial placement through an Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee. After the evaluation or assessment is complete, a meeting is held to discuss the results and determine if the student qualifies for special educational services in one of 13 categories. If the student qualifies, a plan is written for the student's education.
- Educational services and supports according to a written Individualized Education Program (IEP). The ARD committee must develop an IEP including information on the classes, subject areas, development areas, and life skill courses in which the student will be instructed. The IEP also should include information on the amount of time the student will spend in regular educational settings as well as related information on the student's needs such as counseling, guidance, or speech therapy.
- Annual program review. Each year after a student's initial qualification and placement, an ARD committee should conduct a review to ensure that the student's IEP is appropriate.
- Three-year re-evaluation. Every three years, the student should undergo a comprehensive individual assessment. An ARD committee should discuss the results of the re-evaluation. This evaluation should determine whether the student still qualifies for special education services in the same category.
- Dismissal from the special education program. If and when a student no longer meets the eligibility criteria, the student is dismissed from special education. The ARD committee must make this decision.

**Exhibit 2-24** depicts the organizational chart of RISD's Special Education Department.

**Exhibit 2-24**  
**RISD Special Education**  
**Organizational Structure**



Source: Director of Special Education, November 2001.

**Exhibit 2-25** compares RISD's special education spending with those of its peer districts. RISD serves the largest special education student population compared to its peer districts and spends a total of \$1,030,552. RISD's per student expenditures are higher than the Region 1 average.

**Exhibit 2-25**  
**RISD and Peer Districts**  
**RISD Budget Expenditures for Special Education**  
**2000-01**

<b>District</b>	<b>Number of Students Enrolled In Special Education</b>	<b>Budgeted Special Education Expenditures</b>	<b>Percent of Special Education Budgeted Expenditure</b>	<b>Expenditure per Special Education Student</b>
Taft	220	\$437,100	8.5%	\$1,987
Mathis	246	\$561,713	7.9%	\$2,283
Lyford	166	\$631,216	11.1%	\$3,803
West Oso	283	\$853,607	12.6%	\$3,016
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>\$1,030,552</b>	<b>11.0%</b>	<b>\$3,493</b>
<b>Region 1</b>	<b>31,086</b>	<b>\$104,906,894</b>	<b>10.4%</b>	<b>\$3,375</b>

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

**Exhibit 2-26** provides TAAS passing rates over the last three years for RISD students receiving services from the Special Education department. RISD's TAAS passing rates for special education students have improved in every category.

**Exhibit 2-26**  
**RISD Students Receiving Special Education Services**  
**Percent Passing TAAS**  
**1998-99 through 2000-01**

<b>Year</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-01</b>	<b>Percent of Change</b>
All Test Taken	57.7%	69.2%	75.8%	23.8%
Math	68.2%	78.6%	76.7%	11.0%
Reading	70.0%	78.7%	81.8%	14.4%
Writing	72.7%	73.7%	88.9%	18.2%

*Source: TEA, AEIS, 1998-99 through 2000-01.*

## **FINDING**

RISD is a member of the WIL-CAM Pupil Services Cooperative for special education programs. The WIL-CAM cooperative serves six local school districts. The six superintendents of the school districts that are served by WIL-CAM make up the managing board and manage the cooperative in compliance with federal and state laws and local district policies.

The main office for WIL-CAM is located in Raymondville with RISD acting as the fiscal agent. Member districts are obligated to submit their special education funds to pay the cooperative's program expenses. The cooperative also participates in the federal government's Medicaid Administrative Case Management (MACM) program. MACM is a program that reimburses the cooperative for providing additional services to students or their families outside of the classroom. The amount of federal money that the cooperative receives is determined by a federal time study. The study requires each district's principals, assistant principals, counselor, nurses, social workers and diagnosticians to account for their entire work day activities by recording job duties every 15 minutes. The time study, when completed, is submitted to MACM staff who determine the amount of money to award to the cooperative by calculating the amount of time spent on providing outreach services to students and their families. A study can be conducted every quarter.

The director of WIL-CAM and personnel who perform duties for more than one district are compensated by RISD in its capacity as the fiscal agent. The director of WIL-CAM is also the RISD Special Education director. The director has the authority to decide matters involving the daily operations of the instructional program.

WIL-CAM's Plan of Action for 2001-02 concentrates on five goals that state:

- Communication will be improved among WIL-CAM and districts;
- Knowledge of students with disabilities will be increased;
- Teacher training will be provided to improve services for students;
- Efficiency of WIL-CAM staff will be increased; and
- Parental involvement will be increased.

The student services that WIL-CAM provides are:

- monitoring the special education program,
- instructional supervision on a weekly basis,
- psychological testing,
- counseling services,
- vocational adjustment services
- services for the visually impaired,
- occupational therapy,
- physical therapy,
- speech therapy,
- diagnostic evaluations,

- homebound services, and
- medical examinations for students and services for the deaf.

In addition to the director of Special Education, the personnel includes an instructional supervisor, head educational diagnostician, plus various diagnosticians, counselors, a physical therapist, an occupational therapist and a speech therapist. By meeting the needs of its special education students through the cooperative, RISD is able to concentrate on education rather than the daily management operations of a special education program.

## COMMENDATION

**RISD has chosen an effective means to address the needs of special education students by participating in a special education cooperative.**

## FINDING

RISD's ongoing objective to accurately refer students for Special Education caused the district to discontinue a moderately successful pre-referral intervention program for one that is stronger in the intervention component. **Exhibit 2-27** compares RISD's special education student and teacher program enrollment information with those of the peer districts for 1998-99 through 2000-01. Raymondville and Lyford are the only districts among the peers that have reduced the number of students in special education since 1998.

**Exhibit 2-27**  
**RISD and Peer Districts**  
**Special Education Students and Teachers**  
**1998-99 through 2000-01**

District	1998-99		1999-2000		2000-01	
	Number of Students	Number of Teachers	Number of Students	Number of Teachers	Number of Students	Number of Teachers
Lyford	190	7.7	176	8.9	166	9.1
Taft	199	7.0	208	8.5	220	10.1
West Oso	229	15.6	318	16.5	283	14.9
Mathis	243	11.7	248	14.2	246	14.9
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>16.6</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>17.0</b>

*Source: TEA, AEIS, 1998-99 through 2000-01.*

Prior to 2001-02 the district used the Student Intervention Team (SIT) program. Although Special Education student enrollment declined, the intervention component of the program was minimal and ineffective; students continued to be inappropriately referred to Special Education.



In an attempt to reduce the inappropriate special education referrals the district chose to adopt the Instructional Intervention Team (IIT) process and implemented it in August of 2001. If a student is having an academic problem in class, staff completes an IIT Initial Referral Packet. The referral packet includes information such as achievement data, current grades, attendance data and behavior data. The campus IIT team that is made up of teachers and the counselor meets to review the data and completes an IIT Team Report. The IIT Report form has a checklist for current educational status and interventions that have been attempted in the classroom as well as additional recommendations for teachers to use in the classroom. The classroom teacher uses the IIT recommendations to help the student in need. If the student is not showing improvement with the intervention in place, then the referral process begins.

## **COMMENDATION**

**RISD has used a pre-referral process to reduce the number of students referred to Special Education.**

### ***Compensatory Education***

The federal government provides minimal funds to help economically disadvantaged students. These Title I funds (named for the section of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act in which they are addressed) are sent via TEA to school districts based on their number of economically disadvantaged students. These funds must be used to supplement state program funds.

Texas has a Compensatory Education program similar in many ways to the federal Title 1 program, but funded through the state school finance formulas. The State Compensatory Education (SCE) program's purpose is to reduce the dropout rate and increase the academic performance of students identified as being at risk of dropping out of school. In 2001 the legislature amended sections of the TEC that govern the SCE program and the distribution of SCE funds. With few exceptions, the changes went into effect at the beginning of 2001-02.

School districts are required to use student performance data to design and implement appropriate compensatory, intensive, or accelerated instructional services that will enable at-risk students to be performing at grade level at the conclusion of the next regular school term.

Additionally, each school district is required to evaluate and document the effectiveness of its SCE program in reducing any disparity in performance on assessment instruments or any disparity in the rates of high school completion between at-risk students and all other district students.

SCE funds, other than the indirect cost allotment that may not exceed 15 percent, may be used only to meet the costs of providing a supplemental compensatory, intensive, or accelerated instruction program or an alternative education program or to support a Title I, Part A program at a campus with at least 50 percent poverty. The amount of SCE funds that a district may use to fund disciplinary AEPs is now limited.

Beginning in school year 2003-04, the state's Commissioner of Education will adopt

accountability measures to be used in assessing the progress of students who have failed to perform satisfactorily in the preceding school year on an assessment instrument and the TEA will consider that progress in determining the district's accreditation rating.

The criteria for identifying students at risk of dropping out of school was changed and although local criteria can be used, the criteria must be approved by the local board of trustees and the number of students served using local criteria is limited. **Exhibit 2-28** lists the current criteria for identifying students at risk of dropping out of school.

**Exhibit 2-28**  
**Student Eligibility Criteria**  
**State Compensatory Education Program**

Each student who is under 21 years of age and who:

- is in prekindergarten, kindergarten or grade 1, 2, or 3 and did not perform satisfactorily on a readiness test or assessment instrument administered during the current school year;
- is in grade 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, or 12 and did not maintain an average equivalent to 70 on a scale of 100 in two or more subjects in the foundation curriculum during a semester in the preceding or current school year or is not maintaining such an average in two or more subjects in the foundation curriculum in the current semester;
- was not advanced from one grade level to the next for one or more school years;
- did not perform satisfactorily on an assessment instrument administered to the student under Subchapter B, Chapter 39, and who has not in the previous or current school year subsequently performed on that instrument or another appropriate instrument at a level equal to at least 110 percent of the level of satisfactory performance on that instrument;
- is pregnant or is a parent;
- has been placed in an alternative education program in accordance with Section 37.006 during the preceding or current school year;
- has been expelled in accordance with Section 37.007 during the preceding or current school year;
- is currently on parole, probation, deferred prosecution, or other conditional release;
- was previously reported through the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) to have dropped out of school;
- is a student of limited English proficiency, as defined by Section 29.052;
- is in the custody or care of the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services or has, during the current school year, been referred to the department by a school official, officer of the juvenile court, or law enforcement official;
- is homeless, as defined by 42 U.S.C. Section 11302, and its subsequent amendments; or
- resided in the preceding school year or resides in the current school year in a residential placement facility in the district, including a detention facility, substance abuse treatment facility, emergency shelter, psychiatric hospital, halfway house, or foster group home.

*Source: TEA, Financial Accountability System Resource Guide, State Compensatory Education module, January 1, 2002.*

As districts plan and design SCE programs and/or services, the superintendent, principal, and site based decision-making committee must be included. Districts are required to have written policies and procedures addressing specific aspects of the program and the program must be described in the District Improvement Plans (DIP) if it is implemented districtwide and in Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs) if it is implemented at the campus level. SCE resources must be redirected when evaluations indicate that programs and/or services are unsuccessful in producing desired results for students at risk of dropping out of school.

## **FINDING**

RISD's DIP and CIPs do not include the components required by law and State Board of Education rule for SCE programs-even those that have been in statute for years. According to the TEA, the DIP and CIPs are considered the primary record supporting expenditures attributed to the SCE program. As such, they are required to include the following:

- Total amount of SCE funds allocated to the campus for resources and staff or to the district if operating a districtwide SCE program.
- Comprehensive needs assessment
- Identified strategies implemented to reduce the dropout rate and improve student
- Performance for students at risk of dropping out of school
- Supplemental financial resources for SCE
- Supplemental FTEs for SCE
- Measurable performance objectives
- Timelines for monitoring strategies
- Formative and summative evaluation criteria

None of the improvement plans include a total amount of SCE funds allocated to the campus or district for resources and staff; a comprehensive needs assessment; or supplemental financial resources for SCE. The DIP has a strategy that references the use of \$36,000 in "Comp Ed" funds but the activities listed are limited to the attendance officer verifying that students reported as dropouts have actually dropped out. A second reference to the use of \$12,000 of "Comp Ed" funds is for a strategy that increases parental support of some special programs. In both of these cases the number of full time equivalents (FTEs) are listed as well as measurable performance objectives. There are no timelines for monitoring the strategies or evaluation criteria.

The high school CIP indicates that \$500 for an outside consultant will come from "Comp Ed Budget" for a strategy to "Reduce Conflict and Disciplinary Referrals". No FTE numbers or evaluation criteria are shown but timelines for monitoring the strategy and a measurable performance objective are provided.

There are no strategies in the middle school CIP targeting students at risk of dropping out of school or designated as using SCE funds.

One elementary school CIP references the use of SCE funds for four different strategies. Although the use of the funds are specified, and measurable performance objectives are included, there are FTEs listed, timelines for monitoring the strategies or evaluation criteria. The other elementary school refers to

"SCE" and "Comp Ed Budget" in two different strategies with measurable performance objectives but without FTEs, timelines for monitoring the strategies or evaluation criteria.

The district's failure to reflect the recent changes in SCE law in its planning documents suggests that the district has also failed to make other mandated changes in its SCE programming and funding allocations.

**Recommendation 15:**

**Bring the district's use of State Compensatory Education funds into compliance with state law.**

The superintendent and his administrative team should research all of the recent changes in state law regarding SCE to ensure that the district is in compliance in every area.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent calls a meeting of the assistant superintendent, Business manager and Curriculum coordinators and they work as a team to gather information from TEA and Region 1 regarding changes in SCE requirements.	April 2002
2.	The team members study the information individually and meet again to review the requirements as a group.	May 2002
3.	The team meets to develop procedures that address the required changes.	June - July 2002
4.	The superintendent presents the procedures to the board for approval.	August 2002
5.	The team ensures that the new procedures are in place and develops accountability measures.	September 2002
6.	The team meets to evaluate adherence to the procedures to date.	January 2003
7.	The superintendent monitors the adherence to SCE requirements and calls the team together as needed.	February 2003 and Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented using existing resources.

**FINDING**

RISD does not provide programming for its non-traditional learners. A non-traditional learner is a student who has a difficult time learning in a regular education class setting due to academic or personal reasons and is not necessarily a discipline problem. These students are at risk of dropping out of school unless given a flexible setting that allows them to fulfill requirements at their own pace.

Raymondville High School has a program for junior and senior students who are performing at grade level but are off track for graduation. Students who participate in the program must have passed all 3 sections of the TAAS exam. Competency-based modules from the American Preparatory Institute are

made available to the students four periods a day. Students work individually on the modules with a certified teacher present at all times. The goal is for students to earn credits and return to the regular classroom at the end of the semester.

The limitations of this program make it inaccessible to many at-risk students who would like to stay in school and earn their high school diplomas but are younger or are not performing at grade level or require flexible hours due to work or family commitments.

Flour Bluff ISD offers "at-risk" students an opportunity to attend the Alternative Center for Education (A.C.E.) campus, which uses a self-paced tutorial program and Internet instructional program to earn credits. Students can earn credit for core subjects in half the time as in a traditional classroom. The program serves students who are between 16 and 21 years old and not eligible to graduate from high school within four years or are experiencing a lack academic success or motivation, two or more years below grade level, teen parents or over-aged for their grade level. The teachers are certified in the core content areas.

Smithville ISD facilitated progress toward graduation for potential dropouts by creating an academic alternative school. The school started in 1999-2000 and was limited to 20 students who were required to apply for admission and have parental permission. The district used the self-paced, Pathways program, and incorporated mentoring and tutoring depending on student needs. The students were served by one teacher and one aide.

Kingsville ISD has two successful alternative programs for "at-risk" students, its K.E.Y.S. Academy which operates during regular school hours and a night high school. The Night High School is one of only 15 similar facilities in the state. It uses the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program facilities after hours. The school's mission is to "provide educational services and counseling to those students who, for whatever reason, have been unsuccessful in their regular school program and/or have dropped out." Instruction is computer driven and self paced. Students who are enrolled for 12 weeks or longer must earn at least two and one-half credits per semester and attend school 90 percent of the time. Students must apply for admission and in 1999-2000 the school served 39 students.

**Recommendation 16:**

**Establish an Alternative Education Program for students who need a non-traditional learning environment.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The assistant superintendent, high school principal and assistant principal and the Secondary Curriculum coordinator form a committee to develop a proposal for an alternative program to address at-risk students.	June 2002
2.	The committee submits the alternative program proposal to the superintendent and board for approval.	July 2002
3.	The Secondary Curriculum coordinator and the high school principal and assistant principal design an application process, a curriculum and a set of standards for the	July - September 2002

	alternative program.	
4.	High school teachers are informed of the new program and asked for recommendations of students who would benefit from the program.	October 2002
5.	Applications are made available to students recommended by teachers and to the entire high school student body as space in the program permits.	November 2002
6.	The alternative program begins.	January 2003
7.	The high school principal monitors academic performance and graduation rates of students in the program.	February 2003 and Ongoing
8.	The Secondary Curriculum coordinator prepares an annual report to the superintendent and board documenting the impact of the program on drop out and graduation rates.	February 2003 and Ongoing

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

By using existing facilities at the high school from 4:00 pm until 8:00 pm on weekdays when classrooms are empty, the district could implement an AEP very economically. The expense of one half-time teacher and aide are calculated using the pay schedule for a full-time teacher with 10 years experience ( $\$37,000 \times .5 = \$18,500$ ) and adding benefits of \$2,775 and the average pay scale for a classroom teacher aide ( $\$10,616 \times .5 = \$5,308$ ) and adding benefits of \$796.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>
Establish an Alternative Education Program for students who need a non-traditional learning environment.	(\$27,379)	(\$27,379)	(\$27,379)	(\$27,379)	(\$27,379)

# Chapter 2

## EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

This chapter examines Raymondville Independent School District's (RISD) educational service delivery and student performance in five sections.

### D. PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Educational research says that children whose parents volunteer to participate in their education perform better in school. Nationally, districts are trying new ways to enlist parental involvement.

In RISD parental involvement initiatives are handled at each school, and some campuses have a Parent/Teacher Organization while others do not. The district is designated as a Title I district, funded with monies from the federal government and as such, is mandated to follow federal regulations that require the establishment of a comprehensive parental involvement program.

The provisions of Title I Section 1118 emphasize three components of parent involvement:

- Policy involvement at the district and school level, including parental involvement in developing school improvement plans.
- Shared responsibility for high performance embodied in school-parent compacts.
- Building a capacity for parent involvement through increased training and partnerships with community organizations and businesses.

RISD campus improvement plans include goals and strategies for increasing parental involvement. **Exhibit 2-29** shows parental involvement strategies from 2001-2002 campus improvement plans.

**Exhibit 2-29**  
**RISD Campus Improvement Plans**  
**Parental Involvement Strategies**  
**2001-02**

<b>School</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Strategy</b>
Raymondville High School	Parental Participation	Every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social.

		environmental and academic growth of children.
Myra Green Middle School	Parent Awareness	Increase student and parental awareness of students' accomplishments.
L.C. Smith Elementary	Parental Involvement	Seek parental support of programs (Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities, Bilingual/ESL programs, and migrant programs).
Pittman Elementary	Community members understand importance of reading.	The family and community members will demonstrate an understanding of reading and early language development.

*Source: RISD Campus Improvement Plans, 2001-02.*

## **FINDING**

RISD encourages post-secondary education through the University of Texas-Pan American's (UT-PA) Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Program (GEAR UP). The program operates as an alliance among UT-PA and business, community and educational organizations. Its mission is to increase the number of students who are prepared to enter and succeed in post-secondary education. The objectives for GEAR UP are:

- To provide college information to students and parents
- Help create a solid academic foundation for college
- Aid in reforming and improving school curricula
- Target increasing parent involvement in preparing students for college
- Provide mentoring, counseling and tutoring for students
- Support staff training to raise expectations for student learning

Myra Green Middle School is one of 23 schools chosen to participate in the GEAR UP Program through UT-PA. The program focuses on eighth grade students and began in late February 2001.

In August 2001 the district hired a GEAR UP coordinator who is solely responsible for the program. Before students participate in the program, parents must submit written permission.



GEAR UP participants have had the opportunity to visit UT-PA in Edinburg and Texas A&M University in Kingsville to familiarize themselves with a college setting. GEAR UP has also provided six teachers from middle school and high school an opportunity to attend a professional development workshop on developing a rigorous curriculum in math, history, science and English.

GEAR UP is facilitating parent involvement by initiating the Platicas/Parents Talking program. Some of the program's goals are to establish a friendly school climate to encourage parents and community partnerships; to implement focused and meaningful school-home, teacher-parent connections to promote student academic achievement and accountability; and to implement a parent trainer-of-trainers model where parents will be used to train other parents.

GEAR UP selects 20 parents or community members to be the platicas (talkers) who educate the community in promoting student academic success. The platicas are organized by a parent liaison. The parent liaison is responsible for training in the community, conducting literacy classes for GEAR UP parents, developing platicas activities, scheduling tutors for students, keeping records of local resources, scheduling speakers for parent sessions and distributing parent involvement kits to teachers.

UT-PA also offers a web site (<http://www.panam.edu/dept/gearup>) where educators, parents, community leaders and students can obtain information about the program and upcoming events for all participating schools.

## **COMMENDATION**

**RISD encourages higher education and parental involvement through its GEAR UP program.**

## **FINDING**

RISD's Parent Resource Centers (PRCs) are not being used. Until 2001-02, RISD employed staff to manage the PRC at each campus. The district's 2001-02 budget eliminated all expenditures in the Community Services category including all PRC personnel. The PRCs were closed with all the materials and furniture left intact. When the TSPR team visited, the PRCs still contained all of their furniture and educational materials, including videos, books, pre-school educational materials and computer software but were not being used.

Fort Bend Independent School District has established Parent Resource Centers funded through the Title I Program. Parents staff these centers and encourage other parents to volunteer at their child's schools.

**Recommendation 17:**

**Re-open the Parent Resource Centers to all parents and staff with parent volunteers.**

The district should make use of extensive resources still in the PRC at each campus. Campus improvement plans should be modified to include strategies and goals that prioritize volunteer recruitment and staff training in parental and community involvement.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent coordinates with the Maintenance Department to re-open the Parent Resource Center.	April 2002
2.	School facilitators create a list of volunteers by school and forward to the Dean of Instruction to develop an inventory.	May 2002
3.	The Dean of Instruction contacts parent volunteers and creates a schedule to staff the Parent Resource Center.	May 2002
4.	Parent volunteers staff the Parent Resource Center on a rotating basis.	June 2002 and Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation could be implemented using existing resource

**FINDING**

RISD parent/student handbooks do not contain consistent information. Each school provides a wealth of information, but the information varies by school. Some schools have parent/student handbooks with as few as 14 pages, while others have as many as 80 pages. All handbooks have a section with information on district policies regarding attendance, promotion/retention, grading and homework, testing schedules and the school district calendar. The Student Code of Conduct is included in the middle and high school student handbooks.

Each school has an additional section for information that is specific to that school.

Providing information that is applicable to all schools in each handbook eliminates confusion for parents who have children in more than one school.

There are parents in the school district who have children in several different grades, and as a result, they have a handbook from each school. The handbooks are not standardized throughout the district and cause confusion when parents or students are looking for information.

**Recommendation 18:**

**Standardize parent/student handbooks.**

Parents, teachers and administrators should have input in determining items applicable to all schools. All the handbooks should be standardized using the same format. Section One should address school-specific information; Section Two can focus on district policies and Section Three should focus on the Student Code of Conduct.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The assistant superintendent appoints a handbook revision committee composed of elementary and secondary teachers, parents and administrators to review existing parent/student handbooks and to develop a standardized format.	August 2002
2.	The committee reviews handbooks and develops a proposed format and submits it to the assistant superintendent for review and approval.	September - October 2002
3.	The assistant superintendent reviews and approves the format with any recommended changes.	November 2002
4.	The assistant superintendent establishes a timeline for principals to prepare additional information pertinent only to their school to be included with the standardized information.	November 2002
5.	The principals submit the handbooks to the superintendent for approval.	February 2003
6.	Handbooks are available for the beginning of school.	April 2003

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented using existing resources.

# Chapter 2

## EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

This chapter examines Raymondville Independent School District's (RISD) educational service delivery and student performance in five sections.

### E. STUDENT DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT

Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code is the legal authority for school districts to impose student discipline. The code requires each district to develop a Student Code of Conduct detailing acceptable and unacceptable behavior, consequences and fair and equal treatment. School districts report school discipline actions using the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS).

RISD's discipline policy is contained in the district Student Code of Conduct. The code specifically details all aspects of what is expected in student behavior, prohibited conduct, possible consequences for unacceptable behavior and the appeal process. The code also allows flexibility based on factors such as the seriousness of the offense, the student's age, the frequency of misconduct, the student's attitude and the potential effect of the misconduct on the school environment.

The code identifies four levels of misconduct and consequences by each level. **Exhibit 2-30** shows the four levels of misconduct and an example of the offenses for each and possible consequences.

**Exhibit 2-30**  
**Misconduct Offenses and Disciplinary Options by Level**

Level	Offenses	Disciplinary Options
I	Level I acts of misconduct include repeated infractions of classroom rules or other misconduct that disrupts the educational process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher, parent, student conferences</li> <li>• Home visits</li> <li>• Withdrawal of classroom privileges</li> <li>• Detention</li> <li>• Counselor/student conference</li> </ul>
II	When a student's behavior does not	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any combination of</li> </ul>

	change as a result of action taken on level I, and the student is being seen in the principal's office for repeated level I infractions, the student is moved to level II for discipline purposes.	<p>teacher, principal or appropriate administrator, parent, student conference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any discipline technique outlined in level I</li> <li>• In-school suspension</li> <li>• Corporal punishment</li> <li>• Withdrawal of student campus privileges</li> </ul>
<b>Level</b>	<b>Offenses</b>	<b>Disciplinary Options</b>
III	Level III acts of misconduct include those student infractions, which are somewhat more serious than those in level I and II in their effect on the orderly process of the school program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any combination of teacher, principal or appropriate administrator, student and parent conference</li> <li>• Grade penalty for copying or cheating</li> <li>• Detention</li> <li>• Exclusion from extracurricular activities</li> <li>• In-school suspension</li> <li>• Restoration and/or restitution as applicable</li> <li>• Withdrawal of selected student privileges</li> <li>• Saturday school/detention</li> <li>• Involvement with law enforcement personnel</li> <li>• Off-campus suspensions</li> <li>• Corporal punishment</li> </ul>
IV	Level IV offenses include those acts of misconduct that seriously disrupt the educational process, endanger or seriously affect other students, and perhaps violate law.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any discipline technique outlined in level III</li> <li>• Suspension from school not to exceed three days at a time</li> <li>• Citation by law enforcement personnel</li> <li>• Alternative education placement</li> <li>• Reassignment of classes</li> <li>• Expulsion</li> </ul>

*Source: RISD Code of Conduct 2001-02 School Year.*

The district policy and Student Code of Conduct ensure all students receive fair and equal treatment. The rights and responsibilities of the students and parents are explained in the code along with the appeal process. The code also specifies when and where the district authority applies and addresses conduct for extra curricular activities as well as conduct on school busses. Each campus has a student handbook, which contains the code. Each handbook contains a form for parents to sign acknowledging receipt of the Student Code of Conduct.

Students who commit minor infractions of the Student Code of Conduct or break campus or classroom rules are assigned to In-School Suspension (ISS). Students assigned to ISS are supervised by a substitute teacher and are required to complete normal assignments given by their regular teacher. Students that commit major infractions are assigned the district's Alternative Education Program for discipline (DAEP).

Specific information concerning the arrest or criminal conduct of students must be shared among law enforcement and local school districts. Moreover, the Education Code requires school districts, the juvenile board and juvenile justice systems in counties with a population of 125,000 to establish a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP). The JJAEP operates under the jurisdiction of the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission. Its primary objective is to provide for the education of incarcerated youths and youths on probation.

**Exhibit 2-31** shows the type and number of times disciplinary incidents occurred within the district between 1998-99 and 2000-01.

**Exhibit 2-31  
Student Disciplinary Action Summaries,  
1998-99 through 2000-01 Summer Collections**

<b>Incident</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-01</b>
Disruptive behavior	641	201	352
Conduct punishable as a felony	0	1	3
Assault or terrorist threat	108	0	0
Possessed, sold or used marijuana or other controlled substance	23	3	10
Possessed, sold, used or was under the influence of an alcoholic beverage	0	0	4

Public lewdness/indecent exposure	0	1	0
Retaliation against school employee	0	1	0
Conduct occurring off campus while student is not in attendance at school related activity for felony offenses in Title 5	2	0	1
Conduct occurring off campus while student is not in attendance at school related activity for felony offenses not in Title 5	2	1	1
Used, exhibited or possessed a illegal knife	1	2	0
Used/possessed prohibited weapon	8	0	1
Serious or persistent misconduct violating the student Code of Conduct while placed in alternative education program	0	4	38
Violation of student Code of Conduct not included in codes 33 and 34	488	1,326	1,256
Criminal mischief	41		2
Other-student Code of Conduct	956	0	0
Terroristic threat	0	0	2
Assault against a school district employee or volunteer	0	3	0
Assault against someone other than a school district employee or volunteer	0	26	9
Aggravated assault against employee/volunteer	0	0	1
Aggravated assault against a non employee/volunteer	0	0	3
Other	3	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,273</b>	<b>1,569</b>	<b>1,683</b>

*Source: RISD Data Processing Department, November 2001.*

## **FINDING**

RISD's DAEP is not meeting the academic needs of its students. RISD operates a disciplinary AEP at the middle school and high school campuses for students who commit serious offenses or persistent misbehavior. While the elementary schools do not currently operate disciplinary AEPs on their campuses, they each have a designated classroom and staff assigned to supervise in the event that a need arises.

Exhibit 2-32 shows the DAEP enrollment from 1997 through 2000.

**Exhibit 2-32**  
**Disciplinary Alternative Education**  
**Enrollment 1998-99 through 2000-01**

<b>Enrollment Type</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>Percent of Enrolled</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>Percent of Enrolled</b>	<b>2000-01</b>	<b>Percent of Enrolled</b>
White	1	2.0%	0	0.0%	1	3.1%
Hispanic	49	98.0%	29	100.0%	31	96.9%
Black	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Asian/Pacific Island	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
American Indian/Alaskan	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Grade</b>	<b>1997-98</b>	<b>Percent of Enrolled</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>Percent of Enrolled</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>Percent of Enrolled</b>
Grade 5	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	3.1%
Grade 6	1	2.0%	0	0.0%	3	9.4%
Grade 7	3	6.0%	0	0.0%	3	9.4%
Grade 8	1	2.0%	4	13.8%	2	6.3%
Grade 9	30	60.0%	17	58.6%	16	50.0%
Grade 10	12	24.0%	6	20.7%	6	18.8%
Grade 11	3	6.0%	2	6.9%	0	0.0%
Grade 12	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	3.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: AEIS, 1998-99 through 2000-01.*

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

Both the high school and middle school use the American Preparatory Institute (API) modules for student academic instruction. The high school DAEP teacher is certified to teach but the middle school DAEP supervisor is not.



The API curriculum is student-directed, learner-paced and competency-based. The API environment replaces the traditional classroom where all students are taught at the same pace and same academic level. Students work individually on the modules on their computers to achieve course credit. However, the API curriculum is geared for students who are reading on grade level and DAEP enrollment often includes students who are not reading at grade level. Consequently, the material presented to them on the computer is too difficult for those students to master and success is rare.

Students are placed in the DAEP for at least 3 weeks and are not monitored after their release from the program. There is no follow-up with the regular classroom teacher to ensure a smooth transition. According to teacher interviews, students returning to the regular education class are further behind academically than they were before their DAEP assignment.

In November 2001, the high school began to take steps to improve its program. The first step was to determine the reading level of the students. All DAEP students took the STAR Reading test. The results of this test show a Grade Equivalent score and a level at which the student can success reading which is called the Zone of Proximal Development. The high school dean of Instruction and the DAEP teacher incorporated the Science Research Associates reading labs into the DAEP curriculum. The reading labs offer the student an opportunity to improve reading and comprehension skills through independent reading. Students read the material and score their own work.

**Recommendation 19:**

**Develop district procedures that ensure DAEP students' academic needs are met.**

Procedures should be developed that ensure academic coordination between each student's regular classroom teachers and the DAEP teacher upon placement and upon return to the regular classroom. The elementary and secondary coordinators should be involved in the curriculum decisions for DAEP students at each of their campuses. Time spent in DAEP should not be wasted academically. The success of the new procedures should be evaluated quarterly and necessary adjustments made to ensure that students are continuing to progress academically.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The assistant superintendent forms a committee of regular education teachers, DAEP teachers and the	April 2002
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	Elementary and Secondary coordinators.	
2.	The committee develops procedures that address academic continuity for students assigned to DAEPs and submit them to the assistant superintendent.	May 2002
3.	The assistant superintendent submits the procedures to the superintendent and board for approval.	June 2002
4.	Upon approval the assistant superintendent implements the new procedures.	August 2002
5.	The committee evaluates the program and adjusts AEP procedures if necessary.	September 2002 and Ongoing Quarterly

### FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

### FINDING

RISD has significant drug and alcohol usage among its students. **Exhibit 2-33** shows the results of the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (TCADA) sponsored *Texas School Survey of Drug and Alcohol Use* conducted during the spring of 2000. RISD requested a survey and TCADA partially funded the cost of the instrument development, summary and interpretation of the results.

**Exhibit 2-33**  
**RISD Results of the Texas School Survey of Drug and Alcohol Use**

Grade	School Year Used		School Year Used	
	Alcohol	Marijuana	Cocaine	Crack
Grade 4	13.2%	3.7%	N/A	N/A
Grade 5	20.6%	2.1%	N/A	N/A
Grade 6	33.7%	12.7%	N/A	N/A
<b>Grades 4-6</b>	<b>22.4%</b>	<b>6.3%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Grade 7	41.4%	16.3%	2.7%	1.3%
Grade 8	44.5%	20.4%	6.9%	2.1%
Grade 9	48.5%	28.2%	16.9%	3.8%

Grade 10	52.9%	25.5%	4.4%	0.7%
Grade 11	60.8%	25.0%	9.5%	0.7%
Grade 12	73.3%	40.6%	19.6%	7.0%
<b>Grades 7-12</b>	<b>52.2%</b>	<b>25.5%</b>	<b>7.0%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>

*Source: Texas School Survey of Drug and Alcohol Use, Spring 2000.*

RISD's 2001-2002 District Improvement Plan (DIP) and Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs) identify goals, strategies and timelines for including anti-drug and violence programs and activities on each campus. Plans include training teachers at all campuses in the Drug and Violence Education (DAVE) program and implementing it in 2001-02. Red Ribbon week provides an opportunity to include all students in anti-drug, violence, tobacco and alcohol programs and activities. The district uses the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program for sixth grade students. While these plans indicate the district's awareness of its need to work to prevent drug and alcohol usage in its students there is no process in place for evaluating the extent to which the plans were implemented or effective. Neither are there plans that address intervention or enforcement in instances where students are using alcohol or drugs or law.

RISD contracted for drug detection dogs to randomly search parking lots, school lockers and classrooms during 2000-01, which resulted in 14 alerts during 19 visits. The district did not renew the contract for 2001-02, choosing instead to use the city police department for drug dog detection services. However, the district and city had not reached agreement as of November 2001 and no drug detection dogs searched had been done.

**Recommendation 20:**

**Develop and implement a drug and violence prevention plan that includes prevention, intervention and enforcement strategies.**

The district must accurately identify the drug abuse problem within the district, design and implement programs aimed at all students, and establish intervention and enforcement procedures.

The district should use all resources available including parents, community members, Region 1, teachers, staff and campus police to develop and implement the drug prevention plan. Many districts have found it effective to form a committee that includes representatives of these various groups to develop the plan. Local law enforcement personnel should play a vital role in the development, intervention and enforcement of the plan. Federal and state law enforcement officials could also be used

to provide lectures and/or search and seizure activities. The plan should consider the use of drug detection dogs and random drug sampling as ways to reduce drug usage.

The plan should include goals and strategies that can be evaluated. In order to be effective, the plan must be evaluated and updated continuously to ensure the district is obtaining the desired results based on the resources used. The drug prevention plan should be part of the district safety plan.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent forms a committee of teachers, staff, campus police, local law enforcement personnel and community members.	April 2002
2.	The committee determines drug use and violence problems of the district and reports to the board.	May 2002
3.	Committee develops a drug and violence prevention plan and obtains superintendent and board approval.	June 2002
4.	The superintendent implements the drug and violence prevention plan.	June 2002
5.	The committee analyzes results of the plan and adjusts the plan as needed.	September 2002 and Ongoing Quarterly
6.	The committee reports quarterly to the board.	October 2002 and Ongoing Quarterly

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

While RISD's attendance rate has been steadily improving since 1996-97 it remains below the state average (**Exhibit 2-34**). Attendance rates are reported to TEA for the year previous to the calendar year.

**Exhibit 2-34  
Peer Attendance Rate Comparison  
from 1996-1997 to 1999-2000**

District	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00
West Oso ISD	93.9%	94.8%	94.8%	94.4%

Mathis ISD	93.7%	94.6%	93.9%	94.9%
<b>Raymondville ISD</b>	<b>94.7%</b>	<b>95.0%</b>	<b>95.2%</b>	<b>95.3%</b>
Lyford ISD	94.7%	95.2%	95.2%	95.4%
Taft ISD	95.0%	95.6%	96.3%	95.8%
<b>Peer Average</b>	<b>94.3%</b>	<b>95.1%</b>	<b>95.1%</b>	<b>95.2%</b>
<b>State Average</b>	<b>95.2%</b>	<b>95.3%</b>	<b>95.4%</b>	<b>95.6%</b>

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1997-98 through 2000-01.

Attendance rates for RISD, the peer districts, Region 1 and the state are shown for 1999-2000 in **Exhibit 2-35**.

**Exhibit 2-35  
RISD and Peer Districts Attendance Rates  
1999-2000**

District	Percent Attendance			
	Hispanic	Anglo	Economically Disadvantaged	All Students
West Oso	94.1%	94.3%	95.0%	94.4%
Mathis	94.7%	95.9%	95.0%	94.9%
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>95.3%</b>	<b>96.1%</b>	<b>95.4%</b>	<b>95.3%</b>
Lyford	95.3%	96.0%	95.5%	95.4%
Taft	95.7%	96.9%	95.7%	95.8%
<b>Region 1</b>	<b>95.9%</b>	<b>95.9%</b>	<b>96.0%</b>	<b>95.6%</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>95.3%</b>	<b>95.9%</b>	<b>95.4%</b>	<b>95.6%</b>

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

**Exhibit 2-36** lists RISD attendance rates by individual campuses. L.C. Smith ranks higher than the other campuses.

**Exhibit 2-36  
Percent of RISD Attendance by School  
1999-2000**

School	Grade	Attendance
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	<b>Levels</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Raymondville High School	9-12	94.4%
Myra Green Middle School	6-8	96.0%
Pittman Elementary	PK-5	96.9%
L.C. Smith	PK-5	97.4%

*Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.*

RISD has one truancy officer, who is a certified Texas peace officer and is a Willacy County reserves sheriff. The truancy officer reports to the assistant superintendent. RISD has four people in training under an agreement with the Texas Workforce Commission. The four people are being trained to assist the truancy officer in day-to-day operations. This agreement gives the district two people paid by the Workforce Commission to train for future employment.

The district has an attendance clerk at each campus who reports absences to the truancy officer daily. The truancy officer sends a warning letter to a student's parents if the student has two unexcused absences and recommends to the campus principal filing charges with the local court once the student has three unexcused absences. Truancy trends are established and monitored to identify at-risk students. Home visits by the truancy officer and local constable for truant or at-risk students are conducted as time permits.

The district has no approved truancy plan or procedures to guide the truancy officer's activities. He follows district policy and Texas Education Code Section 25.091 in conducting his duties. The truancy officer currently works out of two offices, one at the high school where he works three days a week and one at the middle school where he works two days a week. This separation has caused some confusion in trying to locate the truancy officer and requires him to carry all files and work to and from each office.

The truancy officer also does not have electronic access to attendance records and must work off hard copies provided by the attendance clerks. This situation results in time-consuming efforts to monitor attendance records and establish trends. For each student in average daily attendance, the district is allocated \$4,284 from the state.

**Recommendation 21:**

**Develop a district truancy plan that includes procedures and performance measures to improve attendance.**

The assistant superintendent and truancy officer should develop a plan to reduce student absences with input from the campuses, campus police, local law enforcement and judicial personnel. The plan should include goals for reduced absenteeism, procedures to follow and a method for evaluating the effectiveness of the program. The evaluation method should identify key elements of the truancy program to monitor; items such as the number of court files charged, warning letters sent to parents, the number of home visits conducted and the daily attendance rate. This plan could be incorporated into the overall district security plan.

The assistant superintendent should also set up a single office with a computer and electronic access to attendance records for the truancy officer. The single office will allow the truancy officer to maintain work and files in one location for easy access. The computer and electronic access to attendance records will improve his ability to identify truancy trends and give him more time to make home visits.

### **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The assistant superintendent provides a single office with computer and electronic access to attendance records for the truancy officer.	April 2002
2.	The assistant superintendent and truancy officer-with input from school principals, counselors and local law enforcement and judicial personnel-develop a truancy plan and performance measures to reduce student truancy and increase attendance.	May 2002
3.	The superintendent and board approve the truancy plan.	June 2002
4.	The superintendent implements the truancy plan.	August 2002

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

To raise the Average Daily Attendance (ADA) to the state average of 95.6 percent, RISD needs to increase attendance by 0.3 percent. Basing the calculation on the October 26, 2001 PEIMS snapshot enrollment of 2,611, a 0.3 percent increase equates to 8 students Using the 1999-2000 per student revenue of \$4,284, this increase would result in additional state revenue of approximately \$34,272 per year (8 x \$4,284).

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>
Develop a district truancy plan that includes procedures and performance measures to	\$34,272	\$34,272	\$34,272	\$34,272	\$34,272

improve attendance.					
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# Chapter 3

## PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

This chapter discusses the Raymondville Independent School District (RISD) human resource management in two sections:

- A. Organization and Management
- B. Staffing

Human resource management is a major component of the daily operation of a school district. Human resource operations include efficient processing of all personnel issues in compliance with state and federal law, recruiting qualified employees and maintaining appropriate staffing for the school district.

# Chapter 3

## PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

This chapter discusses the Raymondville Independent School District (RISD) human resource management in two sections:

### A. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

The assistant superintendent supervises the Human Resource department. The Human Resource department includes two administrative assistants, with one of the administrative assistants also performing as the GEAR UP bookkeeper. The assistant superintendent is responsible for hiring practices, teacher certification, recruiting, staffing allocations, performance evaluations, employee training and personnel procedures.

RISD selected Lyford, Mathis, Taft and West Oso ISD as peer districts for comparison data. Some of the data used for this chapter was compiled by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and accessed through the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS).

**Exhibit 3-1** describes the responsibilities of the Human Resource department and other departments.

**Exhibit 3-1**  
**RISD Human Resources Responsibilities by Department**  
**2000-01**

Responsibility	Department
Recruiting Staff	Human Resources
Hiring Staff	Human Resources, Supervisors and Board
Background Checks	Chief of Police
Teacher Certification Verification	Human Resources
Salary Determinations	Superintendent and Board
Attendance Monitoring	Human Resources
Benefits Administration	Business Office
Payroll Management	Business Office and Human Resource
New Teacher Orientation	Human Resources
Substitute Orientation	Human Resources
Staff Development	Human Resources

Termination	Human Resources, Superintendent and Board
Planning for Staffing Level	Human Resources

*Source: RISD Human Resource Department, November 2001.*

**Exhibit 3-2** displays salary trends by type of employee. RISD has increased central administration salaries by more than forty percent from 1997-98 to 2000-01.

**Exhibit 3-2  
RISD Average Salary Trends  
1997-98 through 2000-01**

<b>Classifications</b>	<b>1997-98</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-01</b>	<b>Percent Increase</b>
Teachers	\$34,624	\$34,401	\$38,098	\$37,711	8.9%
Professional Support	\$40,753	\$42,203	\$44,728	\$47,065	15.5%
Campus Administration	\$50,661	\$49,982	\$54,074	\$54,680	7.9%
Central Administration	\$51,312	\$62,243	\$68,516	\$72,263	40.8%

*Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 1997-98 through 2000-01.*

**Exhibit 3-3** compares average teacher salary by years of experience between RISD and the peer districts. RISD pays above the peer average in each category of experience.

**Exhibit 3-3  
RISD Teacher Average Salaries versus Peer Districts  
2000-01**

<b>District</b>	<b>Beginning</b>	<b>1-5B Years</b>	<b>6-10 Years</b>	<b>11-20 Years</b>	<b>More Than 20 Years</b>
Lyford	\$27,998	\$30,273	\$34,560	\$42,159	\$45,226
Mathis	\$27,022	\$28,731	\$33,184	\$41,187	\$44,631
Taft	\$27,905	\$27,294	\$32,757	\$39,693	\$42,582
West Oso	\$28,274	\$30,086	\$33,929	\$42,208	\$46,351
<b>Peer Average</b>	<b>\$27,800</b>	<b>\$29,096</b>	<b>\$33,608</b>	<b>\$41,312</b>	<b>\$44,698</b>

<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>\$28,107</b>	<b>\$29,407</b>	<b>\$34,307</b>	<b>\$42,354</b>	<b>\$45,475</b>
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Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

**Exhibit 3-4** compares average salaries for teachers, professional staff, campus administration and central administration for RISD and peer districts. RISD pays above the peer average in every category.

**Exhibit 3-4**  
**Average Actual Salaries, RISD versus Peer Districts**  
**2000-01**

<b>District</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Professional Staff</b>	<b>Campus Administration</b>	<b>Central Administration</b>
Lyford	\$37,794	\$43,414	\$53,240	\$67,439
Mathis	\$35,037	\$42,672	\$50,105	\$65,867
Taft	\$34,249	\$41,209	\$52,845	\$70,944
West Oso	\$37,039	\$36,663	\$55,781	\$60,776
<b>Peer Average</b>	<b>\$36,030</b>	<b>\$40,990</b>	<b>\$52,993</b>	<b>\$66,257</b>
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>\$37,711</b>	<b>\$47,065</b>	<b>\$54,680</b>	<b>\$72,263</b>

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

**Exhibit 3-5** displays the schedule (based on 10 months) for administrative and professional employees. This includes principals, assistant principals, counselors, diagnosticians and speech-language pathologists. The average duty days for these employees range from 189 to 220.

**Exhibit 3-5**  
**RISD Administrative/Professional Salary Schedule**  
**2001-02**

<b>Type of Staff</b>	<b>Minimum Salary</b>	<b>Midpoint Salary</b>	<b>Maximum Salary</b>
Elementary School Principal	\$59,500	\$62,869	\$66,238
Elementary School Assistant Principal	\$43,850	\$48,300	\$52,750
Librarian-	\$43,200	\$46,327	\$51,607
Counselor	\$45,150	\$49,000	\$53,083

Diagnostician	\$50,330	\$50,405	\$50,556
Speech-Language Pathologist	\$31,696	\$35,224	\$38,752

Source: *RISD Personnel Salary Schedule 2001-02.*

**Exhibit 3-6** shows the pay schedule (based on 8-hour days) for clerical and technical positions such as secretaries, nurses, teacher aides, computer aides and library aides. The average number of duty days for these employees range from 187 to 237.

**Exhibit 3-6**  
**RISD Clerical/Technical Salary Schedule**  
**2001-02**

Type of Staff	Minimum Salary	Average Salary	Maximum Salary
Secretary to Principal	\$18,119	\$19,186	\$20,761
Licensed Vocational Nurse	\$16,189	\$17,319	\$19,956
Teacher Aide	\$8,707	\$10,616	\$14,145
Computer Aide	\$9,613	\$12,225	\$14,561
In-School Suspension Aide	\$13,077	\$15,276	\$18,607
Library Aide	\$13,878	\$14,383	\$14,423
Executive Administrative Secretary	\$24,606	\$27,110	\$29,267

Source: *RISD Personnel Salary Schedule 2001-02.*

The manual trade classification includes mechanics, cafeteria managers, food service workers, custodians, maintenance workers, groundskeepers and police officers. **Exhibit 3-7** shows the pay schedule (based on 8-hour days up to 40 hours per week) for manual trades employees. The average numbers of duty days for these employees range from 187 to 237.

**Exhibit 3-7**  
**RISD Manual Trades Salary Schedule**  
**2001-02**

Types of Staff	Minimum Hourly Rate	Average Hourly Rate	Maximum Hourly Rate
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Vehicle Mechanic	\$8.35	\$9.05	\$9.75
Elementary School Cafeteria Manager	\$8.55	\$10.25	\$11.95
Food Service Worker	\$5.25	\$6.40	\$7.55
Custodian	\$5.30	\$6.49	\$7.67
Maintenance Worker	\$5.50	\$5.83	\$6.10
Groundskeeper	\$5.50	\$5.80	\$6.10
HVAC Mechanic	\$6.05	\$7.30	\$8.55
Police Officer/Certified Peace Officer	\$15.21	\$16.04	\$16.87

Source: RISD Personnel Salary Schedule 2001-02.

**Exhibit 3-8** displays the ethnicity of students and teachers.

**Exhibit 3-8**  
**Ethnicity of RISD Students and Teachers**  
**2000-01**

Ethnicity	Students		Teachers	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Hispanic	2,552	96.2%	121	61.7%
Anglo	88	3.3%	74	37.8%
African American	9	0.3%	0	0.0%
Other	5	0.2%	1	0.5%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2,654</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

**FINDING**

RISD does not have a personnel procedures manual. The district's Personnel Resource Manual, dated spring 1992, is a guide for administrators and campus site-based committees to use for hiring. It covers tips on interview skills, interview questions, telephone reference checks, evaluation areas plus equal employment opportunity information. There is no document for personnel employees that covers the procedures they should use in dealing with employee compensation and benefits, vacations and holidays, expense reimbursement, retirement programs,

employee rights and privileges, standards of conduct, professional development, performance appraisals and hiring practices.

In June of 2001, the district was restructured and more than 50 employees resigned. Some of the individuals were replaced, while others were not. One of the changes was the reassignment of responsibility for Human Resources to the new assistant superintendent. If the district had a comprehensive Human Resources procedures manual in place when he assumed this position, his transition would have been smoother.

**Recommendation 22:**

**Develop a Human Resources procedures manual.**

The Human Resource Department should update and combine the current personnel manuals; adding any topics not covered to produce a comprehensive manual.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The assistant superintendent develops a comprehensive outline of human resource procedures.	August 2002
2.	The assistant superintendent forms a committee to develop the procedures.	August 2002
3.	The committee drafts procedures.	September - October 2002
4.	The assistant superintendent reviews the procedures for accuracy and efficiency.	November 2002
5.	The assistant superintendent presents the procedures to the superintendent and board for review and approval.	November 2002
6.	The assistant superintendent combines the procedures into a manual	December 2002
7.	Manual is updated as required by assistant superintendent.	Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

RISD has no districtwide employee handbook. Although some campus handbooks contain employee information and the Food Service

department has a handbook for its employees, it is important that the district have a common handbook for all employees. Districtwide employee handbooks often include information on district policies, employee obligations, payroll processing procedures, payroll policies, leave and absence benefits, sexual harassment prevention policies and employee conduct, grievance procedures, employment policies, evaluation procedures, compensation benefits and termination procedures.

Many school districts use employee handbooks to provide employees with a general reference guide on district policies. They allow employees access to pertinent information at their convenience. Employees who are well-informed are better prepared to do their jobs. When this information is not supplied consistently to all employees in a single document, there is a possibility of misunderstandings, problems and conflicts.

**Recommendation 23:**

**Develop a districtwide employee handbook and distribute it to all employees.**

The assistant superintendent forms a committee to develop an employee handbook. The committee should include campus administrators and department supervisors.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The assistant superintendent forms a committee that includes campus administrators and department supervisors to draft a districtwide employee handbook.	August - September 2002
2.	The assistant superintendent reviews the handbook and submits it to the superintendent and board for approval.	October 2002
3.	The assistant superintendent distributes the handbook to all employees.	November 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

RISD's job descriptions are not current. The Paraprofessional Job Descriptions booklet is dated spring 1990 and contains an old 1995 copy of district policy DH (LOCAL) which was updated in February 2001. Sixteen of the 18 job descriptions included in the Professional Job Descriptions booklet are dated spring 1998. Only one job description was



found that was dated in 2000 with none more recent. There are no job descriptions for some positions, including the assistant superintendent, the chief Financial officer and the Tax assessor/collector and there are job descriptions for positions that no longer exist in the district.

Job descriptions not only provide employees and their supervisors with the specific duties, responsibilities and expectations of a position. They also serve as a basis for annual performance evaluations. In addition, job descriptions are increasingly used by districts to defend against workers' compensation claims. When job descriptions are not updated regularly their usefulness is questionable and there is potential for misunderstanding between employees and supervisors. .

Spring ISD's Personnel/Support Services department updates job descriptions by conducting focus group sessions made up of employees in each position category.

**Recommendation 24:**

**Develop job descriptions for new positions, update existing job descriptions and review all positions every three years.**

A review of all job positions should be conducted within the district. Each employee should submit a detailed list of the duties that they are performing to their supervisor. Supervisors will amend duties to fit district needs, write the final job descriptions and submit them to the assistant superintendent. Job descriptions for new positions need to be created by the assistant superintendent and department supervisor. The department should then establish a procedure for reviewing and updating job descriptions on a three-year cycle, with one-third of the job descriptions reviewed each year.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The assistant superintendent, elementary curriculum coordinator and secondary curriculum coordinator create a master list of positions.	April 2002
2.	The assistant superintendent distributes the master list to department directors who review the list and provide updated job descriptions with performance measures.	April 2002
3.	Employees review individual job descriptions to determine accuracy.	August 2002
4.	The assistant superintendent meets with department directors to finalize the job descriptions.	September 2002

5.	The assistant superintendent submits revised job descriptions to the superintendent for approval.	October 2002
6.	The assistant superintendent disseminates approved job descriptions to all supervisors and employees.	November 2002
7.	The assistant superintendent develops a three-year cycle for the revision of job descriptions and oversees its implementation.	December 2002 and Ongoing

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## **FINDING**

Performance evaluations are not being conducted consistently for all employees. Department supervisors evaluate non-professional staff. The Human Resources department does not follow-up to ascertain if all employees have had an annual appraisal. The Food Service Department completed appraisals of 28 of its 35 employees for 2000-01. The Transportation and Maintenance departments did not conduct performance evaluations for 2000-01. In some cases, there are employees who have never been evaluated.

District policy DN states that all employees shall be appraised in the performance of their duties and be informed of the criteria used for the evaluation. TEC, Section 21.203(a) mandates that each teacher shall be given a written evaluation annually or at more frequent intervals. RISD principals use the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS). This system encourages teacher growth, with the goal that teacher growth will result in more student growth. District policy DNA (LEGAL) mandates that districts establish a calendar for appraisals in compliance with state law. The district has distributed the 2001-02 calendar for PDAS. The calendar provides a timeline indicating when specific steps of the PDAS are to be completed. Dates during the school year when teachers are not available for formal observations are posted on the calendar.

The TEC, Section 21.203 (a) states that appraisals for school administrators must be performed annually and be based on job-related performance. District policy DNB (LEGAL) and TEC mandates that school funds not be used to pay an administrator who has not been appraised in the preceding 15 months.

## **Recommendation 25:**

**Create procedures, criteria and timelines for evaluating all district employees.**

The assistant superintendent should form a committee to develop personnel evaluation procedures, timelines and criteria and to monitor the implementation of the process. The procedures should ensure that all employees have at least one performance appraisal per year that is kept in the employee's personnel folder, and that the folders are kept in the Human Resource department.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The assistant superintendent forms a committee of administrators to revise procedures for evaluating all employees.	September 2002
2.	The committee develops procedures that include an evaluation format, timelines, criteria, maintenance of evaluations and guidelines for who should perform the appraisals.	September 2002
3.	The assistant superintendent distributes the procedures to department supervisors for review and comment.	October 2002
4.	The assistant superintendent revises the procedures and forwards them to the superintendent for approval.	November 2002
5.	When the superintendent approves the procedures, he sub mits them to the board for approval.	November 2002
6.	Upon approval of the board, the assistant superintendent formalizes the procedures and distributes them to all employees	December 2002
7.	The committee monitors adherence to the procedures and reports to the superintendent those departments that are out of compliance.	Annually

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# Chapter 3

## PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

This chapter discusses the Raymondville Independent School District (RISD) human resource management in two sections:

### B. STAFFING

In October 2001, the district had 382 employees, down from 414 in 2000-01. Teachers, principals and other professional staff are employed under contract. All other staff is considered at will, which means that a contract is not required for employment. In the past, the Human Resource department has attended job fairs at Texas A & M University-Kingsville, University of Texas-Pan American and University of Texas-Brownsville to recruit teachers. UT-Pan American and RISD work together on a regular basis to bring eligible individuals to the district, and the university provides the school district with a list of recent graduates to keep on file. Position openings are advertised in the *Valley Morning Star*, Harlingen, Texas and by word of mouth.

RISD district policy DBA (LEGAL) states that a teacher, librarian, educational aide, administrator or counselor may not be employed unless the person holds a professional certificate or permit in their professional area. District policy DBA (LOCAL) requires all professionals to submit an official college transcript showing the highest degree earned and a valid teaching certificate.

**Exhibit 3-9** shows the total number of full-time equivalent (FTE's) positions employed by the district and that classification's percentage of total employees for 2000-01.

**Exhibit 3-9**  
**Number of RISD FTEs**  
**2000-01**

<b>Staff</b>	<b>2000-01</b>	
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
Teachers	196.0	47.4%
Professional Support	23.3	5.6%
Campus Administrators	11.5	2.8%
Central Administrators	3.0	0.7%

Educational Aides	50.0	12.1%
Auxiliary Staff	129.7	31.4%
<b>Total Staff</b>	<b>413.5</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

**Exhibit 3-10** shows the ratio of the Human Resource staff to overall district employees for 1998-99 through 2000-01 as well as district provided data for 2001-02. The staffing level comparison of total staff to Human Resource staff is one employee to 127 school personnel for 2001-02. The general industry standard calls for one human resources staff member for every 200-300 employees.

**Exhibit 3-10**  
**Ratio of RISD Human Resource Department Employees to Total Staff**  
**1998-99 through 2001-02**

	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-01</b>	<b>2001-02*</b>
Number of students enrolled	2,808	2,693	2,654	2,580
Number of Total FTEs	459	461	414	382
Ratio of Students to FTEs	6:1	6:1	6:1	7:1
Number of FTEs in Human Resource Department	2	2	2	3
Ratio of Human Resource Department employees to total staff	1:230	1:231	1:207	1:127

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1998-99 through 2000-01 and \*RISD Personnel Directory, October 26, 2001.

**Exhibit 3-11** shows the number of RISD teachers from 1996-1997 through 2000-2001.

**Exhibit 3-11**  
**RISD Teacher Staffing**  
**1996-97 through 2000-01**

<b>Years</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Teacher/Student Ratio</b>
--------------	-----------------	-----------------	------------------------------

1996-97	201.2	2,858	1:14
1997-98	198.3	2,828	1:14
1998-99	202.0	2,808	1:14
1999-2000	203.8	2,693	1:13
2000-01	196.0	2,654	1:14

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1996-97 through 2000-01.

## FINDING

Although student enrollment has been declining since 1997-98, RISD's staff reductions have not kept pace with the decline. Prior to the beginning of 2001-02 the RISD assistant superintendent used the peak enrollment numbers from 2000-01 and added 10 percent to arrive at an estimate of the 2001-02 enrollment. He then used that number to determine the number of staff required for 2001-02. This formula however does not reflect the district's history of annual student population declines of one to four percent over the last five years. Although major staffing reductions were made, staff were also added, so that it is not clear how close the district has come to achieving a balanced student/staff ratio.

**Exhibit 3-12** displays the total number of full time equivalent (FTE) positions by classification at RISD over the past four years and the percentage of change in those totals as compared to the four-year change in student enrollment.

**Exhibit 3-12**  
**Number of FTE Employees and Students at RISD**  
**1997-98 through 2000-01**

Staff Classifications	1997-98 Total	1998-99 Total	1999-2000 Total	2000-01 Total	Percent Change
Teachers	198.3	202.0	203.8	196.0	(1.26%)
Professional Support	20.4	24.0	23.8	23.3	14.2%
Campus Administrators	10.5	10.5	11.1	11.5	9.5%
Central Administration	5.1	4.5	3.5	3.0	(41.2%)
Professional Staff	234.4	241.0	242.2	233.8	(0.3%)
Educational Aides	90.0	84.3	77.6	50.0	(44.4%)
Auxiliary Staff	123.3	133.2	140.7	129.7	5.2%

Total Staff	682.0	699.5	702.7	647.3	(5.1%)
Student Enrollment	2,828.0	2,808.0	2,693.0	2,654.0	(6.2%)

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1997-98 through 2000-01.

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accredits more than 12,000 public and private educational institutions, from pre-kindergarten through university levels, in eleven states in the Southeastern United States (including Texas) and in Latin America. SACS recommends minimum personnel requirements for elementary schools, based on enrollment, in its 2000-2001 standards for elementary schools accredited by the Commission on Elementary and Middle Schools

TEC, Section 25.112 limits student to teacher ratios in grades kindergarten through four to 22:1. TEC, Section 25.111 further requires school districts to employ a sufficient number of teachers to maintain an average student to teacher ratio, except as limited in TEC, Section 25.112, of 20:1. SACS also recommends student to professional staff ratios not to exceed 22:1.

**Exhibit 3-13** displays the recommended SACS staff assignments in programs for three and four year olds.

**Exhibit 3-13**  
**SACS Maximum Class Sizes for Three and Four-Year Olds**

Classes	Enrollment	Teacher(s)	Paraprofessional(s)
3-year olds	1-15	1	1
	16-22	1	2
4-year olds	1-11	1	0
	12-22	1	1

Source: SACS, *Checklist of Standards for the Accreditation of Elementary Schools*, 2001-02.

The minimum SACS standards for elementary schools are represented in **Exhibit 3-14**.

**Exhibit 3-14**  
**SACS Minimum Personnel Requirements for Elementary Schools**

Number of Students	Principal	Professional Admin.	Library or Media	Library Aide	Secretaries or Clerk
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		<b>or Supervisor Assistants</b>	<b>Specialists</b>	<b>or Clerk</b>	
1-263	0.5	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.5
264-439	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	1.0
440-659	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.5	1.0
660-879	1.0	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.5
880-1099	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.5
1100-1319	1.0	1.5	1.0	1.0	2.0
1320+	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	2.0

*Source: SACS, Checklist of Standards for the Accreditation of Elementary Schools, 2000-01.*

**Exhibit 3-15** provides the SACS minimum personnel requirements for guidance services at the elementary school level.

**Exhibit 3-15**  
**SACS Minimum Personnel Requirements for**  
**Guidance Services in Elementary Schools**

<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Professional Personnel</b>
1-499	0.5
500-749	1.0
750-999	1.5
1,000-1,249	2.0
1,250-1,499	2.5
1,500+	3.0

*Source: SACS, Checklist of Standards for the Accreditation of Elementary Schools, 2001-02*

**Exhibit 3-16** displays the minimum standards for middle school. SACS recommends minimum personnel requirements for middle schools, based on enrollment, in its 2000-01 accredited standards by the Commission on Elementary and Middle Schools.



**Exhibit 3-16**  
**SACS Minimum Personnel Requirements for Middle Schools**

<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Principal</b>	<b>Administrative Assistants</b>	<b>Guidance Professionals</b>	<b>Library/ Media Specialists</b>	<b>Library/ Media Assistants</b>	<b>Secretaries</b>
1-249	1.0	0.0	0.5	0.5	0.0	0.5
250-499	1.0	0.5	1.0	1.0	0.5	1.0
500-749	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.5
750-999	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.5
1,000-1,249	1.0	1.5	2.5	1.0	1.0	2.0
1,250-1,499	1.0	2.0	3.0	1.0	1.0	2.0
1,500+	1.0	2.0+	3.0+	1.0+	1.0	2.0

*Source: SACS, Checklist of Standards for the Accreditation of Middle Schools, 2001-02.*

**Exhibit 3-17** presents the SACS recommendations for minimum personnel requirements for high schools, based on enrollment, in its 2000 accredited standards by the Commission on Secondary and Middle Schools or in its Standards for Secondary Schools, 1998 Edition.

**Exhibit 3-17**  
**SACS Minimum Personnel Requirements for High Schools**

<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Principal</b>	<b>Administrative or Supv Assistants</b>	<b>Guidance Professionals</b>	<b>Library or Media Specialists</b>	<b>Secretaries or Clerks</b>
1-249	1.0	0.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
250-499	1.0	0.5	1.0	1.0	2.0
500-749	1.0	1.0	1.5	1.0	3.0
750-999	1.0	1.5	2.0	1.0	3.5
1,000-1,249	1.0	2.0	2.5	2.0	4.0

1,250-1,499	1.0	2.5	3.0	2.0	4.5
1,500 +	1.0	*	*	*	4.5

Source: SACS, *Checklist of Standards for the Accreditation of Secondary Schools, 2000.*

\* SACS recommends adding one position for each additional 250 students beyond 1500.

Comparing the personnel staffing standards shown in **Exhibit 3-13** through **Exhibit 3-17** and student to teacher ratios required by the TEC to RISD's actual staffing indicates that the district is overstaffed as shown in **Exhibit 3-18**. Student to teacher ratios of 22:1 for elementary and intermediate grades and 25:1 for middle, junior and senior high school grades were applied in determining minimum needs for teacher staffing and are rounded up to the next whole number.

L. C. Smith and Pittman Elementary schools include teachers for 4-year-old students, which is Pre-K. Raymondville High School and Myra Green Middle School include teachers and administrative staff for the Career and Technology program offerings, which are in addition to the core curriculum. The secretary/clerk category includes an At-Risk program attendance clerk, bookkeeper, registrar, secretaries and computer specialist.

**Exhibit 3-18  
RISD Comparison of SACS Standards to Actual Staffing**

	<b>Raymondville High School</b>	<b>Myra Green Middle School</b>	<b>L. C. Smith Elementary</b>	<b>Pittman Elementary</b>	<b>District</b>
Enrollment	741	549	573	748	2,611
Recommended Minimum Number of Campus Administrators	2.5	2	1	1.5	7
Actual Number of Campus Administrators	3	2	2	2	9

<b>Variance</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>2</b>
Recommended Minimum Number of Guidance Counselors	2.5	1	1	1	5.5
Actual Number of Guidance Counselors	2	1	1	1	5
<b>Variance</b>	<b>(0.5)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(0.5)</b>
Recommended Minimum Number of Secretaries/Clerks	4	1.5	1	1.5	8
Actual Number of Secretaries/Clerks	5	2	2	3	12
<b>Variance</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>4</b>
Recommended Number of Teachers	46	22	25	33	126
Actual Number of Teachers	46	40	36	42	164
<b>Variance</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Total Staffing Variance</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>43.5</b>

*Source: Compiled from SACS Standards, RISD Personnel Directory, 2001-02 and preliminary PEIMS snapshot submission, October 26, 2001.*

Eagle Pass ISD developed a staffing formula based on student enrollment data to determine the required number of personnel. The district determined the ratio of counselors, teachers, custodians and other positions to students and implemented the ratios.

**Recommendation 26:**

**Implement staffing allocation formulas and reduce staff based upon those formulas.**

Based on an approximate 75 percent reduction of the staffing variances in the campus administrators and secretaries and clerks RISD could reduce those positions by 1 and 3 respectively. Because class size reduction is a valid strategy for serving at-risk students, some of the variance in teacher staffing may be directed toward that end. RISD could reduce the teacher variance by 50 percent or 19 positions.

Additionally, it is important to note that the district has already begun to eliminate some positions. Therefore, it will be able to achieve some savings during this budget cycle. Full savings, however, may not be possible until the second year, as vacancies occur or contracts are not renewed.

### **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent reviews the current staffing levels for all staff categories, institutes a hiring freeze and determines the baseline to staff the district.	April 2002
2.	The assistant superintendent and principals determine the minimum staffing allocations for each campus.	April 2002
3.	The assistant superintendent and principals submit suggested staffing allocations to the superintendent.	May 2002
4.	The superintendent presents recommended staffing allocations for board approval.	May 2002
5.	The board approves staffing guidelines/allocation formulas submitted by the superintendent.	June 2002
6.	The superintendent applies staffing guidelines/allocation formulas to determine staffing requirements, shifts qualified individuals to fill vacant positions and/or eliminates unnecessary positions when vacated.	August 2002
7.	The superintendent announces non-renewal of contracts for the coming school year and Human Resources forwards notice to appropriate employees.	March 2003
8.	The superintendent implements non-renewal of contracts effective for the 2003-04 school year.	April 2003
9.	The superintendent annually applies staffing guidelines/allocation formulas to determine staffing requirements.	Annually

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Estimated cost savings are based on beginning salary levels for each of the categories of employees affected by the proposed non-renewal of contracts and a 15 percent benefit rate. The minimum rate of pay for an assistant principal is \$44,600 plus benefits of \$6,690; therefore, the savings from the elimination of one position is \$51,290. The minimum salary for a secretary is \$16,189 plus benefits of \$2,428. Eliminating three positions will total \$55,851 (\$18,617 x 3). The minimum salary for teachers is \$28,000 with benefits of \$4,200. Reducing 19 teaching positions would save \$608,000 annually (\$32,000 x 19). The total savings will be \$715,141 annually when fully implemented. One half of these savings may be possible in the first year due to actions already underway in the district, and as a result of the hiring freeze. Full saving should be possible in the second year.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>
Implement staffing allocation formulas and reduce staff based upon those formulas.	\$357,570	\$715,141	\$715,141	\$715,141	\$715,141

# Chapter 4

## FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines the Facilities Use and Management operations of the Raymondville Independent School District (RISD) in three areas:

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

A comprehensive facilities, maintenance, custodial and energy management program should coordinate all of a district's physical resources. The program must integrate facilities planning with all other aspects of school planning, including the district's strategic plan. Facilities management personnel should be involved in planning, design and construction activities, and should be knowledgeable about operations and maintenance. In addition, clearly defined policies, procedures and activities should accommodate changes in the district's resources and needs.

### **BACKGROUND**

RISD has four campuses that serve 2,673 students in grades PK-12; one high school, one middle school and two elementary schools. District facilities also include a central administration complex, a maintenance/transportation facility, a sports complex, an auditorium and an old high school building built in 1924 that the district leases to the city of Raymondville for use as a historical center.

**Exhibit 4-1** lists the RISD facilities that are in use, their location and the square footage for each. Some of the buildings currently in use at each school will be vacated in the near future and will be either demolished or used for other purposes, such as office space or storage.

**Exhibit 4-1**  
**RISD Facilities In Use**  
**2000-01**

Facility	Total Square Footage
<b>Raymondville High School</b>	
Main Complex	86,700
Main Gymnasium	25,800

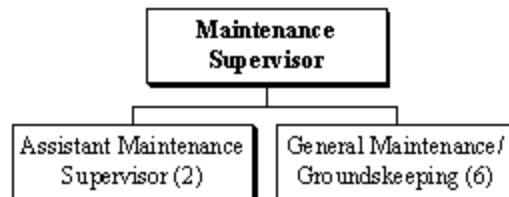
Agriculture Building	2,580
Vocational Building	13,440
Drama Building	6,600
Practice Gym	8,000
Classrooms	13,465
Auditorium	12,500
Central Administration	2,700
Administration Offices & Classrooms	7,665
Old Library	3,000
Sports Complex Concession Stand/Restrooms	900
<b>Myra Green Middle School</b>	
Administration/Library/Classrooms	31,350
Physical Education Building	4,800
Band Hall	3,600
Bookroom/Storage	1,500
Old Maintenance/Bus Barn (used for storage)	N/A
Science Building	13,000
Cafeteria	6,525
Math Building	11,200
Covered Pavilion	6,000
Portable Classrooms	1,800
Armory (used for storage and gym)	12,500
<b>Pittman Elementary School</b>	
Administration/Cafeteria/Library/Classrooms	77,600
Mini Gym	6,000
Old Cafeteria	8,000
Old Library	1,925
Music Building	1,370
Pavilion	1,500
Wil-Cam Co-op	9,700

<b>L.C. Smith Elementary School</b>	
Cafeteria/Administration/Library/Classrooms	77,600
Early Childhood	6,385
Old Cafeteria	3,500
Old Library	4,100
Pavilion	6,000
<b>7th &amp; Gem Street</b>	
Vocational Building (mechanics/storage/alternative education)	11,000
Vocational Annex (storage)	36,500
<b>FM 3168</b>	
Main Building (mechanics classroom)	10,000
Maintenance Office	600
Maintenance Storage	2,800
<b>Historical Center</b>	11,932
<b>Total</b>	<b>552,137</b>

*Source: RISD Construction supervisor, November 2001,  
Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) Property Appraisal,  
September 2000.*

The organization of the facilities maintenance department is displayed in **Exhibit 4-2**.

**Exhibit 4-2**  
**Organization of RISD Facilities Maintenance Department**  
**2001**



*Source: RISD Maintenance Department, November 2001.*



# Chapter 4

## FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines the Facilities Use and Management operations of the Raymondville Independent School District (RISD) in three areas:

### A. FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

RISD's construction supervisor was hired in 1999 as a consultant specifically to oversee construction and new building warranty issues. His contract ended in December 2001 and the maintenance supervisor has assumed the construction supervisor's duties.

Since 1999, the district has completed construction of three new schools and several renovations throughout the district. **Exhibit 4-3** lists new construction, renovations and the year completed.

**Exhibit 4-3**  
**RISD New Construction and Renovations**  
**1999-2001**

Facility	Year Completed
<b>Raymondville High School</b>	
Sports Complex (new)	1999
Agriculture Building (new)	1999
Gymnasium (new)	2000
High School (new)	2000
Vocational Complex (renovation)	2001
Drama Building (renovation)	2001
Practice Gym (renovation)	2001
Maintenance/Transportation Complex (renovation)	2001
600 Wing Classrooms (renovation)	1999
Bricking of Existing Classroom Buildings	2001
Sports Complex Concession/Restrooms	2001
<b>Pittman Elementary</b>	
New School Complex	2001
Closed Pavilion	2000

<b>L.C. Smith Elementary</b>	
New School Complex	2001
Covered Pavilion	2000
<b>Myra Green Middle School</b>	
Covered Pavilion	1999

*Source: RISD Construction supervisor, November 2001.*

The district has more than 84,000 square feet of empty space designated for demolition at the high school and Pittman Elementary school. **Exhibit 4-4** lists facilities not in use and their locations.

**Exhibit 4-4  
RISD Facilities Currently Not In Use  
Designated for Demolition**

Facility	Total Square Footage
<b>Raymondville High School</b>	
Classrooms	3,000
Administration and Classrooms	51,563
Snack Bar	900
Classrooms	11,300
Locker Bays	2,000
<b>Pittman Elementary</b>	
Old Migrant Building	2,700
Classrooms	13,085
<b>Total</b>	<b>84,548</b>

*Source: RISD Construction supervisor, November 2001.*

Members of the TSPR review team accompanied the construction supervisor on a walkthrough of empty buildings at the high school and Pittman Elementary. All of the unoccupied buildings at those schools have electricity and some still have water. Ceiling fans and window unit air conditioners were running in some of the buildings and the boy's restroom

in the old main building at Pittman Elementary had water running into a trough from a corroded pipe.

## FINDING

RISD is not enforcing its policy regarding community use of its facilities. The district's auditorium, located at One Bearkat Boulevard, is available for use by the community, but there is little evidence that fees are being collected.

**Exhibit 4-5** shows the district's auditorium rental fee schedule. Fees are higher for events that have an admission charge.

RISD policy (Legal) states: The Board may fix and collect rentals, rates, and charges from students and others for the occupancy or use of any of the District's facilities, in such amounts and in such manner as determined by the Board, *Education Code 45.033*.

RISD policy (Local) states: District facilities shall be available for civic, educational and recreational purposes when use does not conflict with school use. A nominal fee shall be charged to help defray the cost of heat, lights, water and custodial services. Organizations using school facilities shall maintain proper care of such facilities, as set forth in regulation. Arrangements for the use of facilities shall be made through the Superintendent's office. Fees for the use of the facility shall be paid to the business manager who will issue a receipt. The receipt shall be necessary to enter and use the facility.

### Exhibit 4-5 RISD Auditorium Agreement 2001 Fee Schedule

Charges	Fee Schedule
No Admission Charge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$40 per hour per performance or \$200 regardless of hours.</li><li>• \$20 per hour per rehearsal or \$100 regardless of hours.</li></ul>
Admission Charged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$80 per hour per performance or \$400 regardless of hours.</li><li>• \$40 per hour per rehearsal or \$200 regardless of hours.</li></ul>

A deposit of \$200 must be paid prior to use of the auditorium and will be returned to the lessee if there is no damage to the building or contents.

*Source: RISD Business Office, November 2001.*

When asked to provide records of payment by community groups, the district provided one receipt accounting for a single use of the auditorium. Though the old high school on Seventh Street in Raymondville is leased to the city for use as a historical center, RISD was unable to produce a copy of the lease agreement and was unsure of the monthly lease amount.

**Recommendation 27:**

**Collect fees for the community use of district facilities.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent reviews the district fee schedules for facilities use.	April - May 2002
2.	The superintendent informs the community of the fee schedule.	May 2002
3.	The superintendent designates a district representative to oversee the community use of district facilities.	May 2002
4.	The district representative coordinates with the community for any use of district facilities.	June 2002
5.	The district representative collects and records fees and tracks community use of facilities.	July 2002 - Ongoing
6.	The district representative reports to the superintendent each month on the community use of facilities and fees collected.	August 2002 - Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

RISD does not have a formal facilities master plan. The district relies on a two-year old TASB property appraisal packet for a complete listing of RISD facilities. This August 2000 report primarily includes building valuation reports and replacement cost for the district's schools and additional structures. The property appraisal appears to include buildings that have been demolished and does not include new construction. The

maintenance department could not provide information regarding the number of permanent classrooms or the number of acres of land owned and maintained by the district.

Some essential components of a comprehensive facilities master plan which are not included in the property appraisal are:

- identification of the current and future needs of district facilities and educational programs;
- analysis of the condition of existing schools;
- student growth projections and community expansion plans;
- cost and capital requirements analysis; and
- facilities program management and design guidelines.

A facilities master plan should be used to set the district's strategy for future land acquisitions.

Historically, RISD has not managed its facility operations and new construction efficiently. RISD's problematic process has led to poor construction contract overview, a lack of assets to demolish empty buildings, and uninhabited buildings with utilities in use. All these factors have resulted in unnecessary costs for the district.

Effective school districts use facility master plans to manage ongoing facility maintenance and construction programs. For example, Mount Pleasant ISD (MPISD) effectively manages renovation by periodically evaluating facilities for maintenance and construction needs. By planning and evaluating its facilities, MPISD has been able to identify potential code violations, ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and establish school educational space guidelines for classrooms and common areas such as cafeterias and libraries using minimum state standards as a starting point.

**Recommendation 28:**

**Create a comprehensive facilities master plan and monitor the district's progress toward implementation on an annual basis.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The assistant superintendent meets with school principals and the Maintenance supervisor to assign responsibilities for developing the district's facilities master plan.	May 2002
2.	The assistant superintendent compiles components of the facilities master plan and develops a formal facilities	June 2002

	master plan document.	
3.	The assistant superintendent submits the facilities master plan document to the superintendent for approval.	July 2002
4.	The superintendent presents the facilities master plan to the board for review and approval.	August 2002
5.	The assistant superintendent monitors and evaluates the implementation of the facilities master plan and reports on the process to the superintendent.	September 2002 - Ongoing Quarterly

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# Chapter 4

## FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines the Facilities Use and Management operations of the Raymondville Independent School District (RISD) in three areas:

### B. MAINTENANCE AND CUSTODIAL OPERATIONS

#### *Maintenance*

RISD maintains more than 543,000 square feet of facilities space and grounds at four schools and other locations within the district. Maintenance staff handles the district's routine repair needs and major equipment repairs and replacement.

**Exhibit 4-6** shows the RISD maintenance department's nine employees, eight of whom report to the supervisor. The maintenance supervisor reports to the Assistant Superintendent. General Maintenance consists of grass cutting, minor carpentry, minor plumbing, tractor operation, tree trimming and concrete work.

**Exhibit 4-6**  
**RISD Maintenance Department Staff**  
**2001-02**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Number</b>
Supervisor	1
Assistant supervisor	2
Locksmith/General Maintenance/General Electrician	1
Carpenter/plumber/General Electrician	1
General Maintenance	2
Welder/General Maintenance	1
Air conditioning repair/General Maintenance	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>

*Source: RISD Personnel Directory 2001-02.*

**Exhibit 4-7** shows RISD's maintenance expenditures as a percentage of the total budget for 2000-01 compared to its peer districts.

**Exhibit 4-7**  
**Maintenance and Operations Budgeted Expenditures**  
**RISD and Peer Districts**  
**2000-01**

District	Maintenance and Operations Expenditures	Total District Expenditures	Percent of Total
West Oso	\$1,595,279	\$13,064,500	13.1%
Taft	\$1,243,971	\$10,206,309	12.9%
Mathis	\$1,562,641	\$13,422,739	12.4%
Lyford	\$1,278,973	\$11,618,226	12.0%
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>\$1,479,760</b>	<b>\$18,071,473</b>	<b>8.9%</b>

*Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) 2000-01.*

**FINDING**

The priority system for work orders at RISD is ineffective. Nearly 90 percent of the work orders reviewed were given a high priority. When the majority of all work orders are given the highest priority, a true priority of needs is difficult to determine.

Work orders are processed manually. Principals, or their designee, and the central office submit work order requests on handwritten forms. The handwritten requests are faxed to the maintenance office or placed in the department mailbox at central administration. The maintenance supervisor checks the mailbox daily for work order requests. Once the handwritten forms are received they are typed onto a form by one of the maintenance personnel.

The maintenance supervisor reviews each work order, assigns a priority and assigns the work order to one of the department's employees. When the work is completed, the employee who completed the work notes the amount of time necessary to complete the work on the work order form. If items have been purchased to complete the work, the quantity, date, unit cost, total cost, supplier and invoice number are noted on the work order. When the employee completes the work order, an invoice for any purchases is also submitted to the maintenance supervisor. With the exception of the prioritizing process, this manual work order process is efficient for a district the size of RISD.



**Exhibit 4-8** lists work orders initiated and completed, as well as the number of work orders in each priority category from April through September 2001.

**Exhibit 4-8  
RISD Work Orders  
Initiated, Completed and Assigned Priority  
April through September, 2001**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Initiated</b>	<b>Emergency Priority</b>	<b>High Priority</b>	<b>Low Priority</b>
April	29	4	23	2
May	14	0	13	1
June	6	0	6	0
July	7	0	7	0
August	10	0	10	0
September	33	3	30	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>3</b>

*Source: RISD Maintenance Department, November 2001.*

The following is an example of a work order system that assigns and defines priorities and completion times:

- 1-Urgent: If corrective actions are not taken immediately, operation of the facility could be in jeopardy. Must be completed within 24 hours.
- 2-Routine: Corrective actions that should be performed at the first opportunity, but their nature is such that the primary function of the facility is not significantly affected. Should be completed within 7-10 days.
- 3-Deferred: These are corrective actions that will in no way affect the service of the facility. They will be scheduled with similar work in the preventive maintenance schedule or the weekly schedule as opportunity permits.

Written guidelines for assigning work order priorities are useful in helping principals and other district personnel determine the severity of a problem and communicate the problem to the maintenance department. As the number of facilities increase and new personnel are added in RISD, it will be difficult to communicate these priorities without a list of priority projects.

**Recommendation 29:**

**Develop and distribute written work order priorities and provide a list of typical maintenance work for each priority level.**

The list should include an estimate of the time frame within which the work order will be addressed.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The Maintenance supervisor identifies types of projects for each work order system priority level.	April 2002
2.	The Maintenance supervisor creates written guidelines and suggested completion time frames for each level in the work order system.	May 2002
3.	The Maintenance supervisor distributes the written information to all principals and the central office staff.	June 2002
4.	The Maintenance supervisor conducts follow-up visits to each school to ensure each principal understands the priority level system and completion time frames.	August 2002
5.	The supervisor evaluates the success of the system.	September 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

Several safety hazards were identified in the high school home economics and chemistry classrooms. These conditions are not only safety hazards for the students and teachers but they impede the teacher's ability to instruct the students.

The high school home economics classroom does not have an exhaust fan. When the students cook the classroom fills with smoke making it hard to breathe and burning people's eyes. Maintenance personnel told the teacher that an exhaust fan was on order and would be installed as soon as it arrived. The district provided a work order for the problem, but RISD was unable to produce any document verifying the exhaust fan had been installed.

The chemistry classroom has safety equipment that does not work properly. The emergency shower located in the classroom floods the floor if used. As a result the teacher has not conducted any emergency shower tests. The classroom has two emergency eye wash systems; one works perfectly while the other one does not produce a spray of water to wash a person's eyes. The classroom has two fume hoods, one on each end of the classroom, to vent chemicals outside. If only one fume hood is used, the fumes from it are vented into the classroom through the fume hood that is not in use. Also, the fume hoods have drains on one end so that water can be mixed with the chemicals and then washed down the drain. However, the drains are higher than the rest of the fume hood bottom and will not allow the water to drain. Finally, the classroom has no mechanism for detecting gas leaks.

Because of these potential hazards the teacher does not use chemicals or allow students to handle chemicals. Chemistry instruction is limited to lectures, depriving students of valuable hands-on lessons.

**Recommendation 30:**

**Conduct a safety inspection of all classrooms and ensure all safety hazards are corrected.**

The superintendent should take aggressive action to ensure all possible safety hazards in the classrooms are identified and corrected.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent directs the principals at each campus to inspect all classrooms for possible safety hazards.	April 2002
2.	The campus principals submit possible safety hazard issues to the superintendent.	May 2002
3.	The superintendent coordinates with the Maintenance supervisor to ensure all identified issues are corrected.	June 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

***Custodial Operations***

RISD custodians report directly to the principal at the school where they work. The duties of custodians vary slightly from school to school based upon the priorities determined by the principal. Custodial duties include cleaning some of the vacant buildings. Custodians are also assigned to

clean the auditorium after a community group has used it. Four of the high school custodians are assigned to perform "yard work" on Tuesdays and Thursdays, or whenever necessary.

Custodians assigned to the Food Service department report directly to the cafeteria manager at each school and work only within the Food Service department.

## **FINDING**

There is little district coordination of custodial staff and there is confusion about who is responsible for maintenance of campus grounds. Although custodians are given a work schedule that identifies the areas to be cleaned during their shift, it is not uncommon for them to be pulled away for other duties, leaving their scheduled work unfinished. During the day shift, custodians are expected to provide assistance to the principal and teachers to handle routine duties, such as moving furniture. Some campuses have areas that have apparently not been cleaned regularly. In a visit to the high school, there were piles of trash on the floor of the men's locker room. Trash cans were also full. The principal at one school did not know who was going to cut the high weeds on the campus.

Some comments from the RISD public forum indicate dissatisfaction with the cleanliness of district facilities:

- "Rooms are not cleaned well."
- "Janitorial staff seems overworked and do not have time to do an adequate job."
- "Schools are dirty and unattended."

### **Recommendation 31:**

#### **Coordinate custodial cleaning activities at all schools.**

Custodial duties should be coordinated with the school program and skilled labor schedules so that work during school hours is done with a minimum of disturbance to students and school personnel. There are many custodial tasks that need to be performed on a regular basis, including:

- regulating the heating and/or air conditioning equipment as required;
- unlocking doors, opening windows for ventilation and turning on lights;
- setting up rooms for special activities;
- cleaning restroom facilities, replacing all commodities and making sure dispensers work properly;

- cleaning classrooms, teachers' lounges and other areas;
- performing special tasks within the classrooms based on teacher requests;
- moving furniture;
- disposing of trash; and
- locking doors and gates, closing windows, and turning off lights at school buildings and on school grounds.

Duties of a weekly, monthly or quarterly nature should be defined and scheduled. Tasks that may be included are:

- lubricating equipment;
- cleaning interior walls;
- indoor painting;
- waxing floors and cleaning carpeting;
- washing windows and blinds and arranging drapery cleaning; and
- resurfacing floors and refinishing furniture.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES**

1.	The Maintenance supervisor works with each principal to re-assign the cleaning areas and schedules of custodians.	May 2002
2.	The Maintenance supervisor submits the revised cleaning schedules to the assistant superintendent for review.	June 2002
3.	The assistant superintendent approves the revised cleaning schedules.	July 2002
4.	The Maintenance supervisor, principals and custodians implement the new work schedule.	August 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# Chapter 4

## FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines the Facilities Use and Management operations of the Raymondville Independent School District (RISD) in three areas:

### C. ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Between February and October 2001, the maintenance department received 124 work orders for problems with the air conditioning system at the new high school. Construction reports during this period submitted by the construction supervisor indicate the problems concerned thermostats not working properly. The air conditioning contractor replaced thermostats and lowered the humidity settings. The maintenance department has developed a program for maintaining and changing the filters of each unit in accordance with recommendations of the contractor.

### FINDING

The district does not track utility costs and has not had a utility audit in the last five years. Utility cost data provided by the district was inconsistent. Bills for individual meters could not be matched to the monthly summary.

**Exhibit 4-9** gives an example of monthly electricity costs and consumption from August 2000 to July 2001. Electricity expenses have increased by 26.1 percent since August 2000.

**Exhibit 4-9**  
**RISD Electricity Expenses**  
**August 2000 through July 2001**

<b>Service Date</b>	<b>Electricity Costs</b>	<b>Electricity Consumption KWH</b>	<b>Electricity Consumption (KWH) Per Day*</b>
August	\$14,598.61	187,723	6,257
September	\$15,271.32	194,548	6,485
October	\$12,708.75	174,749	5,825
November	\$15,490.04	207,003	6,900
December	\$15,425.59	206,337	6,878
January	\$16,375.94	199,088	6,636
February	\$25,479.52	297,271	9,909

March	\$34,045.57	435,011	14,500
April	\$45,301.91	513,072	17,102
May	\$54,402.10	666,698	22,223
June	\$48,368.63	626,236	20,875
July	\$55,931.15	708,769	23,626
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$353,399.13</b>	<b>4,416,505</b>	<b>147,216</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>\$29,449.93</b>	<b>368,042</b>	<b>12,268</b>

Source: RISD Business Office, November 2001.

\*Based on an average 30 day billing cycle.

### **Recommendation 32:**

#### **Request a utility audit from the State Energy Conservation Office.**

SECO has engineering firms under contract that will, at no cost to RISD, conduct a preliminary audit of district buildings, projects for retrofit and financing options. These audits often find low-cost or no-cost projects that can be undertaken immediately to save energy before major capital investments are made in energy retrofits. Some districts have used savings from low-cost/no-cost projects to fund capital projects.

### **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The Maintenance supervisor contacts SECO and schedules an audit.	April 2002
2.	SECO completes the audit and provides RISD with a report.	April - May 2002
3.	The Maintenance supervisor reviews the report and prepares a recommended implementation plan for the assistant superintendent.	May 2002
4.	The assistant superintendent approves the plan and recommends approval by the superintendent.	July 2002
5.	The superintendent approves the plan and recommends approval by the board.	August 2002
6.	The board approves the plan and directs the superintendent to begin implementation for 2002-03.	September 2002
7.	The Maintenance supervisor monitors the implementation	October 2002 -

plan and reports progress to the assistant supervisor on a quarterly basis.	Ongoing Quarterly
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## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## **FINDING**

RISD does not promote student and staff involvement in energy conservation. The maintenance supervisor indicated during interviews that the only energy conservation practiced by the district is having programmable thermostats in the new buildings.

SECO has developed an Energy Education Outreach Program that helps schools set up student energy projects and develops energy-related educational materials for schools, residential consumers and small businesses.

Watt Watcher and Watt Team programs educate elementary students in energy efficiency and promote activities that instill an energy-efficient ethic in all aspects of school operation. Student teams patrol assigned areas of the school, checking for lights left on in unoccupied rooms. "Tickets" and thank you notes are left for the occupants to remind them to turn off lights when they are not needed. This is a proven method of promoting energy conservation habits and reduced school energy bills. Lighting accounts for at least 25 percent of energy use in schools.

In high schools, the Watt Watcher Program is called "Energy Council." Students can expand the program to include school energy audits and serve as mentors for elementary school patrols. The Energy Council can exist as a project of the student council, other existing groups or a new school organization. SECO provides free materials and information for Watt teams. The Watt Watchers Web site is located at <http://wattwatchers.utep.edu/>.

Spring ISD implemented a rebate program that rewards schools that reduce energy use below the budget amount with a check for half of the savings.

### **Recommendation 33:**

**Involve schools in districtwide energy efficiency and conservation efforts.**



RISD should promote student and staff involvement in energy conservation. Utility expenditure information should be forwarded to schools every month to make principals and staff aware of energy use and the effect that conservation has on the district's finances.

Implement a reward system whereby schools share savings from efficient energy use to encourage student and staff involvement.

### **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES**

1.	The Maintenance supervisor acquires materials to develop programs such as SECO's Watt Watchers to promote student and staff involvement in energy conservation.	April 2002
2.	The Maintenance supervisor works with individual schools to identify maintenance projects that will conserve energy.	May 2002 - Quarterly
3.	School principals promote school involvement in selected energy conservation programs.	May 2002 - Ongoing
4.	The assistant superintendent forwards monthly energy use reports to individual schools.	May 2002 - Ongoing
5.	The assistant superintendent submits quarterly energy reports to the Board of Trustees.	July 2002 - Ongoing Quarterly

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Energy savings from school conservation measures could result in savings for RISD. Using a conservative savings estimate of 18,462 kilowatt-hours (kwh) per year of use a 5 percent reduction of 2001 kwh at an average of \$0.077 per kwh could save \$1,422 per year.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>
Involve schools in districtwide energy efficiency and conservation efforts.	\$1,422	\$1,422	\$1,422	\$1,422	\$1,422

# Chapter 5

## ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines the Asset and Risk Management operations of the Raymondville Independent School District (RISD) in four sections:

- A. Tax Collection
- B. Cash Management
- C. Risk Management
- D. Fixed Assets

Texas school districts are responsible for protecting the publicly financed assets that are provided to educate children. A school district's assets include cash, fixed assets, real property and personnel. A district's asset and risk management programs should control risks by protecting against significant financial and physical losses while paying the lowest possible insurance premiums.

Effective asset and risk management includes investing idle cash to obtain optimum rates of return; providing adequate and affordable health and workers' compensation insurance to employees; safeguarding property against loss from damage, theft and obsolescence; managing debt with timely principal and interest payments and taking advantage of opportunities to reduce interest expenses.

### **BACKGROUND**

RISD's business manager is responsible for overseeing cash management, maintaining fixed asset records, investing and providing guidance to the tax collection office.

RISD's cash management and investment policies are designed to ensure the safety of idle funds, the availability of operating, capital and debt service funds and the best return on investments with an emphasis on the preservation and safety of principal, liquidity and yield in accordance with board policy. The school board reviews and approves the district's investment policies and procedures.

RISD provides workers' compensation insurance under a risk management arrangement with the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB). As of September 1, 2001, RISD contracts with Managed Benefit Administrators and Insurance Consultants, Inc. for employee health insurance coverage.

# Chapter 5

## ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines the Asset and Risk Management operations of the Raymondville Independent School District (RISD) in four sections:

### A. TAX COLLECTION

Local property taxes provide about 20 percent of RISD's operating revenues, which is a much lower percentage than the state average of 48.5 percent for 2000. An efficient and cost-effective tax collection system is essential for generating the resources necessary to meet the needs of the district's daily operations.

**Exhibit 5-1** shows the funds received from property tax collections at RISD for 1996 through 2000. As a percentage of total revenue, local tax revenues increased by 5.3 percent from 1996 to 2000.

**Exhibit 5-1**  
**RISD Local Property Tax Revenue**  
**1996 through 2000**

	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>
Local Tax Revenue	\$3,152,911	\$3,679,469	\$5,001,291	\$4,328,275	\$3,856,261
Percentage of Total Revenue	20.6%	22.5%	28.4%	22.9%	21.7%
<b>State Average</b>	<b>47.5%</b>	<b>47.0%</b>	<b>47.8%</b>	<b>46.0%</b>	<b>48.5%</b>

*Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 1996-97 through 2000-01.*

**Exhibit 5-2** provides a comparison of RISD's annual tax rate to those of its peer districts for 1996-97 through 2000-01. For 2000-01, RISD's combined Maintenance and Operations (M&O) and I&S (Interest & Sinking Fund) tax rates resulted in the second-lowest total tax rate among its peer districts.

**Exhibit 5-2**  
**Comparison of Total Tax Rates**  
**1996-97 through 2000-01**

District	1996-97		1997-98		1998-99		1999-2000		2000-01	
	M&O	I&S	M&O	I&S	M&O	I&S	M&O	I&S	M&O	I&S
Lyford	1.515	0.000	1.460	0.000	1.480	0.000	1.482	0.000	1.500	0.000
Mathis	1.210	0.147	1.139	0.161	1.241	0.159	1.355	0.030	1.350	0.110
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>1.391</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>1.320</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>1.340</b>	<b>0.150</b>	<b>1.324</b>	<b>0.127</b>	<b>1.360</b>	<b>0.130</b>
Taft	1.493	0.000	1.439	0.000	1.455	0.000	1.466	0.000	1.500	0.070
West Oso	1.382	0.211	1.310	0.200	1.310	0.200	1.356	0.071	1.470	0.070
<b>State Average</b>	<b>1.313</b>	<b>0.185</b>	<b>1.301</b>	<b>0.191</b>	<b>1.340</b>	<b>0.199</b>	<b>1.358</b>	<b>0.153</b>	<b>1.384</b>	<b>0.091</b>

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1996-97 through 2000-01.

RISD's adopted tax rate for 2001-02 is \$1.52 per \$100 of property valuation, which is the same rate the district levied for 2000-01. The tax rate is composed of \$1.36 for Maintenance and Operations and \$.16 for the Interest and Sinking Fund, which provides funding for the district's bonded indebtedness.

Although RISD's property values increased by 2.4 percent from 1996-97 through 2000-01, values decreased from 1999-2000 to 2000-01 by 15.5 percent, due primarily to a decreased in oil and gas property values as shown in **Exhibit 5-3**.

**Exhibit 5-3**  
**RISD Property Values**  
**1996-97 through 2000-01**

Category	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change 1997 to 2001
Business	\$55,568,879	\$53,057,868	\$53,718,329	\$52,240,962	\$53,915,938	(3.0%)
Residential	\$65,935,053	\$67,352,743	\$70,538,260	\$71,637,043	\$72,031,528	9.3%
Land	\$28,521,331	\$29,280,095	\$26,453,421	\$25,660,352	\$26,602,487	(6.7%)
Oil & Gas	\$138,804,110	\$181,185,000	\$182,500,930	\$193,126,370	\$139,563,310	0.6%
Other	\$1,889,653	\$1,814,705	\$2,077,666	\$2,112,652	\$4,127,595	118.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$290,719,026</b>	<b>\$332,690,411</b>	<b>\$264,750,346</b>	<b>\$344,777,379</b>	<b>\$296,240,848</b>	<b>2.4%</b>

Value per pupil	\$88,674	\$104,174	\$106,156	\$114,161	\$97,827	10.3%
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*Source: TEA, AEIS, 1996-97 through 2000-01.*

## **FINDING**

RISD's tax collection operations have allowed the district's tax collection rate to decrease by 3.4 percentage points between 1998 and 2000.

**Exhibit 5-4** shows the tax collection rates for RISD for 1998 through 2000. Willacy County's tax collection rate for 2000 was 97.0 percent.

### **Exhibit 5-4 Tax Collection Rates 1998 through 2000**

<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>Average</b>
<b>98.4%</b>	<b>95.6%</b>	<b>95.0%</b>	<b>96.3%</b>

*Source: RISD's Annual Financial Report, 1997-98 through 1999-2000.*

RISD has a tax office employing two full-time employees to collect the district's taxes. The tax office contracts with a private company in Dallas, T. Y. Pickett, to print tax statements. For the services provided by T. Y. Pickett, the district pays an annual fee of \$5,000 for software and approximately \$2,300 in processing and printing fees.

The district's tax collection process includes the following steps.

- Willacy County Appraisal District forwards property values to RISD.
- The RISD tax office sends a computer tape of the appraisal roll to T. Y. Pickett in Dallas.
- The RISD tax office faxes the approved tax rate information to T. Y. Pickett.
- T. Y. Pickett prepares and prints the district's tax statements and mails them to RISD.
- T. Y. Picketts transfers the statement information to the district via modem.
- RISD mails out the tax statements.
- RISD collects tax payments and enters payment information into the district's computer system.

- The RISD tax office prints two receipts, counts tax payments and balances receipts daily.
- The bank's armored car picks up tax collection receipts for deposit twice weekly.

**Exhibit 5-5** summarizes the cost of collecting the district's taxes according to RISD's audited financial statements for 1997-98 through 1999-2000.

**Exhibit 5-5**  
**RISD Cost of In-House Tax Collection**  
**1997-98 through 1999-2000**

Cost Element	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	Average
Payroll Costs	\$56,804	\$58,165	\$61,997	\$58,989
Tax Appraisal and Collection	\$111,148	\$91,398	\$93,269	\$98,605
Professional Services	\$6,243	\$6,296	\$7,276	\$6,605
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$174,195</b>	<b>\$155,859</b>	<b>\$162,542</b>	<b>\$164,199</b>

*Source: RISD's Annual Financial Report, 1997-98 through 1999-2000.*

Some school districts that have high tax collection rates use a variety of methods to increase or keep tax collection rates high. United ISD established a policy that directs the superintendent to publish in the newspaper the names of anyone who owes \$1,000 or more in accumulated taxes. The ad is published in the month of October and doesn't include any homestead residents over 65 or any accounts that are in bankruptcy. Other school districts realize that there is competition for taxpayer dollars and stress customer service to encourage taxpayers to pay their school taxes first.

**Recommendation 34:**

**Develop a tax collection policy that includes a progressive goal of increasing the tax collection rate by 0.5 percent each year for three years.**

Increasing the tax collection rate by 0.5 percent each year for three years would increase the rate to 96.5 which is slightly higher than the average of the last three years.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent meets with the business manager and tax-	April
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	assessor collector and develops a plan for increasing the district's tax collection rate.	2002
2.	The superintendent presents the plan and collection rate goals to the board for approval.	May 2002
3.	The business manager develops a new tax collection procedures manual and presents to the superintendent for approval.	May 2002
4.	The business manager trains the tax collection staff on the new procedures.	June 2002
5.	The business manager presents quarterly reports to the board on the progress of improving the district's tax collection rates.	August 2002

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The fiscal impact is based upon applying the progressive tax collection rate increase to RISD's 2000 local tax revenue of \$3,856,261. The 2002-03 increases would be \$19,281 ( $\$3,856,261 \times .05$  percent). The 2003-04 increases would be \$38,563 ( $\$3,856,261 \times 1.0$  percent). The 2004-05 and subsequent year increase would be \$57,844 ( $\$3,856,261 \times 1.5$  percent).

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>
Develop a tax collection policy that includes a progressive goal of increasing the tax collection rate by 0.5 percent each year for three years.	\$19,281	\$38,563	\$57,844	\$57,844	\$57,844

# Chapter 5

## ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines the Asset and Risk Management operations of the Raymondville Independent School District (RISD) in four sections:

### B. CASH MANAGEMENT

All school districts' investment policies and procedures must comply with the requirements of the Public Funds Investment Act. Sections 2256.009 through 2256.017 of the Texas Government Code. The act provides a list of authorized investments that may be purchased.

#### Exhibit 5-6 Excerpts from the Public Funds Investment Act Authorized Investments

Government Code Section	Investment Description
2256.009 Authorized Investments: Obligations of, or Guaranteed by Governmental Entities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obligations, including letters of credit of the United States or its agencies and instrumentalities.</li> <li>• Direct obligations of this state or its agencies and instrumentalities;</li> <li>• Collateralized mortgage obligations directly issued by a federal agency or instrumentality of the United States;</li> <li>• Other obligations, the principal and interest of which are unconditionally guaranteed or insured by, or backed by the full faith and credit of, this state or the United States or their respective agencies and instrumentalities;</li> <li>• Obligations of states, agencies, counties, cities and other political subdivisions of any state rated as to investment quality by a nationally recognized investment rating firm not less than A or its equivalent;</li> <li>• Bonds issued, assumed, or guaranteed by the State of Israel.</li> </ul>
2256.010 Authorized Investments: Certificates of	A certificate of deposit is an authorized investment if the certificate is issued by a state or national bank, savings bank or state or federal credit union domiciled in this state and is:



<p>Deposit and Share Certificates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guaranteed or insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or its successor or the National Credit Union Share Insurance Fund or its successor;</li> <li>• Secured by obligations that are described by Section 2256.009(a), including mortgage backed securities directly issued by a federal agency or instrumentality that have market value of not less than the principal amount of the certificates, but excluding those mortgage backed securities of the nature described by Section 2256.009(b); or</li> <li>• Secured in any other manner and amount provided by law for deposits of the investing entity.</li> </ul>
<p>2256.011 Authorized Investments: Repurchase Agreements</p>	<p>A fully collateralized repurchase agreement is an authorized investment if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It has a defined termination date;</li> <li>• It is secured by obligations described by Section 2256.009(a)(1);</li> <li>• It requires the securities being purchased by the entity to be pledged to the entity, held in the entity's name and deposited at the time the investment is made with the entity or with a third party selected and approved by the entity; and</li> <li>• It is placed through a primary government securities dealer, as defined by the Federal Reserve, or a financial institution doing business in this state.</li> </ul>
<p>2256.012 Authorized Investments: Banker's Acceptances</p>	<p>A banker's acceptance is an authorized investment if it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a stated maturity of 270 days or fewer from the date of its issuance;</li> <li>• Will be, in accordance with its terms, liquidated in full at maturity;</li> <li>• Is eligible for collateral for borrowing from a Federal Reserve Bank; and</li> <li>• Is accepted by a bank organized and existing under the laws of the United States or any state, if the short-term obligations of the bank, or of a bank holding company of which the bank is the largest subsidiary, are rated not less than A-1 or P-1 or an equivalent rating by at least one nationally</li> </ul>

	recognized credit rating agency.
2256.013 Authorized Investments: Commercial Paper	<p>Commercial paper is an authorized investment if it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a stated maturity of 270 days or fewer from the date of issuance;</li> <li>• Is rated not less than A-1 or P-1 or an equivalent rating by at least;</li> <li>• Two nationally recognized credit rating agencies; or</li> <li>• One nationally recognized credit rating agency and is fully secured by an irrevocable letter of credit issued by a bank organized and existing under the laws of the United States or any state.</li> </ul>
2256.014 Authorized Investments: Mutual Funds	<p>A no-load money market mutual fund is authorized if it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is registered with and regulated by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC);</li> <li>• Provides the investing entity with a prospectus and other information required by the SEC Act of 1934 of the Investment Company Act of 1940;</li> <li>• Has a dollar-weighted average stated maturity of 90 days or fewer; and</li> <li>• Includes in its investment objectives the maintenance of a stable net asset value of \$1 for each share.</li> </ul> <p>A no-load money mutual fund is authorized if it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is registered with the SEC;</li> <li>• Has an average weighted maturity of less than two years;</li> <li>• Is invested exclusively in obligations approved by this subchapter;</li> <li>• Is continually rated as to investment quality by at least one nationally recognized investment rating firm of not less than AAA or its equivalent; and</li> <li>• Conforms to the requirements set forth in section 2256.016(b) and (c) relating to the eligibility of investment pools to receive and invest funds of investing entities.</li> </ul>
2256.015 Authorized Investments:	A guaranteed investment contract is an authorized investment for bond proceeds if it:

Guaranteed Investment Contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a defined termination date;</li> <li>• Is secured by obligations described by Section 2256.009(a)(1) excluding those obligations described by Section 2256.009(b) in an amount at least equal to the amount of bond proceeds invested under the contract;</li> <li>• Is pledged to the entity and deposited with the entity or with a third party selected and approved by the entity; and</li> <li>• The governing body of the entity has specifically authorized guaranteed investment contracts as an eligible investment in the order, ordinance, or resolution authorizing the issuance of the bonds.</li> </ul>
2256.016 Authorized Investments: Investment Pools	An entity may invest its funds and funds under its control through an eligible investment pool if the governing body of the entity by rule, order, ordinance or resolution, as appropriate, authorizes investment in the particular pool. An investment pool shall invest the funds it receives from entities in authorized investments permitted by this subchapter.
2256.017 Existing Investments	An entity is not required to liquidate investments that were authorized investments at the time of purchase.

*Source: Government Code Chapter 2256 Subchapter A. Authorized Investments for Governmental Entities.*

The act also requires a school district to establish a written investment policy and to designate one or more officers or employees as the investment officer(s) responsible for establishing the internal controls and written procedures.

Government Code 2256.008 further requires investment officers and the chief financial officer to receive at least 10 hours of instruction relating to investment responsibilities under the Public Funds Investment Act. Ten hours of instruction must be undertaken in the first 12 months after assuming duties. Subsequent training requires at least one class in a two-year period consisting of at least 10 hours.

The Texas Education Agency's (TEA) *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide* (FASRG) states three general rules for investing school district funds.

- The purchase of investments should be made with the intent and ability to hold the investment to maturity if necessary.
- All investments should be made with the school district's cash needs and cash flow forecast in mind.
- The school district must understand the investing instrument, the investment mechanics and the associated risk of the investment. Knowledge of these factors and the variables that affect the market value of each investment will help the school district determine its investment policies and strategies.

A June 19, 2001 RISD policy allows eight types of investments that are authorized by the Public Funds Investment Act:

- Obligations of, or guaranteed by, governmental entities as permitted by Government Code 2256.009;
- Certificates of deposit and share certificates as permitted by Government Code 2256.010;
- Fully collateralized repurchase agreements permitted by Government Code 2256.011;
- Banker's acceptances as permitted by Government Code 2256.012;
- Commercial paper as permitted by Government Code 2256.013;
- Two types of mutual funds as permitted by Government Code 2256.014; money market mutual funds and no-load mutual funds;
- A guaranteed investment contract as an investment vehicle for bond proceeds, provided it meets the criteria and eligibility requirements established by Government Code 2256.015;
- Public funds investment pools as permitted by Government Code 2256.016.

RISD has a two-year depository agreement with the First National Bank (FNB) of Edinburg, which runs from September 1, 2001 to August 31, 2003. FNB acts as the depository for all district funds and does not assess service charges for checking accounts, which are held in the FNB Public Fund Platinum Account, yielding 3.75 percent.

As of June 2001, RISD reported an average bank account balance of \$1,318,415. Pledged securities in excess of \$1.5 million are kept with FNB's custodial agent, Southwest Bank of Texas.

Electronic services offered by FNB allow district employees to perform daily financial transactions without leaving the office. FNB's direct banking services include:

- account inquiries;
- account statements;
- transaction searches;

- transfer requests;
- service requests;
- stop payment requests;
- automated messages left for banking staff; and
- payroll and vendor billing transactions.

The district's previous depository agreement was with the Texas State Bank. As of October 31, 2001, checking accounts at Texas State Bank had not yet been closed and still contained available funds. In addition, the pledged securities listing provided by Texas State Bank as of September 30, 2001 showed RISD securities with a book value of more than \$2.8 million.

RISD participates in the TASB Lone Star investment pool. The district's local maintenance fund account in the TASB investment pool had a balance of \$188,332.95 as of September 30, 2001. **Exhibit 5-7** shows the district's interest earned and ending monthly balances for its' local maintenance fund from September 2000 through September 2001.

**Exhibit 5-7**  
**RISD Interest Earned**  
**Lone Star Investment Pool**  
**Local Maintenance Fund**  
**September 2000 through September 2001**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Interest Earned</b>	<b>Ending Balance</b>
September 2000	\$12,006.06	\$1,565,061.84
October 2000	\$12,898.09	\$4,249,851.93
November 2000	\$21,537.73	\$4,304,911.84
December 2000	\$20,152.75	\$3,304,180.23
January 2001	\$13,143.75	\$1,743,528.23
February 2001	\$7,917.32	\$1,976,101.13
March 2001	\$9,182.18	\$1,755,326.27
April 2001	\$4,928.32	\$1,044,769.08
May 2001	\$2,428.90	\$551,383.71
June 2001	\$2,062.77	\$1,154,069.65
July 2001	\$3,054.09	\$1,108,914.18
August 2001	\$2,987.55	\$70,409.22
September 2001	\$687.39	\$188,332.95

*Source: Texas Association of School Boards, Lone Star Investment Pool monthly reports, September 2000 - September 2001.*

The pool's investment strategy is to provide participating government entities with safety of principal, daily liquidity and the highest possible rate of return. **Exhibit 5-8** shows the rates of return for the Lone Star investment pool from June 2001 through November 2001.

**Exhibit 5-8  
Rates of Return  
Lone Star Investment Pool  
June through November 2001**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Yield</b>	<b>Weighted Maturity (number of days)</b>
June	4.24%	59
July	3.98%	63
August	3.86%	65
September	3.69%	78
October	3.16%	74
November	2.74%	68

*Source: TASB Lone Star Investment Pool Web site, December 2001.*

**FINDING**

RISD does not have a designated investment officer to manage the district's cash and investments. Board policy states the superintendent or another person designated by board resolution shall serve as the investment officer of the district and invest district funds as directed by the board and in accordance with the district's written investment policy and generally accepted accounting procedures.

The former business manager was the district's investment officer, but left RISD in February 2001. At that time, the chief financial officer assumed the duties and provided investment reports to the board, but was never designated by the board and never attended investment officer training. Since that time, the board has not designated a replacement, and district investments are not being monitored.

The current business manager has begun taking TASB training courses and plans to complete the necessary courses required for certification. The business manager informed TSPR that the board intends to designate the business manager as the district's investment officer.

The Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts identified 10 key steps to developing and monitoring an effective investment program, which are published in *Banks to Bond: A Practical Path to Sound School District Investing*. This publication provides advice on sound investing by school districts.

**Recommendation 35:**

**Designate an investment officer and an assistant investment officer.**

The Public Funds Investment Act requires investment officer training for district employees within 12 months of assuming duties and not less than once in a two-year period thereafter.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent recommends an investment officer and an assistant investment officer to the board for approval.	May 2002
2.	The board approves and designates a district investment officer and an assistant investment officer.	June 2002
3.	Investment officer and assistant attend 10 hours of investment training.	September 2002
4.	Investment officer and assistant attend 10 hours of refresher training every other year.	Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Required training can be provided with existing resources.

**FINDING**

RISD does not monitor the securities pledged by the depository bank on a daily basis. Pledged securities in excess of \$1.5 million are kept with FNB's custodial agent, Southwest Bank of Texas.

Under Texas state law, a bank serving as the school depository must have a bond or deposited or pledged securities with the district or an independent third-party agent in an amount equal to the highest daily balance of all deposits the district may have during the term of the

depository contract, less any applicable Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation insurance.

The RISD school board approved the securities pledged by the depository bank in September 2001. The district, however, did not sign the safekeeping receipt and return it to the bank until November 6, 2001. As the district has operated for several months without a business manager or a designated investment officer, RISD's pledged securities have not been monitored regularly.

Unless pledged securities are monitored daily, there is no assurance that the market value amount is equal to or exceeds the daily balances of the district's deposits.

**Recommendation 36:**

**Monitor pledged securities on a daily basis using the bank's online services and prepare a monthly report.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The business manager monitors balances of all bank accounts to ensure the value of its pledged securities is equal to or exceeds daily balances.	April 2002 - Ongoing
2.	The business manager prepares a monthly summary of bank accounts and pledged security balances and submits it to the superintendent with recommendations for corrective action when necessary.	April 2002 - Ongoing
3.	The superintendent submits summary to the board for review and approval.	April 2002 Ongoing
4.	The business manager executes corrective actions when necessary.	May 2002 Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

RISD's bank accounts are not reconciled in a timely manner. Before resigning in October 2001, the chief financial officer began completing bank reconciliations in an effort to bring the district's financial records up to date. However at the end of the review team's fieldwork in November 2001, most of the district's bank accounts had not been reconciled since



June 2001. Moreover, no supervisory reviews were being performed on the reconciliations that had been prepared.

In January 2002, the district confirmed it had contracted with Texas Education Consulting Services for assistance and had reconciled its bank accounts through December 2001.

The lack of up-to-date monthly bank reconciliations creates the following problems:

- Late discovery of errors made by the banking institution;
- Inaccurate general ledger accounts;
- Inaccurate management reports;
- Delay in discovering posting errors in the district's records; and
- Delayed detection of fraud.

Though the district's depository agreement with First National Bank was made effective September 1, 2001, accounts with the former depositor, Texas State Bank, remained open as of October 31, 2001. Without someone in the district assigned to reconcile bank accounts in a timely manner, RISD was unable to effectively close accounts at Texas State Bank and transfer funds to the new depositor.

Typically, bank statements are reconciled and necessary corrections made within 30 days following the receipt of the statement from the bank. Timely reconciliations and corrections of errors increase the accuracy of financial data that is relied upon for decision-making and also helps detect the occurrence of certain types of fraudulent activities before substantial losses are incurred.

**Recommendation 37:**

**Reconcile all district bank accounts and make necessary corrections within 30 days following receipt of bank statements.**

Bank account reconciliations should be completed within 30 days of the receipt of bank statements to ensure district funds are properly accounted for and to detect and correct any discrepancies as quickly as possible. In addition, bank account reconciliation should be reviewed for accuracy and be initialed and dated by the supervisor of the employee performing the reconciliation. The business manager should provide training on properly posting and updating general ledger accounts.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The business manager develops bank account reconciliation	April 2002
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	procedures.	
2.	The business manager distributes the procedures to staff and directs staff on their implementation.	April 2002
3.	The business manager assigns responsibility for bank account reconciliation to the chief accountant.	April 2002
4.	The chief accountant reconciles bank accounts each month and submits to the business manager for review and approval.	May 2002
5.	The business manager approves reconciled accounts and all corrections that may be needed.	June 2002 Ongoing

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# Chapter 5

## ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines the Asset and Risk Management operations of the Raymondville Independent School District (RISD) in four sections:

### C. RISK MANAGEMENT

RISD's commercial insurance coverage is provided through the Texas Association of School Board's (TASB's) risk management fund. **Exhibit 5-9** identifies the coverage in place as of November 2001.

**Exhibit 5-9**  
**Commercial Insurance Coverage**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Coverage Limits</b>	<b>Deductible</b>	<b>Annual Premium</b>
Builder's Risk	\$11,750,000	\$5,000	\$4,510
Fleet Liability	\$100,000 per person \$300,000 per occurrence bodily injury \$100,000 property damage	\$250	\$7,985
Auto Physical Damage	\$885,574	\$0	\$4,804
Boiler	Property Limit	\$1,000	\$1,548
Criminal	\$25,000	\$1,000	\$236
General Liability Aggregate Includes Personal Injury and Employee Benefits Liability	\$1,000,000 per occurrence	\$1,000	\$1,928
Property & Casualty Blanket Replacement Cost Limit on Buildings, Personal Property and Auxiliary Structures	\$29,200,548	\$1,000	\$36,500
Band equipment	\$436,955	\$250	\$699
Computer equipment	\$1,104,590	\$250	\$1,767
School Professional Legal Liability	\$1,000,000 per occurrence \$1,000,000 annual	\$2,500	\$9,443

	aggregate		
<b>Total - All Coverage's</b>			<b>\$69,420</b>

*Source: TASB Risk Management Fund Property/Casualty In Force Contribution Report.*

RISD also provides workers' compensation insurance under the TASB risk management fund. The district has been identified as a high-risk employer due to its large number of workers' compensation claims.

## **FINDING**

RISD does not have a districtwide safety program. Of the 466 claims reported over the last four years, a great number of injuries have been due to a fall or slip, strain from pushing or pulling, or contact with an electrical current. The district has no risk management department or districtwide safety plan. The district's lack of an implemented safety plan and training program has resulted in unusually high occurrences of on-the-job injuries.

As a TASB member and participant in the TASB risk management fund, RISD is eligible to receive loss control services at no charge. TASB offers an accident prevention plan that provides the following services and tools:

- Management Commitment and Assignment of Responsibilities: documents leadership's commitment and support for accident prevention, assigns responsibilities and provides authority and accountability;
- Accident/Incident Trend Analysis: establishes procedures to schedule, identify and review injury and hazard trends and appoints the person for responsible for this analysis;
- Workplace Audit/Inspections: initiates a program to walk through and audit/inspect work areas where hazardous exposures exist;
- Accident/Incident Investigations: targets recurring injuries and encourages supervisors to learn how to identify root causes of accidents;
- Education and Training: identifies the types and frequency of safety training needed in various functional areas, based on recognized district hazards, accident trends and state-mandated safety and health programs;
- Documentation and Record Keeping: establishes a records maintenance procedure, complete with retention schedule, location and assigned responsibility; and
- Accident Prevention Plan Review: establishes frequency and assigns responsibility for the update. This critical component

reinforces the idea that the Accident Prevention Plan is a living document requiring annual review and update.

TASB also provides loss control consultants to help a district develop a campus safety coordinator program to prevent accidents and, improve safety awareness, to develop a return-to-work process that gets injured employees back to work at the earliest opportunity and to advise the district's safety committee about loss prevention and safety initiatives that reduce work-related injuries.

RISD has received from TASB a safety plan, an implementation procedure and a schedule for TASB monitoring.

The Robstown ISD created a Risk Management Department that conducts safety training sessions for campus personnel, performs periodic safety inspections and investigates reported safety concerns. The department has developed and distributed manuals on subjects such as employee accidents, hurricane preparedness, crisis management and asbestos management. The department uses Texas School Safety Center's *Planning Manual for Safe Schools* and the Texas Association of School Boards' *Loss Control Manual* as resources. As a result of the efforts at Robstown ISD, the district reports a 40.8 percent decrease in its number of workers' compensation claims since the plan's implementation.

**Recommendation 38:**

**Implement TASB's safety recommendations and develop a formal district safety plan.**

Another source of assistance the district may consider using is the Texas School Safety Center at Southwest Texas State University. The center has developed a manual, *Texas School Safety Center Planning Manual for Safe Schools*. The center also produced a free video and CD-ROM on safety and conducts safety audits at school districts at no charge to the districts.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent and business manager develop a plan of action to carry out the requirements of the TASB safety recommendations and submits it to the board for approval.	May 2002
2.	The superintendent assigns specific responsibilities to district staff members to carry out the individual requirements of TASB recommendations.	June 2002
3.	The superintendent contacts Southwest Texas State University	July 2002

	and schedules a free safety audit for RISD.	
4.	The Texas School Safety Center conducts a free safety audit of the district and provides a report to district management.	July 2002
5.	The assistant superintendent and business manager develop a formal safety plan for the district and submit it to the superintendent and board for approval.	August 2002
6.	Department representatives conduct monthly safety meetings and training.	August 2002 - Ongoing

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The TASB safety recommendations can be implemented with existing resources. Implementing the recommended safety plan will decrease the number of workers' compensation claims and subsequently the district's premium paid to the TASB risk management fund. Saving projections are based on a decrease in annual premiums of 5 percent (\$153,554 annual premium x 5 percent) beginning in 2003-04.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>
Implement TASB's safety recommendations and develop a formal district safety plan.	\$0	\$7,678	\$7,678	\$7,678	\$7,678

### **FINDING**

RISD has been identified as a high risk employer because of its large number of workers compensation claims.

**Exhibit 5-10** shows the number and amount paid for RISD claims for 1997 through 2000. RISD also has reported two claims for 2001, but no medical or compensation expenses have been paid as of September 30, 2001.

**Exhibit 5-10**  
**RISD Workers' Compensation Claims**  
**1997 through 2000**

<b>Fund Year</b>	<b>Number of Claims</b>	<b>Total Medical and Compensation Expenses Paid to Date</b>	<b>Case Base Incurred</b>
1997	96	\$70,124	\$70,124

1998	107	\$97,604	\$140,549
1999	140	\$153,710	\$174,719
2000	123	\$128,814	\$251,580
<b>Total</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>\$420,252</b>	<b>\$636,972</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>\$112,563</b>	<b>\$159,243</b>

Source: TASB Risk Management Fund detail list of claims as of 9/30/2001.

Of the 466 claims reported over the last four years, 21 exceeded \$5,000. **Exhibit 5-11** summarizes RISD's workers' compensation claims that exceeded \$5,000 from 1998 to 2001.

**Exhibit 5-11**  
**RISD Workers Compensation Claims Exceeding \$5,000**  
**As of October 31, 2001**

Accident Date	Paid to Date			Total Case Base Incurred
	Compensation	Medical & Expenses	Total	
1/08/98	\$0	\$13,206	\$13,206	\$13,206
1/12/98	\$5,343	\$20,130	\$25,472	\$25,472
8/24/98	\$299	\$4,848	\$5,147	\$5,147
2/16/99	\$5,737	\$20,830	\$26,568	\$26,568
3/11/99	\$0	\$11,476	\$11,476	\$24,500
6/25/99	\$23,490	\$23,243	\$46,733	\$76,533
10/27/99	\$2,233	\$14,446	\$16,679	\$16,679
12/06/99	\$9,846	\$9,296	\$19,142	\$19,142
12/14/99	\$15,266	\$14,374	\$29,640	\$37,000
1/10/00	\$4,293	\$6,698	\$10,991	\$13,293
1/21/00	\$0	\$10,871	\$10,871	\$10,871
3/09/00	\$1,275	\$24,883	\$26,158	\$26,158
8/23/00	\$6,069	\$4,101	\$10,169	\$14,169
9/07/00	\$7,618	\$2,226	\$9,845	\$10,700

9/12/00	\$8,709	23,485	\$32,194	\$37,000
10/27/00	\$1,603	\$5,352	\$6,955	\$6,955
1/16/01	\$9,895	\$15,262	\$25,156	\$40,000
2/07/01	\$2,290	\$9,390	\$11,680	\$23,340
4/30/01	\$1,827	\$6,316	\$8,144	\$18,000
5/21/01	\$7,337	\$6,775	\$14,112	\$37,585
8/04/01	\$4,536	\$16,714	\$21,250	\$32,854
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$117,666</b>	<b>\$263,923</b>	<b>\$381,588</b>	<b>\$515,172</b>

*Source: TASB Detail Claims Report as of October 21, 2001.*

The average expense for the 21 claims that exceeded \$5,000 was \$18,171. The nature of the injury for the majority of these large claims included a strain from a slip or fall or from a pushing, pulling or reaching incident.

The district does not investigate injuries. The district relies on a third-party administrator (TASB) to investigate and efficiently and accurately handle the claim.

Killeen ISD improved the safety of its schools by creating a Safety Review Board to analyze the causes of accidents and design measures to prevent their repetition. The Safety Review Board reviewed serious accidents involving district facilities, property and personnel. The board determined the primary factors behind each accident and made recommendations to the superintendent on how such hazards could be eliminated or mitigated. The Safety Review Board included directors for Risk Management, School Safety, Transportation Services, Plant Services, Food Services, Property Management, Student Services, Auxiliary Personnel and Employee Relations, as well as the district's environmental specialist, campus principals or their designees and the district's chief of police.

The KISD Safety Review Board met whenever serious accidents occurred. Serious accidents were those resulting in a fatality, permanent injury to limbs, \$5,000 or more in property damage, damages caused by exposure to hazardous chemicals, projected lost time to a district employee of 30 days or more, incidents publicized by the news media and any accident involving a district vehicle in which the district driver was cited.

**Recommendation 39:**



**Establish a Safety Review Board to evaluate serious on-the-job accidents.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent obtains approval from the school board to establish a Safety Review Board and creates the board consisting of departmental directors and campus principals.	May 2002
2.	The Safety Review Board meets quarterly to analyze factors that contributed to accidents and submit recommended corrective actions to the superintendent.	June 2002 - Ongoing
3.	The superintendent submits to the board for approval recommendations to improve safety.	July 2002 - Ongoing
4.	The superintendent implements necessary measures recommended by the Safety Review Board.	July 2002 - Ongoing
5.	The superintendent or his designee analyzes quarterly accident and safety data and workers' compensation loss claims history to determine if implemented measures are effective.	September 2002 - Ongoing
6.	The superintendent or his designee prepares quarterly reports on workers' compensation claims to the board.	September 2002 - Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

The 2001 Texas Legislature has established a statewide school employee health insurance plan for teachers and other school district employees. In September 2002, RISD will be required to participate in the Teacher Retirement System's (TRS) statewide health care benefit program.

Districts with 500 or fewer employees will be required to participate in the new state insurance plan beginning in fall 2002. If a district of this size participated in a risk pool as of January 1, 2001, it may elect to remain in the same risk pool or participate in the new teacher retirement state pool. In addition, if the district of this size was individually self-insured on or before January 1, 2001 and has continued the self-insured program since that time, it may also elect not to participate in the state pool.

The plan further provides that districts that are parties to a health insurance contract in effect on September 1, 2002 are not required to participate until the expiration of the contract period.

All full-time employees and part-time employees who are members of TRS are automatically covered by the basic state plan. Receiving higher levels of coverage will require additional district and employee contributions. To assist with these costs, the state will send each district \$75 per month, per covered employee and will give each employee an additional \$1,000 annually to help pay for additional employee coverage, dependent coverage, compensation or any combination thereof. Part-time employees who are members of TRS may participate if they or the district pays the full cost.

Districts are required to make a minimum contribution of \$150 per employee per month. If they are not making that effort, over the next six years, the state will help them pay that local district share. The state will phase out this hold harmless aid over the next six years. Districts reaching the Maintenance and Operations tax cap of \$1.50 will also be held harmless for any tax effort over \$1.50 required to reach their minimum district effort of \$150 a month.

Districts contributing more than \$150 a month per employee may use the difference between their current expenditure per employee per month and the required \$150 a month minimum effort to provide additional insurance coverage or other employee compensation.

Because RISD, with fewer than 501 employees, participated in a risk pool as of January 1, 2001 but withdrew, the district must participate in TRS in fall 2002.

Health insurance for RISD's employees is provided through a contract with Managed Benefits Administrators and Insurance Consultants, Inc. District employees have four optional plans from which to choose. PPO options to choose from through the Ethix/True-Choice network as shown in **Exhibit 5-12**.

**Exhibit 5-12**  
**RISD Health Insurance Options**  
**Effective September 1, 2001**

Plan Options	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
<b>In-Network Benefits</b>				
Annual Deductible	\$500 (3 per family)	\$500 (3 per family)	\$500 (3 per family)	\$500

Annual Coinsurance Limit Single/Family	\$5,000/\$10,000	\$3,000/\$6,000	\$1,500/\$3,000	\$2,400
Coinsurance	50%	70%	80%	60%
Office Visit Co-pay	\$25	\$25	\$25	\$30
Professional Services: In-Patient	50% after deductible	70% after deductible	80% after deductible	60% after deductible
Preventive Care - Babies/Children	\$25 co-pay then 100%	\$25 co-pay then 100%	\$25 co-pay then 100%	None
Preventive Care - Adults	\$25 co-pay then 100% (limited to \$150 annually per insured)	\$25 co-pay then 100% limited to \$250 annually per insured)	\$25 co-pay then 100% (limited to \$250 annually per insured)	None
Maternity	50% after deductible	70% after deductible	80% after deductible	60% after deductible
Chiropractic Care Annual Maximum	50% after deductible \$300	70% after deductible \$500	80% after deductible \$500	60% after deductible \$300
Emergency Room Care	50% after deductible	70% after deductible	80% after deductible	60% after deductible
Prescription Drug Benefit Generic Brand Name	Greater of \$5 or 20% 50%	Greater of \$5 or 20% 50%	Greater of \$5 or 20% \$25	None
Prescription Mail Order Benefit Generic Brand Name	Greater of \$10 or 20% 30%	Greater of \$10 or 20% 30%	Greater of \$10 or 20% \$50	None
Annual Deductible	\$500 (3 per family)	\$500 (3 per family)	\$500 (3 per family)	\$500
Annual Coinsurance Limit Single/Family	\$10,000/\$20000	\$6,000/\$12,000	\$3,000/\$6,000	\$3,600
Coinsurance	50%	50%	60%	40%
Office Visit Benefit	50% after deductible	50% after deductible	60% after deductible	40% after deductible
Maternity	50% after deductible	50% after deductible	60% after deductible	40% after deductible
Professional Services: In Patient	50% after deductible	50% after deductible	60% after deductible	40% after deductible
Plan Maximums	\$50,000 Annually	\$1,000,000 Lifetime	\$1,000,000 Lifetime	\$10,000

				Annually
Life & AD&D Insurance Benefit	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Monthly Cost	\$1.80	\$1.80	\$1.80	\$1.80
<b>Employees Cost of Insurance</b>				
Employee Only	\$35	\$85	\$240	District pays 100% for employees only. Dependents not eligible.
Employee + Spouse	\$124	\$265	\$436	
Employee + Child (ren)	\$99	\$194	\$330	
Employee +Family	\$249	\$381	\$604	

*Source: RISD business office.*

RISD participated in the South Texas Health Cooperative along with the Rio Hondo and La Feria ISDs as of January 2001. However, the district withdrew from the cooperative and is now insured by a private organization, RISD has lost its ability to rejoin the previous pool or competitively bid for its group health coverage for 2002-03 and is mandated to participate in the state program effective September 2002.

**Recommendation 40:**

**Establish a committee to review the state health plan and develop a plan for an orderly conversion.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent appoints an insurance committee of employees from throughout the district and designates the business manager as chairman.	May 2002
2.	The insurance committee develops a plan for converting to the state plan in 2002-01.	June 2002
3.	The business manager prepares a report to the board on the potential impact of the funding changes on the district and its employees.	July 2002
4.	The business manager holds informational sessions with all employees to provide information pertaining to the state insurance.	August 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# Chapter 5

## ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines the Asset and Risk Management operations of the Raymondville Independent School District (RISD) in four sections:

### **D. FIXED ASSETS**

The guidelines set forth in TEA's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide* (FASRG) define fixed assets items as:

- tangible in nature with an expected life of more than one year;
- of a significant value at the time of purchase or acquisition; and
- reasonably identified and controlled through a physical inventory system.

Fixed assets may include land, buildings, machinery, furniture and other equipment intended to be held and used over a long period of time. Various data relating to a district's fixed assets must be accumulated in order to maintain control and accountability for the custody and maintenance of individual items and to help plan for the district's future needs.

Beginning September 1, 2001, school districts must depreciate assets to conform with the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement 34. The GASB issues accounting and financial reporting rules for state and local governments throughout the United States.

GASB 34 now requires governmental entities to report assets net of depreciation in financial statements. Before GASB 34 was issued, governments treated their assets at purchase as expenses, rather than allocating the expense over the assets' useful life. Only a few exceptions will be allowed, such as land, permanent infrastructure, assets acquired long ago and assets with a short life or low value. According to TEA, if a purchase meets these criteria and costs \$5,000 or more, the item should be accounted for as a fixed asset.

The FASRG requires assets costing \$5,000 or more to be recorded in a district's fixed asset group of accounts. Under TEA guidelines, items that cost less than \$5,000 are recorded as an operating expense of the appropriate fund. These guidelines also allow school districts to establish lower thresholds for control and accountability for equipment that costs less than \$5,000.

### **FINDING**

RISD has not kept its fixed asset inventory current and lacks proper procedures to ensure that all fixed assets are added to the system. District campuses and departments create purchase requisitions for fixed asset items. The requisitions are then approved by the business manager, superintendent and board when required. RISD has no central warehouse, so campuses and departments receive the items purchased. The district does not require campuses and departments to tag fixed asset items immediately upon arrival. Invoices are remitted to the business office for payment and for recording fixed assets in the general ledger's fixed asset account.

Representatives of the RISD business office told TSPR that fixed assets have not been tracked since December 2000. Reconciliation of detailed fixed assets listings are not reconciled to the general ledger control account to ensure that all fixed assets purchased have been added to the fixed asset listing. Without current, accurate and complete data on its fixed assets a district cannot correctly report that information in its financial reports, provide accurate insurance coverage, dispose of unneeded items timely and protect the district's investments.

**Recommendation 41:**

**Develop procedures to ensure all fixed assets are immediately tagged when received, added to the inventory listing and recorded in the accounting system.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The business manager develops procedures for tagging and recording fixed assets and for monthly reconciliation of detailed inventory records to the general ledger's fixed asset account.	May 2002
2.	The business manager presents the procedures to the superintendent for approval	June 2002
3.	The business manager distributes the procedures and holds training sessions for all employees who have responsibilities for fixed assets.	July 2002
4.	The business manager assigns responsibility to the chief accountant for monthly reconciling fixed asset listings to the accounting system records.	August 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## **FINDING**

RISD does not have a fixed asset control system that assigns individual accountability for fixed assets and has not consistently conducted annual physical inventories. Principals and department management personnel are not specifically assigned the responsibility for safekeeping the district's fixed assets in their custody.

Representatives of the RISD business office told TSPR that the district did not conduct an inventory of fixed assets in 2000-01.

Districts that have control over their fixed assets are those that assign responsibility and then hold those individuals accountable for any missing items or other discrepancies. Without assigning accountability, RISD principals and department personnel have no vested interest in ensuring that assets are properly tagged, inventoried and safeguarded.

### **Recommendation 42:**

**Assign principals and department management staff custody for fixed assets and conduct an annual physical inventory.**

By assigning responsibility for fixed assets to principals and department personnel and conducting annual physical inventories, and by holding these individuals accountable for the assets in their custody, RISD can ensure that the district's assets are properly protected.

## **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent amends the district's fixed asset policy to assign responsibility to principals and department management personnel and requires an annual physical inventory to be conducted.	May 2002
2.	The superintendent presents the new policy to the board for approval.	June 2002
3.	After the board's approval is obtained, the superintendent directs the business manager to coordinate a physical inventory of the district's fixed assets.	July 2002
4.	The business manager prepares fixed asset listings for each campus and department and develops instructions for principals and department personnel to follow when performing the physical inventory.	July 2002
5.	Principals and department personnel return the inventory listings to the business manager after completing the	August 2002



	physical inventory.	
6.	The business manager reviews the fixed asset listings and makes appropriate adjustments if necessary.	September 2002

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

### **FINDING**

RISD is not prepared to implement new accounting and reporting guidelines required by GASB 34.

GASB 34 significantly changes how Texas school districts and other state and local government entities must report their finances to the public. TEA has required school districts to implement the new standards for 2001-02.

Under the new rules, anyone with an interest in school finance, such as current and prospective residents and businesses, will have access to school budget information. School financial reports must provide information about the cost of providing services to students as well as a narrative analysis of the school's financial performance. The reports must show whether revenues are adequate to pay for services. Districts also must calculate and record depreciation for school facilities and equipment, and disclose the costs of all programs supported by tax revenues.

Reports prepared under GASB 34 will help school boards better understand the implications of policy decisions. School districts will be held to a higher level of accountability for the uses of public funds. In addition, reports prepared under the new standard will help to determine whether the school district's financial condition is improving or declining and help taxpayers assess the fiscal impact of the district's management actions.

### **Recommendation 43:**

#### **Obtain GASB 34 training for key business office personnel and develop plans to ensure the district's compliance.**

The superintendent and accountant should work with the district's external auditor and representatives of Region 1 to develop an implementation plan.

### **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The business manager and appropriate staff obtain GASB 34 training.	May 2002
2.	The business manager works with Region 1 representatives and the district's external auditor to develop a plan for GASB 34 implementation.	June 2002
3.	The business manager presents the superintendent with information on GASB 34 and detailed issues on its implementation.	July 2002
4.	The superintendent and business manager present the board with information on GASB 34 and the issues that will affect the district.	July 2002
5.	The business manager implements procedures to satisfy the requirements of GASB 34.	August 2002

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The Texas Association of School Business Officers (TASBO) conducts two-day workshops on GASB 34 compliance training at a cost of \$250 per person. The fiscal impact of \$750 (\$250 x 3) assumes that RISD will send three of its personnel to a two-day workshop and it can be funded from 2001-02 budgeted funds.

### **FINDING**

The district's computerized accounting system provided by Texas Educational Consultative Services, Inc. includes a fixed asset software module, but the district does not use it. The fixed asset module is designed to enable the district to record individual items by location and to print location-based reports.

Maintaining a district's fixed assets in a system that provides data in a timely manner is essential to proper investment management. Incomplete data on fixed assets can cause the district to maintain inaccurate insurance information, recognize incorrect depreciation expenses and make it difficult to determine the condition or location of assets.

On July 19, 2001, the RISD school board approved a policy covering the district's fixed assets. According to the policy, all school district property valued at \$5,000 or more must be classified as fixed assets. In addition, all school district items or property worth \$500 to \$5,000 must be inventoried for accountability.

Using a computerized fixed asset inventory system can reduce the amount of time required to record transactions, provide current listings for physical inventory purposes and make reconciling to accounting records more efficient.

**Recommendation 44:**

**Use the fixed asset module in the district's existing financial accounting system.**

The district also should separate the inventory into two categories; items valued between \$500 and \$5,000 and items valued at more than \$5,000 to be in compliance with the board policy on district assets.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The business manager develops procedures for the use of the fixed asset module and instructs the staff on how to use them.	April 2002
2.	The chief accountant enters asset data into the fixed asset module of the accounting system.	April 2002
3.	The business manager uses the fixed asset control module as its formal detail records for the district's fixed assets.	May 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# Chapter 6

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This chapter discusses the financial management of Raymondville Independent School District (RISD) in three sections:

- A. Organization, Management and Staffing
- B. Districtwide Planning and Budgeting
- C. Accounting and Internal Control

Effective financial management ensures that a school district receives all available revenue from state and federal resources, maintains a track record of sound financial decisions and makes adequate and equitable budget allocations. A well-managed financial department will issue timely, accurate and informative reports on the district's finances, maintain adequate internal controls, employ skilled personnel and maintain a consistent record of unqualified opinions by its external auditors.

Financial management in school districts requires effective planning, budgeting and ongoing evaluation of the use of district resources. Financial management is most effective when resources are used to meet district-established priorities.

### **BACKGROUND**

Texas public school districts must meet financial management requirements established by federal and state laws, rules and regulations. Internally developed policies and procedures, Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) guidelines also provide direction to a school district's financial management activities.

Texas school districts are required by Texas law to conduct school programs in accordance with the state constitution. The Texas Education Code (TEC) spells out the specific requirements that school districts must comply with and authorizes the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to establish standards for all school districts. TEA's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide* (FASRG) outlines accounting and reporting requirements for Texas school districts.

The RISD business office is responsible for financial reporting, accounting, accounts payable, accounts receivable, payroll, investing and fixed assets. The business manager supervises eight employees and reports to the district superintendent. The district contracts with the Brownsville firm of Pattillo, Brown & Hill for external auditing services.

RISD's revenues steadily increased from 1997-98 to 2001-2002. Revenues from federal sources increased considerably while revenues from the state decreased. **Exhibit 6-1** shows RISD's actual revenues for 1997-98 through 1999-2000 and budgeted revenues for 2000-01 and 2001-02.

**Exhibit 6-1**  
**RISD Actual and Budgeted Revenues**  
**1997-1998 through 2001-02**

<b>Revenue Source</b>	<b>Actual Revenues 1997- 98</b>	<b>Actual Revenues 1998- 99</b>	<b>Actual Revenues 1999-2000</b>	<b>Budgeted Revenues 2000-01</b>	<b>Budgeted Revenues 2001-02</b>	<b>Percent Increase/(Decrease) 1997-98 to 2001-02</b>
Local and intermediate revenues	\$4,167,692	\$4,430,859	\$4,539,372	\$3,839,149	\$4,171,437	0.1 %
State program revenues	\$11,778,352	\$10,903,873	\$10,991,788	\$11,699,606	\$11,613,962	(1.4%)
Federal program revenues	\$33,638	\$1,041,859	\$1,121,644	\$1,138,563	\$1,121,384	3,233.7%
Total adjusted revenue	\$15,979,682	\$16,376,591	\$16,652,804	\$16,677,318	\$16,906,783	5.8%
General Fund revenues per Student	\$5,631	\$5,779	\$6,080	\$6,284	\$6,553	16.4%

*Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 1997-98 through 2000-01, and RISD business office.*

RISD had the largest increase in expenditures among its peers from 1997-98 through 2000-01, as shown in **Exhibit 6-2**.

**Exhibit 6-2**  
**Actual and Budgeted Expenditures**  
**All Funds**  
**RISD and Peer Districts**  
**1997-98 through 2000-01**

District	Actual Expenditures 1997-98	Actual Expenditures 1998-99	Actual Expenditures 1999-2000	Budgeted Expenditures 2000-01	Percent Increase/(Decrease) 1997-98 to 2000-01
Raymondville	\$15,211,782	\$16,508,042	\$18,437,132	\$18,071,473	18.8%
Taft	\$9,822,133	\$11,274,897	\$11,518,605	\$10,416,912	6.1%
West Oso	\$12,900,850	\$17,210,270	\$17,421,633	\$13,064,500	1.3%
Mathis	\$13,626,661	\$15,642,845	\$17,796,027	\$13,422,739	(1.5%)
Lyford	\$11,812,237	\$11,636,217	\$12,816,154	\$11,618,226	(1.6%)

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1997-98 through 2000-01.

**Exhibit 6-3** presents a summary of RISD's 2000-01 expenditures by function compared to the state average. RISD spent 51.9 percent of its total expenditures on instruction, which is slightly more than the state average for 2000-01 of 51.5 percent.

**Exhibit 6-3**  
**RISD Budgeted Expenditures by Function**  
**As a Percentage of Total Expenditures**  
**2000-01**

Function (Code)	RISD Expenditures	Percent of Total Expenditures	
		RISD	State
Instruction	\$9,376,317	51.9%	51.3%
Instruction-Related Services	\$560,940	3.1%	2.6%
Instructional Leadership	\$261,204	1.4%	1.2%
School Leadership	\$992,490	5.5%	5.2%
Student Support Services	\$581,702	3.2%	4.0%
Student Transportation	\$286,116	1.6%	2.5%
Food Services	\$1,222,500	6.8%	4.9%
Co-curricular/Extracurricular Activities	\$832,444	4.6%	2.2%
Central Administration	\$813,546	4.5%	3.5%
Plant Maintenance and Operations	\$1,479,760	8.2%	9.6%
Security and Monitoring Services	\$54,250	0.3%	0.6%

Data Processing Services	\$100,756	0.5%	1.1%
Other	\$67,553	0.4%	0.0%
<b>Total Operating Expenditures</b>	<b>\$16,629,578</b>	<b>92.0%</b>	<b>88.7%</b>
<b>Total Non-Operating Expenditures</b>	<b>\$1,441,895</b>	<b>8.0%</b>	<b>11.3%</b>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$18,071,473</b>	<b>100.0%*</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

*Source: TEA, Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 2000-01.*

# Chapter 6

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This chapter discusses the financial management of Raymondville Independent School District (RISD) in three sections:

### **A. ORGANIZATION, MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING**

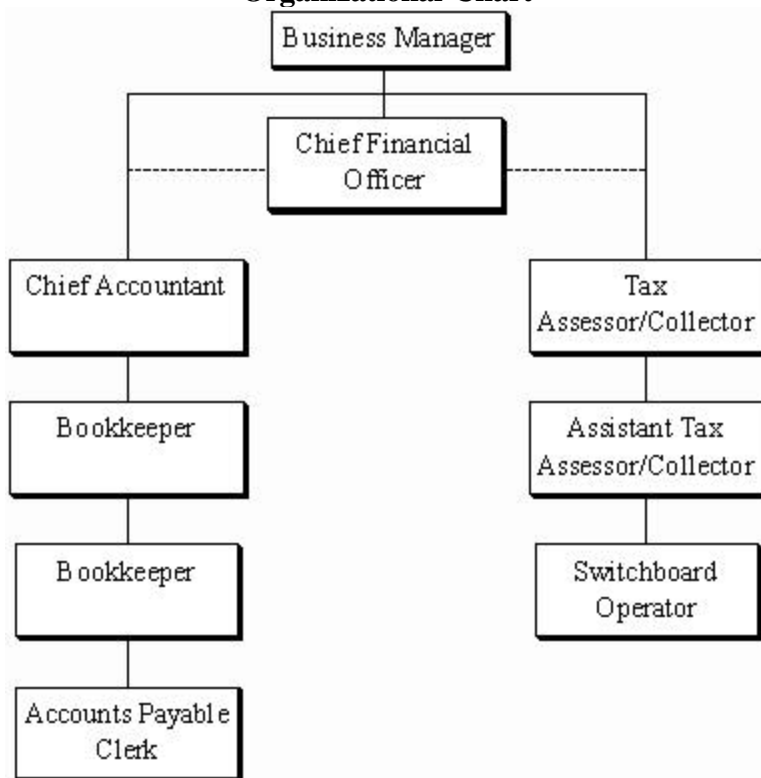
The RISD business office staff consists of nine full-time positions including the business manager, hired in November 2001, and vacant chief financial officer, chief accountant and tax-assessor officer positions. The office also includes two bookkeepers, an accounts payable clerk, an assistant tax assessor/collector and a switchboard operator. A student accounting/PEIMS clerk (not included in RISD's organization chart for the business office) also reports to the business manager. **Exhibit 6-4** shows the current organization of RISD's business office.

An efficient and effective financial system is dependent on an organizational structure with trained staff that have work assignments that allow sufficient time to complete their work in an orderly and professional manner. Management staff must be available to assist with complex financial issues and to oversee the daily operations.

#### **Exhibit 6-4 Business Office**



## Organizational Chart



*Source: RISD business office, November 2001.*

Facing a financial crisis for 2001-02 and realizing its financial operations were in trouble, the former RISD superintendent contacted the Regional Educational Service Center I (Region 1) for assistance.

In a presentation conducted by Region 1 representatives on May 30, 2001, the district was advised to execute a number of actions to include:

- Increase tax collection rate for current year and future years to 100 percent of tax levy;
- Increase tax rate for 2001-02 to maximize state aid;
- Sell bonds before August 31, 2001;
- Submit an Instructional Facilities Allotment (IFA) application by June 2001;
- Reduce the number of staff and teachers for 2001-02 to meet the minimum acceptable staff and teacher ratios;
- Create a district budget for 2001-02 within remaining projected revenue and have a built-in increase to the general fund balance.

## FINDING

RISD's business office lacks public school district financial accounting training.

The business manager position remained vacant for several months until the current business manager joined the district in November 2001. The new business manager has a background in auditing but has no previous school district financial management experience. The chief financial officer left the district in October 2001 and has not been replaced. The chief accountant, the only remaining district employee with school district experience and training, retired in November 2001 after more than 27 years with RISD. The district has a full-time tax assessor/collector position that is currently vacant and a full-time assistant tax collector who mails statements and collects the district's taxes. RISD does not maintain an internal audit staff and has contracted with an auditing firm in Brownsville to perform its annual external audit.

Members of the district's secretarial staff attended a workshop in Harlingen in February 2001. The business manager began taking Texas Association of School Board Officials (TASBO) business-related courses in November 2001 but those are the only employees with training in governmental accounting.

Financial management and reporting requirements for school districts are complex. Understanding the reporting and legal requirements and prohibitions are critical. The amount of state and federal funding the district receives depends on the district's ability to interpret and apply rules and regulations in an accurate and thorough manner.

**Recommendation 45:**

**Obtain training for the district's business manager and other business office staff and adjust future postings to require school district experience.**

The need for well-trained and experienced business office staff is essential to improving the district's financial operations.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The business manager contacts a Region I representative for advice on the appropriate business training classes and workshops to be attended by RISD business office personnel.	April 2002
2.	The superintendent directs the business manager to revise job descriptions to require an appropriate level of school district experience for each position in the business office.	April 2002

3.	The business manager requests a schedule of training classes and workshops from TASBO.	May 2002
4.	The business manager prepares a proposed schedule of training classes and workshops to be attended by him and other business office personnel and submits to the superintendent for approval.	June 2002
5.	The superintendent submits the proposed schedule of business and governmental accounting classes and workshops to the board for review and approval.	July 2002
6.	The business manager registers business office employees for appropriate training classes and workshops.	August 2002
7.	The business manager and business office employees attend training.	September 2002 - Ongoing

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Workshops for TASBO include many subjects such as the basics of governmental accounting, GASB reporting models, fundamentals of risk management, budget and financial planning, investment training, pupil projections and state aid calculation. Assuming two business office personnel register for TASBO online classes in budget and financial planning, duties of school business administrators, external auditing and risk management, the cost will be \$1,600. The cost of most two-day classes is \$200 per person for TASBO members. The cost estimate assumes two district personnel register for four two-day classes in each year from 2002-03 to 2006-07 (\$200 x 4 x 2).

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>
Obtain training for the district's business manager and other business office staff and adjust future postings to require school district experience.	(\$1,600)	(\$1,600)	(\$1,600)	(\$1,600)	(\$1,600)

### **FINDING**

The current organization of the business office does not provide for an effective and efficient operation. The chief accountant, chief financial officer and tax-assessor/collector positions are vacant as of this writing. With the existing vacancies, all business office personnel report directly to and seek guidance from the business manager.

The accounts payable clerk is responsible for entering accounts payable information, processing bi-weekly payrolls, maintaining the district's teacher retirement records and preparing the weekly check register that is presented to the board.

Bookkeepers are responsible for maintaining sick leave balances, entering central office purchase order information, maintaining fixed asset records, maintaining employee insurance records, preparing insurance vendor checks and performing daily backups of the computer system. Bookkeepers also assist with the district's switchboard.

Tax office personnel receive property value information from the Willacy County Appraisal District and coordinate printing the district's tax statements, mail them out to local residents and businesses and collect tax payments.

A position that does not appear on the organization chart for the RISD business office is a clerk that handles the student attendance accounting, acts as the PEIMS coordinator and the software coordinator for the district's financial accounting system.

An effective and efficient business office requires that duties be assigned equitably between staff and staff provided with supervisory personnel who are knowledgeable and capable to provide guidance and direction. Staffing levels should be established so that required functions can be adequately performed but as the lowest cost possible.

#### **Recommendation 46:**

#### **Reorganize the Business Office with two chief accountants who report to the business manager.**

The vacant chief financial officer position should be changed to a chief accountant position, giving the district two chief accountants who report to the business manager and the vacant tax assessor/collector position should be eliminated. One chief accountant should be responsible for the formal accounting duties, including management of the general ledger, financial reporting, management of grant programs, fixed asset accounting and management of cash receipts. The second chief accountant should be designated as the tax assessor- collector and be responsible for tax assessor-collector duties and duties primarily associated with accounts payable, purchasing, payroll, and PEIMS reporting. The duties of the two chief accountants should be organized to equitably distribute responsibilities and maximize internal controls. Both positions should be filled with accountants with college degrees and school finance experience.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager submits the realignment plan for the business office to the superintendent for approval.	April 2002
2.	The business manager organizes the specific job duties of the business office under two chief accountant positions, defines the lines of authority and develops job descriptions for the revised duties and responsibilities.	May 2002
3.	The Human Resource Department recruits two chief accountants with college degrees and school district finance experience.	May - June 2002
4.	The business manager interviews candidates and makes recommendations to the superintendent for approval.	June 2002
5.	The two chief accountants report to work and the business manager implements the new organizational structure.	July 2002

## FISCAL IMPACT

Eliminating the tax assessor-collator position and changing the chief financial officer to a chief accountant position would save the district a total \$44,534 (\$38,725 salary costs and \$5,809 benefit costs based on a 15 percent benefit rate) a year. Salary reductions of \$38,725 are based on eliminating the tax assessor-collector position at a salary of \$33,165 and the difference in salary between the chief financial officer of \$45,000 and a chief accountant position of \$39,440 (\$33,165 + \$45,000 - \$39,440).

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>
Reorganize the Business Office with two chief accountants who report to the business manager.	\$44,534	\$44,534	\$44,534	\$44,534	\$44,534

# Chapter 6

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This chapter discusses the financial management of Raymondville Independent School District (RISD) in three sections:

### **B. DISTRICTWIDE PLANNING AND BUDGETING**

Effective budgeting provides a district with a solid financial foundation. An effective budgeting system typically includes formal input from all interested parties, appropriate guidance from administrators, desired goals, objectives and outcomes from strategic planning processes, and detailed management and reporting throughout the budget cycle. Budget processes are most effective when they include an opportunity for district personnel and the public to have input in the development process and when they require ongoing evaluation. Budgets developed without adequate involvement of the public and staff do not receive the support necessary for it to be utilized to its maximum.

TEA's FASRG states that the budgeting process is composed of three major phases; planning, preparation and evaluation. Planning defines the goals and objectives of the campuses and the district and develops programs to attain those goals and objectives. Once these programs and plans have been established, budgetary resource allocations are made to support them. Budgetary resources cannot be allocated until plans and programs have been established.

The budget must also be evaluated for its effectiveness in attaining goals and objectives. Evaluation typically examines how funds were expended, what outcomes resulted from the expenditure of funds and to what degree these outcomes achieved the objectives stated during the planning phase. This evaluation phase is important in determining the following year's budgetary allocations.

Public hearings should be held during the budget development process and serve as an opportunity for public review and comment on the proposed budget. These hearings are legally mandated by the TEC and typically include the presentation of a summary of the proposed district budget by either the board president, the superintendent or a designee. Individuals and interest groups are then given the chance to present feedback on the proposed budget before the school board legally adopts the district budget. Once the budget is legally adopted, funds are available for expenditure.

**Exhibit 6-5** contains excerpts of a sample budget calendar as recommended in the TEA's FASRG.

**Exhibit 6-5  
Budget Calendar Sample**

<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Activity/ Process</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
February 2002	Budget process approved.	Superintendent
February 2002	Projected enrollments and developed revenue estimates.	Business manager
March 2002	Budget process outlined to principals and staff.	Assistant superintendent of Finance and business manager
March 2002	Beginning of campus, departments and special program budget preparation.	Principals, staff, campus improvement committee and other budget managers
April 2002	Completed budgets sent to the business office.	Budget managers
May 2002	Budgets compiled by the business office and non-allocated requests sent to the superintendent and assistant superintendent.	Business manager
May 2002	Budget managers may be asked to meet with the superintendent and/or the assistant superintendent to justify non-allocated requests.	Superintendent, assistant superintendent and budget managers
May 2002	Complete prioritization of non-allocated requests.	Superintendent and/or assistant superintendent
May 2002	Review personnel staffing and proposed salary schedule.	Superintendent and assistant superintendents
May 2002	Complete superintendent's review of preliminary district budget, personnel requirements, facility requirements and projected revenue.	Superintendent and assistant superintendents.
June 2002	Budget workshop held.	Superintendent and school board
August 2002	Budget workshop held.	Superintendent and school board
August 2002	Prepare newspaper notice of public hearing. Notice must be published 10 days prior to public hearing.	Business manager

August 2002	Official public budget hearing held.	School board, superintendent, assistant superintendent and business manager
August 2002	Budget adopted.	School board

*Source: TEA Financial Accountability System Resource Guide.*

Sections 44.002 through 44.006 of the TEC establish the legal basis for budget development in school districts. The following five items summarize the legal requirements from the code:

- the superintendent is the budget officer for the district and prepares or causes the budget to be prepared;
- the district budget must be prepared by a date set by the State Board of education, currently August 20;
- the president of the board of trustees must call a public meeting of the board, giving 10 days public notice in a newspaper, for the adoption of the district budget. Any taxpayer in the district may be present and participate in the meeting;
- no funds may be expended in any manner other than provided for in the adopted budget. The board does have the authority to amend the budget or adopt a supplementary emergency budget to cover unforeseen expenditures; and
- the budget must be prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and state guidelines.

## **FINDING**

Principals and central office administrators are the only RISD staff involved in the development and management of the district's budget. For 2001-02, the budget development process began in June 2001, with the involvement of the former chief financial officer, campus principals, the Food Services director and the assistant superintendent. The interim superintendent presented the budget to the school board for adoption.

In November 2001, when the TSPR review team visited the district, principals and program supervisors had not been provided monthly expenditure reports indicating the budget expenditures to date and the remaining budget by account code. These reports are common among school districts and normally are available from a school district's accounting software system. Summaries of these reports are also furnished to school boards.



RISD's public hearing on its proposed budget was held during a special session of the school board on August 30, 2001. The meeting was advertised 10 days in advance, as required by TEA's FASRG.

RISD board policy CE (LOCAL) requires budget planning to be an integral part of overall program planning. **Exhibit 6-6** shows the RISD policy regarding the annual operating budget.

**Exhibit 6-6**  
**RISD Board Policy CE (LOCAL)**  
**Annual Operating Budget**

Element	Policy
Budget Planning	Budget planning shall be an integral part of overall program planning so that the budget effectively reflects the district's programs and activities and provides the resources to implement them. In the planning process, general educational goals, specific program goals and alternatives for achieving program goals shall be considered, as well as input from the District- and campus-level planning and decision-making committees. Budget planning and evaluation are continuous processes and should be a part of each month's activities.
Availability Of Proposed Budget	After it is presented to the board and prior to adoption, a copy of the proposed budget shall be available upon request from the business office or superintendent. The superintendent or a designee shall be available to answer questions arising from inspection of the budget.
Budget Meeting	The annual public meeting to discuss the proposed budget shall be conducted as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the board president shall request at the beginning of the hearing that all persons who desire to speak on the proposed budget and/or tax rate sign up on the sheet provided;</li> <li>2. prior to the beginning of the meeting, the board may establish time limits for speakers;</li> <li>3. speakers shall confine their remarks to the appropriation of funds as contained in the proposed budget and/or the tax rate; and</li> <li>4. no officer or employee of the district shall be required to respond to questions from speakers at the hearing,</li> </ol>
Authorized Expenditure	The adopted budget provides authority to expend funds for the purposes indicated and in accordance with state law. board

	policy and the district's approved purchasing procedures. The expenditure of funds shall be under the direction of the superintendent or a designee who shall ensure that funds are expended in accordance with the adopted budget.
Budget Amendments	The budget shall be amended when a change is made increasing any one of the functional spending categories or increasing revenue object accounts and other resources.

*Source: RISD Board Policy Manual.*

**Recommendation 47:**

**Implement a budget process that includes a budget calendar and involves campus administrators and program supervisors in budget development and monitoring.**

The superintendent should distribute a budget calendar to campus administrators and program supervisors. Raymondville ISD's community, staff and site-based decision-making committees or campus improvement councils should be made aware of the calendar and provide input during the budget development process.

RISD should use the TEA's recommended budget calendar as a starting point and revise it based on the unique requirements of the district. However, two important dates for budget preparation and adoption are mandated by TEA and should be incorporated into RISD's calendar.

The budget should also consider multi-year planning efforts and incorporate the financial impact of long-range objectives. Once the budget is developed and adopted by the school board, the business manager should provide monthly reports to campus administrators and program supervisors.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent and business manager develop a budget calendar and explain the budget process to principals and staff.	April 2002
2.	Principals, program directors and program supervisors develop program budgets.	May 2002
3.	The SBDM reviews the campus budgets and recommends amendments where necessary.	May 2002
4.	The business manager submits the proposed budget to the	June 2002

	superintendent for review and approval.	
5.	The superintendent, business manager and school board participate in budget workshops and consider community input in budget development.	July - August 2002
6.	The school board conducts a public hearing for budget review and adopts the budget.	August 2002 - Annually
7.	The business manager prepares monthly budget status reports and sends them to principals, program directors and program supervisors for information and monitoring.	September 2002

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

### **FINDING**

RISD was not prepared for the audit of its 2000-01 financial records. The district contracted with Pattillo, Brown & Hill, a Brownsville auditing firm, to perform the annual audit. The firm contacted the district in June 2001 requesting the schedule for audit planning and interim work for July and August as well as year-end fieldwork from September through December.

An audit is a methodical examination of financial records, which concludes with a public report of findings. The purpose of a financial audit is to determine whether the financial statements are free of material misstatements. The audit generally includes an examination of evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements prepared by the school district. The audit also assesses the accounting principles used and any significant estimates made by management.

As part of the audit, the auditor reviews the district's internal control system. The auditor is required to obtain an understanding of the district's internal control system and assess whether the controls are sufficient.

To be able to conduct a successful and cost-efficient audit, external auditors must have ready access to various financial, and in some instances, non-financial records and documents maintained by the school district.

In November 2001, when the review team visited the district, no audit work or preparation for the audit had been performed by district staff. RISD has not responded to the auditor's request and has not scheduled any on-site, interim or fieldwork, making it unlikely the district will complete

the audit within the timeframe required by TEA. In addition, the TSPR review team's inspection revealed bank reconciliations that had not been completed for several months, and a lack of insurance schedules that include coverage and premium information. In January 2001, after the TSPR fieldwork, the district confirmed that it had contracted with Texas Educational Consultative Services, Inc. to complete the financial accounting records for 2000-01, and had reconciled most bank accounts.

A school district must submit a copy of the *Annual Financial and Compliance Report* with accompanying audit reports, and an accompanying management letter, if applicable, to the Division of School Financial Audits of TEA within 120 days of the end of the school district's fiscal year. This requirement is established by law (TEC, Section 44.008) and cannot be waived by TEA. The *Annual Financial and Compliance Report* must be prepared in accordance with the requirements established in the Financial Accounting and Reporting module of TEA's FASRG.

RISD's fiscal year ends August 31. If a school district does not submit an annual financial and compliance report to TEA within the prescribed period or if the submitted report is not properly prepared, TEA will notify the superintendent that the district is not in compliance. TEA may also conduct a special accreditation investigation of the district's financial accounting practices, and state and federal program requirements. The district's accreditation rating may be lowered, based on the results of this special investigation,.

#### **Recommendation 48:**

#### **Develop a calendar and strategy for preparing for annual financial and compliance audits.**

Schedules and documents that should be provided to auditors include:

- copies of the budget and amendments;
- copies of the minutes of each board meeting and monthly financial statements;
- copies of an organizational chart showing lines of responsibility;
- copies of the school district's flow chart documents;
- copies of bank reconciliation for each bank account;
- a list of all depositories and their addresses, including bank account numbers and account names;
- a list of all investment transactions by fund;
- a list of outstanding encumbrances that were closed out and included in the budget;
- a schedule of insurance including the names of companies, types of coverage, inclusive dates of the policies and total cost per policy;

- reconciliation of payrolls and related accounts such as payroll taxes and retirement deductions;
- copies of new bond issues and details of bond sales;
- copies of teacher contracts and appropriate leave schedules;
- copies of lease agreements;
- copies of trial balances and financial statements, footnote disclosures and combining schedules; and
- copies of previous audit reports.

The district should also make schedules and other documents that support the financial statements available to the auditors. School districts should supply other information that may be requested by the auditor. Early agreement on the scope and nature of the information requested is recommended.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The business manager drafts a calendar and strategy that includes business office procedures for preparing for the district's annual financial and compliance audits.	April 2002
2.	The business manager distributes the calendar and business office procedures to all business office staff.	April 2002
3.	The business manager directs the preparation of the district's annual financial and compliance audits.	April 2002 - Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

Raymondville ISD is not considering or attempting to maximize its Tier II funding as it prepares its annual budgets.

The two categories of property levies made by school districts are maintenance and operations (M&O) and interest and sinking (I&S). The M&O portion is used to cover routine operating costs of the district and the I&S portion is used to pay principal and interest on bonds sold to finance construction projects. RISD's 2000-01 M&O tax rate of \$1.36 per \$100 of taxable value is \$0.14 below the maximum authorized level of \$1.50.

State funding for public education is appropriated to school districts through three tiers of funding. Tier I funding is designed so that the state and district share the basic cost of education. Funding allotments under the

Tier I formula are based on student attendance in weighted average daily attendance (WADA). WADA is an adjusted student count that compensates for student and district characteristics. Tier II funding rewards the district's local tax efforts by guaranteeing that tax efforts beyond the annual required local share in Tier I will yield a minimum amount of money per WADA (\$25.91 for the 2001-02 school year). Tier III funds allow local school districts to receive partial state funding for debt service requirements on previously issued bonds.

**Exhibit 6-7** shows the estimated change in yield if the district were to raise its M&O tax to \$1.40, \$1.45 or \$1.50. Calculations assume property values accurately reflect current values and the district increases its tax rate to the maximum amount allowable while raising its tax collection rate to 100 percent.

**Exhibit 6-7  
RISD Tier II Yield Calculations**

M&O Tax Rate	\$1.40	\$1.45	\$1.50
Change in state yield	\$951,252	\$1,289,469	\$1,627,686
Change in local yield	\$365,117	\$494,934	\$624,751
Increase in total yield	\$1,316,369	\$1,784,403	\$2,252,437
Increase in total yield by year	\$1,316,369	\$468,034	\$468,034

*Source: Texas School Performance Review.*

Due to the district's decreasing fund balance and budgetary needs that exceed revenue that would be produced from the district's current tax rate, in May 2002, Region 1 advised the district to increase the M&O tax rate to maximize Tier II funding. As presented in **Exhibit 6-7**, for every dollar that the district receives by increasing its M&O tax rate it would receive an additional \$2.61 in state revenue.

**Recommendation 49:**

**Provide the board with funding scenarios that maximize Tier II funding during budget development.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The business manager develops various funding scenarios for the district's M&O tax rate and the impact they will have on Tier II funding.	April 2002
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2.	The business manager explains the affects of adjusting the district's M&O tax rate will have on Tier II funding.	May 2002
3.	The board carefully considers the various scenarios and adopts a tax rate that meets the needs of the community while maximizing the amount of state funding the district collects.	August 2002 - Annually
4.	The business manager and superintendent review new legislation relative to tax rate adoption to determine how it will affect district funding.	January 2003 - Ongoing

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

### **FINDING**

The RISD's general fund balance is below the level recommended by the TEA.

The equity in governmental funds such as RISD's General Fund is reported as a "fund balance." A fund balance is the difference between a district's assets and liabilities and can be looked upon as a savings account. It is the measure of the district's financial resources available for future use after all obligations have been met.

The fund balance of a district's general fund is significant since it is the primary fund that supports most of the district's activities and receives state aid and local maintenance taxes. It is one of the primary measures of solvency for the school district. The fund balance is viewed as the most meaningful reflection of the district's financial condition.

RISD's optimum fund balance is calculated in **Exhibit 6-8**.

**Exhibit 6-8**  
**Optimum Fund Balance Calculation**  
**RISD General Fund**  
**1997-98 through 2000-01**

	<b>1997-98</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-01</b>
<b>Total general fund balance</b>	<b>\$4,237,519</b>	<b>\$4,106,149</b>	<b>\$3,074,181</b>	<b>\$622,728</b>
<b>Total reserved fund balance</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$94</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total designated fund</b>	<b>\$2,715,000</b>	<b>\$2,615,000</b>	<b>\$2,615,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>

<b>balance</b>				
Estimated amount needed to cover fall cash flow deficits in the general fund	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Estimate of one month's average cash disbursements during the regular school session	\$1,525,200	\$1,525,200	\$1,525,000	\$1,566,906
Optimum fund balance and cash flow	\$4,240,200	\$4,140,294	\$4,140,000	\$1,566,906
Excess/(deficit) undesignated unreserved general fund balance	(\$2,681)	(\$34,145)	(\$1,065,819)	(\$944,178)

*Source: RISD Audited Annual Financial Report, 1997-98 through 1999-2000.*

*2000-01 estimated based on the final amended budget since the annual financial report was not completed as of the date of this writing.*

An adequate fund balance covers unanticipated changes in revenue projections and for emergency expenditures. Unanticipated decreases in revenues or increases in expenditures can place a district in a difficult financial situation without an adequate fund balance to rely upon.

**Recommendation 50:**

**Establish a general fund balance management policy and require the business manager to report fund balance levels to the board.**

This policy should establish goals concerning the district's optimum fund balance and include a means of attaining and maintaining the desired level. The policy should provide the superintendent with clear directions as to how to increase revenues or decrease expenditures in order to meet the district's fund balance goals. The policy should also require the business manager to make regular reports to the board to keep them informed of the fund balance's status.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The business manager drafts a fund balance policy and	April 2002
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	submits it to the superintendent for approval.	
2.	The superintendent presents the policy to the board for approval.	May 2002
3.	The board approves the policy and directs the superintendent to implement it.	May 2002
4.	The business manager develops the reports that will be submitted to the board.	June 2002
5.	The business manager presents the reports to the board.	July 2002 - Ongoing

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

# Chapter 6

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This chapter discusses the financial management of Raymondville Independent School District (RISD) in three sections:

### **C. ACCOUNTING AND INTERNAL CONTROL**

A district's internal control structure includes three elements: the control environment, the accounting system and control procedures.

- The control environment reflects the overall attitude, awareness and actions of the board of trustees, management and others concerning the importance of controls.
- The accounting system consists of the methods and records established to identify, assemble, analyze, classify, record and report transactions and to maintain accountability for the related assets and liabilities.
- Control procedures are those policies and procedures in addition to the environment and accounting system that management has established to provide reasonable assurance that specific objectives will be achieved.

The business office prepares the district's accounts payable and payroll checks. Checks are prepared using the district's financial computer system and require two board member signatures. Checks are signed electronically and the district superintendent and the business manager have the authority to initiate the check preparation process. After checks are prepared, they are presented to the board for approval during regular board meetings.

### **FINDING**

RISD manages and maintains an excessive number of bank accounts, including nine general operating accounts and seven campus activity accounts. The business office maintains the operating accounts while the schools maintain the student activity accounts. The operating accounts consist of:

- an interest and sinking fund,
- a construction fund,
- a health insurance fund,
- a local maintenance fund,

- the Wil-Cam Co-op Fund,
- a WCED Successor in Interest Fund,
- a food service fund,
- the Consolidated Application Fund and
- the payroll fund.

The campus activity accounts consist of:

- Raymondville High School,
- the central cafeteria,
- L.C. Smith Elementary,
- RISD Special School Fund,
- Myra Green Middle School,
- Wil-Cam Activity Fund and
- Pittman Elementary.

The business office maintains signature cards only for the operating accounts and the schools maintain their own signature cards. Checks written against the operating accounts require signatures of both the board president and the board secretary and checks are signed electronically. The business manager and the superintendent are authorized to execute check preparation within the financial system. Prior to her departure, the chief financial officer was responsible for reconciling the operating bank accounts.

The schools make their own deposits, issue their own checks and reconcile the student activity bank accounts. Although the chief financial officer is provided a copy of the reconciliation, there is an internal control issue with the current process due the schools reconciling their bank statements while also making deposits and issuing checks. Proper internal controls require that reconciliation of bank accounts be prepared by individuals that do not prepare deposits or issue checks whenever possible.

TEA's FASRG prescribes two common methods of activity fund accounting. One method is centralized: funds are controlled and disbursed through the district's accounting department. The other is decentralized: funds are accounted for and controlled by the various schools.

Some of the advantages of centralizing activity funds accounting are:

- better internal controls, since all receipts and disbursements flow through one central accounting system rather than systems that can vary from school to school;
- easier access for internal and external audits;
- consistency;

- better control of cash management operations including assurance of proper collateralization of cash and investment balances;
- more consistent district policies and procedures; and
- a reduced need for audit funds.

Mount Pleasant ISD uses an effective, centralized method of accounting for the activity funds, which strengthens the district's internal controls and fosters efficient fund operations. This saves administrative effort and reduces financial monitoring activities. The district maintains all financial records for these funds in the central accounting office and uses established control processes to disburse all funds, reducing the potential for errors and inappropriate use of funds.

**Recommendation 51:**

**Combine campus activity bank accounts into a single account and centralize management and reconciliation.**

Combining the seven campus activity accounts into one account will reduce banking fees and leave fewer accounts to be reconciled. Reconciliation of the accounts should be performed by the Business Office to improve internal controls. The schools can continue to make deposits and issue checks but should provide the Business Office with necessary documents so that the accounting can be performed for the single account.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The business manager prepares a recommendation for consolidating bank accounts and submits it to the board for approval.	April 2002
2.	The board approves the consolidation of bank accounts.	May 2002
3.	The business manager closes the unneeded bank accounts.	June 2002
4.	The business manager develops procedures for managing the single bank account for campus activity funds.	June 2002
5.	The business manager trains district personnel to use the new procedures for administration of the consolidated campus activity funds.	June 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

# Chapter 7

## PURCHASING AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

This chapter discusses the purchasing and contract management functions within the Raymondville Independent School District (RISD) in three sections:

- A. Purchasing Management
- B. Contract Management
- C. Textbook Operations

An effective purchasing system ensures that a district acquires quality materials, supplies, equipment and services in a timely manner, at the best price and in accordance with all applicable purchasing and bid requirements established by the Texas Government Code, Texas Education Code (TEC) and local district policies.

Section 44.031 of the TEC addresses state purchasing laws including the competitive bidding process. In general, when districts purchase items valued at \$25,000 or more, or multiple like items with a cumulative value of more than \$25,000 in a 12-month period, one or more of the following processes shown in **Exhibit 7-1** must be followed:

**Exhibit 7-1**  
**Competitive Procurement Methods**

<b>Purchasing Method</b>	<b>Method Description</b>
Competitive bidding	Requires that bids be evaluated and awarded based solely upon bid specifications, terms and conditions contained in the request for bids, bid prices offered by suppliers and pertinent factors affecting contract performance. Forbids negotiation of prices of goods and services after proposal opening.
Competitive sealed proposals	Requires the same terms and conditions as competitive bidding, but allows changes in the nature of a proposal and prices after proposal opening.
Request for proposals	Generates competitive sealed proposals and 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 for both the design and construction of a project. (The "single entity" is usually a team of firms including a general contractor, architect and sometimes an engineer. One firm almost never does both the design and the construction.)
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.
Reverse Auction Procedure	Outlines a bidding process that involves submission of bids by multiple suppliers, unknown to each other, in a manner that allows the suppliers to bid against each other.

*Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA) Financial Accountability System Resource Guide.*

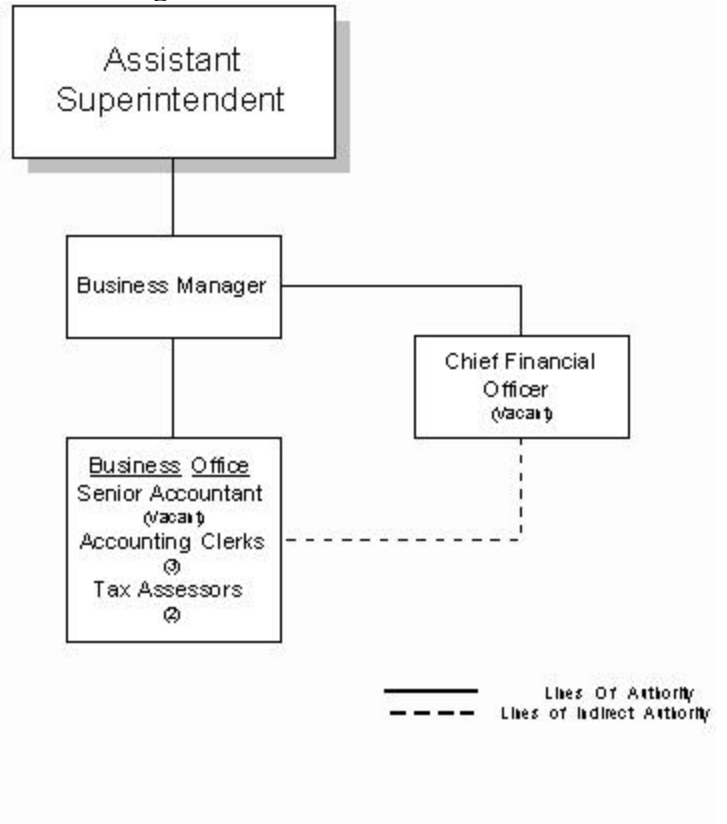
In 1999, the Office of the Attorney General issued an opinion (Op. JC-37) stating that school district procurement through an inter-local agreement or a cooperative purchasing arrangement satisfies competitive bidding requirements. Under an inter-local agreement, a district can contract or agree with another local government, including a nonprofit corporation that is created and operated to provide one or more governmental services, to purchase goods and any services reasonably required for the installation, operation or maintenance of the goods.

School districts often stay current on purchasing statutes, regulations and practices through professional development courses, seminars or workshops. This ensures that district staff is aware of current purchasing statutes, regulations and board policies and able to prepare competitive procurement specifications, evaluate competitive procurement bids, maintain a vendor list, supervise the processing of purchase orders and evaluate the performance of vendors.

## **BACKGROUND**

RISD'S organization for its purchasing function is displayed in **Exhibit 7-2**.

**Exhibit 7-2**  
**RISD Purchasing Function Organization**



Source: *RISD Administrative Organization Chart*, approved August 7, 2001.

RISD personnel with purchasing process duties are displayed in **Exhibit 7-3**.

**Exhibit 7-3**  
**RISD Personnel with Purchasing Process Duties**  
**November 2001**

Job Title	Duties	Supervisor
Board of Trustees	Approves all purchase orders of \$5,000 and above.	
Teachers, Principals, school administrators.	Prepare purchase orders and submit through their supervisors to accounting clerk in the business office.	Various

department directors		
Accounting Clerk	Receives purchase orders and assigns vendor number, encumbers purchase orders, annotates purchase order log and forwards purchase orders to accounts payable clerk and forwards to the business manager for review.	Senior Accountant
Business Manager	Develops RFPs, evaluates proposals submitted and reviews contracts. Supervises accounts payable, fixed asset accounting, receiving and purchase order functions. Prepares purchase order listing for submission to the Board of Trustees for review and approval for payment. Reviews purchase order and returns to accounting clerk or delivers to assistant superintendent for further processing.	Assistant Superintendent
Accounting Clerk	Forwards purchase orders to Superintendent's secretary who forwards to the Assistant Superintendent or Superintendent for signature.	Senior Accountant
Superintendent	Superintendent reviews, approves and signs purchase orders of more than \$5,000 before forwarding to the board for approval. The superintendent's secretary returns purchase orders to the business manager or accounting clerk.	Board of Trustees
Accounting Clerk	Sends purchase order copies to requestors and files copies, receives and files signed purchase orders. Requestors of purchases order the goods or services.	Senior Accountant
School Administrative secretary, distribution personnel or ordering official	Accepts delivery of goods or delivers goods to the campus ordering the item(s), as required.	Various

*Source: Interviews with RISD central office personnel, November 2001.*



# Chapter 7

## PURCHASING AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

This chapter discusses the purchasing and contract management functions within the Raymondville Independent School District (RISD) in three sections:

### A. PURCHASING MANAGEMENT

An effective purchasing system requires several key components. One of the most important is a good organization that includes well-trained staff. 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 perform similar functions. A centralized purchasing function is essential to efficiency in purchasing for the following reasons:

- Small volume purchases can be consolidated into larger volume purchases for the entire district;
- Vendors and the business community have a single, central contact within the district;
- Purchasing personnel have experience and are trained in purchasing, sourcing, prices and vendor relations that saves the district money and allows for a more efficient process; and
- Purchasing personnel are trained in state and federal laws and local district policies applicable to purchasing and providing for better compliance.

**Exhibit 7-4** shows RISD's purchasing and acquisition policy CH (LOCAL).

**Exhibit 7-4**  
**RISD Purchasing and Acquisition Policy CH (LOCAL)**  
**Adopted February 8, 2001**

PURCHASING AUTHORITY	The board delegates to the superintendent or designee the authority to determine the method of purchasing, in accordance with CH (LEGAL), and to make budgeted purchases. However, any purchase that costs or aggregates to a cost of \$5,000 or more shall require board approval before a transaction may take place.
COMPETITIVE BIDDING	If competitive bidding is chosen as the purchasing method, the Superintendent or designee shall prepare bid specifications. All bids shall be submitted in sealed

	envelopes, plainly marked with the name of the bidder and the time of opening. Any bid may be withdrawn prior to the scheduled time for opening. Bids received after the specified time shall not be considered. The district may reject any and all bids.
COMPETITIVE SEALED PROPOSALS	If competitive sealed proposals are chosen as the purchasing method, the superintendent or designee shall prepare the request for proposals and/or specifications for items to be purchased. All proposals shall be submitted in sealed envelopes, plainly marked with the name of the proposer and the time of opening. Proposals received after the specified time shall not be considered. Proposals shall be opened at the time specified, and all proposers shall be invited to attend the proposal opening. Proposals may be withdrawn prior to the scheduled time of opening. Changes in the content of a proposal, and in prices, may be negotiated after proposals are opened. The district may reject any and all proposals.
RESPONSIBILITY FOR DEBTS	The board shall assume responsibility for debts incurred in the name of the district so long as those debts are for purchases made in accordance with adopted board policy and current administrative procedures. The board shall not be responsible for debts incurred by persons or organizations not directly under board control; persons making unauthorized purchases shall assume full responsibility for all such debts.
PURCHASE COMMITMENTS	All purchase commitments shall be made by the superintendent or designee on a properly drawn and issued purchase order, in accordance with administrative procedures.
PERSONAL PURCHASES	District employees shall not be permitted to purchase supplies or equipment for personal use through the district's business office.

*Source: RISD District Policy Manual.*

## **FINDING**

RISD does not have a purchasing procedures manual, nor does the district provide training on purchasing policies and procedures to district staff. The district's purchasing policies reflect the requirements under the Education Code sections relating to school district purchasing. However, written procedures that implement the policies are not available for district staff.

District staff has not been provided with written instructions on entering requisitions into the financial system; explaining what happens to a purchase order once it has been received by the Business Office; or information regarding purchasing dollar thresholds, when bids or quotes are needed, when purchases must be presented for board approval, who has authorization to make purchases, or definitions or procedures for emergency purchases.

A purchasing manual outlines the rules and procedures for making school district purchases, provides guidance to school district employees and acquaints vendors and suppliers with a district's purchasing policies and procedures. A purchasing manual can include the district's purchasing goals and objectives; statutes, regulations and district policies applicable to purchasing; approval requirements; requisition and purchase order processing guidelines; competitive procurement requirements and procedures; vendor selection information; receiving and distribution procedures as well as procedures for the deposal of obsolete and surplus property.

Well-written and organized procedures help ensure compliance with board policies and document the intent of those policies; provide the basis for training new employees; and offer a tool for evaluating employees based on their adherence to procedures.

**Recommendation 52:**

**Develop and implement a comprehensive purchasing procedures manual and provide training to district personnel.**

By providing a purchasing manual and training its staff, the district will promote consistency in its purchasing practices, provide guidance to school district employees and assist school district officials when making purchasing decisions.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The designated purchasing agent drafts a comprehensive purchasing manual that includes purchasing thresholds and submits to the business manager for review and approval.	April 2002
2.	The business manager approves and submits the purchasing manual to the superintendent and board for approval.	May 2002
3.	The designated purchasing agent publishes and distributes the new purchasing manual to district staff.	June 2002
4.	The designated purchasing agent provides training to district staff on	June

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING** The district's purchasing policy does not provide for an appropriate management review of certain levels of purchases.

RISD principals approve purchases from campus funds up to \$5,000 and the business manager approves purchases from maintenance and operation funds up to \$5,000 without any further approvals required from central office staff. All purchases above \$5,000 require superintendent and board approval. Allowing purchases of up to \$5,000 without the approval of central office staff does not provide the district with proper review to ensure that district funds are being used effectively.

An effective purchasing process includes reviewing purchase orders by appropriate management staff prior to the expenditure of district funds. The review of purchase requests by the appropriate level of management staff ensures that district funds are being used judiciously. The review also helps to ensure that similar items purchased for different campuses or departments are of similar quality and are consistent with district standards.

Delegation of purchasing authority at multiple levels provides campuses and departments needing to make routine small purchases the authority to make those purchases without the delay of multiple review steps. A multiple level review process also establishes proper management oversight for larger dollar purchases to ensure that the purchases are needed and are for the types of items that are consistent throughout the district.

**Recommendation 53:****Revise purchasing policies to establish multiple levels of purchasing authority.**

RISD's purchasing policy should be revised to identify different levels of purchasing authority. The superintendent should have a specific dollar limit, the assistant superintendent a lesser limit and limited delegations of authority to school principals and selected administrators. Consideration should be given to authorizing school principals and selected administrators to acquire items costing less than \$100 without submitting a purchase request prior to the acquisition. A school principal or administrator should be allowed to call the business office and obtain a

purchase order number for tracking purposes, acquire the items and then submit the invoice to the business office for payment.

Purchasing procedures should be streamlined to eliminate inefficient steps that do not add value to the process. Each step in the process should be analyzed to determine its value and should be eliminated if there is none.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent, assistant superintendent and business manager meet to discuss the revisions to the district's purchasing policy and procedures.	April 2002
2.	The business manager drafts a revised purchasing policy.	May 2002
3.	The superintendent approves the policy and submits to the board for approval.	June 2002
4.	The business manager drafts revised purchasing procedures based on the policy approved by the board.	June 2002
5.	The business manager submits the revised procedures to the superintendent for approval.	July 2002
6.	The business manager distributes the revised purchasing procedures and holds training sessions with principals and administrators.	July 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

RISD has not formally designated a purchasing agent to direct the purchasing activity in the district. District staff and vendors need to know who has the authority to act on behalf of the board involving purchasing transactions. A trained purchasing agent is required to ensure all purchasing and contracting is performed in accordance with state purchasing laws and district policies.

RISD's former chief financial officer acted as the district's purchasing agent until resigning in October 2001 after working in the district's business office for two years. A business manager was hired in November 2001, filling a vacancy that had existed since February 2001. The new business manager has extensive accounting and audit experience for both government and private organizations, but has no previous experience or training in school district purchasing or contract laws. In addition, after 27

years with RISD, the senior accountant retired in November 2001 leaving the district with no remaining personnel trained in state purchasing or contract laws.

Without a designated purchasing agent who is knowledgeable in state purchasing laws and district policies the district cannot ensure that its purchasing transactions are following the required laws and policies and the vendor community does not know who has the authority to represent the district in purchasing activity and to legally bind the district in purchasing transactions.

**Recommendation 54:**

**Designate a purchasing agent and obtain training in state purchasing laws and school district purchasing procedures.**

The superintendent should recommend a purchasing agent to the board and support training opportunities for the agent and other staff as needed. The Regional Educational Service Center I (Region 1) should be consulted to determine appropriate training requirements.

The Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASBO) offers many training opportunities through workshops and online courses, which provide valuable instruction on state purchasing laws in addition to other school business related subjects.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent designates a purchasing agent and obtains board approval.	April 2002
2.	The purchasing agent consults with Region 1 to determine training opportunities.	April 2002
3.	The purchasing agent obtains approval from the superintendent for training for selected purchasing workshops.	June 2002
4.	The purchasing agent and other staff as needed attend TASBO training workshops on state purchasing laws.	September 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The cost of two-day TASBO training workshops is usually \$200 for member districts. The fiscal impact assumes RISD will send two district personnel to purchasing related workshops annually beginning in 2002-03 (\$200 x2).

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>
Designate a purchasing agent and obtain training in state purchasing laws and school district purchasing procedures.	(\$400)	(\$400)	(\$400)	(\$400)	(\$400)

## **FINDING**

RISD uses a number of alternatives to local bidding for its goods and services, much like other school districts in Willacy County but has not actively participated in cooperatives with other local governmental entities. Cooperative bid arrangements with other governmental agencies is a popular and effective alternative to acquiring goods and services while complying with bidding requirements.

RISD participates in two cooperative purchasing agreements for district procurements. The Texas Building and Procurement Commission's cooperative purchasing program and the TASB's BuyBoard bid out products and provides a product listing to members. The district's participation in these two purchasing arrangements satisfies the legal competitive bidding requirements and reduces the cost associated with advertising, printing of bidding documents and postage.

RISD processes an average of 682 purchases orders per month for materials and services for its departments and campuses. Annual purchase order volume for the district is summarized in **Exhibit 7-5**.

**Exhibit 7-5**  
**Annual Purchase Order Volume**  
**1999-2000 through 2001-02**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Volume</b>	<b>Monthly Average**</b>
1999-2000	8,151	815
2000-01	6,993	699
2001-02*	5,301	530
<b>Average</b>	<b>6,815</b>	<b>682</b>

*Source: RISD central office personnel.*

*\*Prorated based on first three months of 2001-02.*

*\*\*Average calculated on 10-month schedule.*

Board approved interlocal agreements with other local governmental entities allow school districts to share each other's bids just like established cooperatives. When one district bids its tax collection services for example, another district through an interlocal agreement would be eligible to use that bid as well, provided the vendor was willing to extend the pricing. This practice saves each district time in developing bid specifications and also saves the cost of advertising, printing and postage.

**Recommendation 55:**

**Establish interlocal agreements with neighboring school districts in order to make purchases using each other's bids.**

Each district's bid specifications would need to include wording to notify vendors of an existing interlocal agreement and the possibility of other districts' participation. The district could save on advertising, printing and postage expenses by not having to develop formal bids. RISD could also achieve savings on purchases of goods and services by obtaining better prices as a result of interlocal agreements.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent seeks board approval to pursue interlocal agreements with neighboring districts.	May 2002
2.	The superintendent meets and discusses with other local superintendents the possibility and benefits of participating in an interlocal agreement.	June 2002
3.	The district attorney drafts interlocal agreements and forwards to the other participating school districts.	July 2002
4.	The board of each participating school district approves and signs the interlocal agreement.	August 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.



# Chapter 7

## PURCHASING AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

This chapter discusses the purchasing and contract management functions within the Raymondville Independent School District (RISD) in three sections:

### **B. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT**

Proper financial and project management relies on the concept of value received for cost incurred. In an era of increased emphasis on improved governmental financial and project management, agencies, including school districts, must use output and outcome-oriented measures in defining requirements as part of the budget and project planning process. To this end, effective contract management in school districts puts the emphasis on results and on measuring contractor performance in providing products and services of the best available quality at the lowest possible cost.

Performance-Based Contracting (PBC) methods are intended to ensure that required performance quality standards are achieved and that payments are related to the degree that services performed meet those contract standards. PBC provides an incentive for contractors to perform well and provide school districts with timely, affordable and high quality services.

The Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 37.601 states that performance-based contracts:

- describe the requirements in terms of results required rather than the methods of performance of the work;
- use measurable performance standards (i.e. terms of quality, timeliness, quantity, etc.) and quality assurance surveillance plans;
- specify procedures for reductions of fee or for reductions to the price of a fixed-price contract when services are not performed or do not meet contract requirements; and
- include performance incentives where appropriate.

In addition, the FAR states performance-based contracting includes the following five elements:

- statements of work, which define contract requirements in clear, concise language and identify specific work to be accomplished;

- quality assurance surveillance plans, which contain measurable inspection and acceptance criteria corresponding to performance standards contained in the statement of work;
- selection procedures, which incorporate competitive negotiations to ensure the selection of services offering the best value and cost;
- contract types, which must be selected in order to motivate contractors to perform at optimal levels by including performance incentives to increase efficiency and maximize performance; and
- follow-on and repetitive requirements, which includes experience gained from previous contracts and adds value to performance-based contracting methods.

Texas Education Code 44.031 states that, in determining contract awards to vendors, the district may consider:

- the purchase price;
- the reputation of the vendor and of the vendor's goods and services;
- the quality of the vendor's goods or services;
- the extent to which the goods or services meet the district's needs;
- the vendor's past relationship with the district;
- the impact on the ability of the district to comply with laws and rules relating to historically underutilized businesses;
- the total long-term cost to the district to acquire the vendor's goods or services; and
- any other relevant factor that a private business entity would consider in selecting a vendor, to include vendor response time and the compatibility of goods/products purchased with those already in use in the district.

In addition, Section 44.035 requires the district to publish evaluation criteria in request for bids or proposals.

TEA's Financial Accountability System Resource Guide states that a system for the evaluation of vendors and their performance is important to support an effective purchasing function. Factors to consider for inclusion in the evaluation are:

- timeliness of deliveries;
- service availability;
- completeness and accuracy of order; and
- quality of products or services received.

## **FINDING**

RISD staff is not trained or knowledgeable in the principles of performance-based contract development and management. Having previously worked as a principal for the district, the interim superintendent was appointed in June 2001 and has no prior training on contract development or management. The assistant superintendent was promoted from principal of the Alternative Education Program to his current position in June 2001 and has not yet received training on contract development and evaluation. Though the business manager, hired in November 2001, has vast experience in the fields of accounting and auditing, he has no prior school district financial management or contracting experience or training. Subsequently, district management is not providing training to school principals and department supervisors on how to effectively manage contracts.

By not having trained staff that are knowledgeable in contract development and evaluation the district is opening itself up to contracts that allow for poor quality materials, inferior workmanship and terms that are not in the best interest of the district.

**Recommendation 56:**

**Obtain training for key district personnel on effective contract development and management.**

In addition, once district managers and business leaders have acquired the necessary training, they should provide training to school principals and department supervisors who may be responsible for managing projects and evaluating contractor performance. The business manager should obtain training and conduct research on effective performance-based contract development. Subsequently, the business manager should develop contracting policies and procedures for the district and provide training for other district personnel.

Training should cover all contract development and management functions that may be encountered by a project manager or department supervisor. It should include in-depth discussion and an examination of all the components of contract management including the supervision, inspection and review of technical work, deliverables, reports, payment requests, project schedules and other matters.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent, assistant superintendent and business manager obtain training on contract development and management.	May 2002
2.	The assistant superintendent and business manager develop a policy	June

	and an in-house training program on contract management for district personnel and submit to the superintendent for approval.	2002
3.	The superintendent obtains approval from the board for the training program.	July 2002
4.	The assistant superintendent and business manager provide contract management training to district staff that are assigned contract management responsibilities.	August 2002

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASBO) is one of many organizations that provide workshops and training on contract development and management. The cost of most two-day workshops is \$200 for TASBO members. The fiscal impact assumes RISD sends three personnel to training in 2002-03 (\$200 x 3) and two in each subsequent year (\$200 x 2).

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>
Obtain training for key district personnel on effective contract development and management.	(\$600)	(\$400)	(\$400)	(\$400)	(\$400)

### **FINDING**

Several of RISD's vendor contracts are not performance-based and contain terminology that is vague and vendor-friendly. The terms of some district contracts do not protect RISD in the event contractors fail to perform as desired making it impossible for the district to impose sanctions. This situation results in the district receiving goods and services late and of lesser quality, incurring cost overruns and ultimately poor district-vendor relationships. Contracts with poor terms and ill-defined standards of performance undermine the district's contracting process and result in overspending in the form of unanticipated costs for changes and re-work.

RISD contracts with the Compass Group USA, Inc., by and through its Chartwells Division, to provide food service management. The contract provides for the district to pay Chartwells \$24,500 for services during 2001-02. Although district staff stated that Chartwell provides only consultant services, Article I of the August 28, 2001 contract deals with services provided by the contractor and reads that "Chartwells will manage the District's food service operations to the reasonable satisfaction of the District. Chartwells will manage the food service for the District in accordance with the financial arrangements as set forth in this article." The

district also employs a Food Services manager to oversee the day-to-day operations of food services. The contract wording is vague and does not specifically identify what is expected from the contractor.

Contributing to the vagueness of the Chartwells contract is its lack of performance measures. Without performance measures or goals, the district has no way to measure how well the contractor is performing or what actions are available to the district should the contractor not perform as expected. Contracts for this type of service often include clear and specific performance goals such as "reduce food service costs by 5 percent" and "improve food quality, as measured through surveys conducted every two months."

The district also contracted with the Joe Williamson Construction Company on November 16, 1999 for property improvement services at a cost of \$139,500. The contract does not include a listing of drawings, specifications, or addenda for work to be performed by the contractor. Article 2, paragraph 2.0 of the contract describes the services provided to the district as "In accordance with the Plans and Specifications agreed upon by and between the parties hereto, reference to which is here made for all purposes. Contractor agrees to construct certain improvements on the herein after described property Willacy County, Texas..." The contract does not specify what work is to be performed and neither plans nor specifications are included in the contract document. While Article 2, paragraph 2.4 states, "The only basis for rejection shall be non-conformity with the Plans and Specifications herein above referred to, or with any provisions of this Contract," the district is left unprotected in the event work is not completed to its satisfaction because plans and specifications are not included in the contract.

Some school districts save money by using detailed specifications and a precise bid process. To accurately budget and control costs associated with capital projects involving construction or renovation improvements to school facilities, the Ricardo ISD school board adopted a bid process by which the district works with an architectural firm to develop precise bid specifications and budgets for each identified project. During the procurement process, bid specifications are made available to all bidders, but budget information is kept secret. Bids for two capital improvement projects were subsequently accepted. The internal budget for both projects was \$349,125 while the actual bids were \$269,733 resulting in a savings to the district of \$79,392.

**Recommendation 57:**

**Draft contracts that are performance-based including performance standards, measures and incentives.**

A pilot study conducted by the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) has found that performance-based contracting methods reduce service contract costs an average of 15 percent and increase customer satisfaction by 18 percent. These types of results can have a tremendous impact on a school district's financial operations, which makes PBC a viable contracting instrument.

### **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent directs the business manager to develop effective contract management policies and procedures to include writing performance-based contracts with standards of contractor performance, performance measures and contractor incentives.	April 2002
2.	The business manager develops contract management policies and procedures for use in the district.	June 2002
3.	The business manager presents the contracting policies and procedures to the superintendent for review and presentation to the board for approval.	July 2002
4.	The business manager implements the contracting policies and procedures and communicates them to affected district employees.	August 2002
5.	The business manager drafts new district contracts using the principles of performance-based contract management.	September 2002 - Ongoing
6.	The district's legal counsel reviews and approves all major contracts.	September 2002- Ongoing
7.	The business manager and superintendent evaluate contracting policies and procedures.	Ongoing

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The fiscal impact uses the two contracts mentioned above as the basis for calculating savings and assumes savings of 15 percent as reported by the OFPP for a total annual savings of \$24,600 (\$24,500 plus \$139,500 times 15 percent). Once RISD implements the use of performance-based contracts, the district should realize continual financial savings and increase its satisfaction with vendor performance.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>
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Draft contracts that are performance-based including performance standards, measures and incentives	\$24,600	\$24,600	\$24,600	\$24,600	\$24,600
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# Chapter 7

## PURCHASING AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

This chapter discusses the purchasing and contract management functions within the Raymondville Independent School District (RISD) in three sections:

### C. TEXTBOOK OPERATIONS

The TEA is responsible for selecting and purchasing most of the textbooks used by Texas school districts. The TEA buys textbooks from publishers and lends them to districts. RISD places textbook orders each April for the coming school year using the TEA's Educational Materials online textbook requisition system. The district is entitled to order up to 110 percent of its maximum pupil enrollment for the grade or subject for which it is ordering pupil editions. In accordance with TEC Section 31.102, textbooks ordered through TEA are the property of the state, and the school board is the legal custodian of those textbooks.

Each school at RISD has scanning technology to inventory textbooks. Once inventoried, textbooks are issued to the teachers who issue them to the students. As of December 2001, the district has no lost textbook charges due to TEA.

The review team administered surveys to students, parents, teachers, campus administrators and district administrators regarding the issuance and quality of textbooks. Less than half of the students (48 percent) believe textbooks are in good condition while the majority of parents (74 percent) believe the textbooks are in good condition. **Exhibit 7-6** shows the percentage of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed that textbooks are delivered in a timely manner and are in good condition.

**Exhibit 7-6**  
**RISD Survey Results**  
**Quality of Textbook Materials**  
**October 2001**  
**Strongly Agreeing or Agreeing with the Statement**

Survey Statement	District Administrators	Campus Administrators	Parents	Teachers	Students
Students are issued textbooks in a timely	55.5%	62.3%	79.7%	60.5%	77.1%



manner.					
Textbooks are in good shape.	55.5%	58.4%	74.4%	71.2%	48.0%

*Source: TSPR Survey Results, November 2001.*

## **FINDING**

The district does not have an assigned textbook coordinator. During 2000-01, the administrative secretary to the director of Curriculum and Instruction was instructed to perform textbook coordinator duties. In June 2001 the director of Curriculum and Instruction left the district. The departure of the director of Curriculum and Instruction left the district without a textbook coordinator requiring the assistant superintendent to assume those duties.

A textbook coordinator is typically responsible for ordering and issuing textbooks, maintaining inventory records, preparing textbook forms such as Form TEX 006 (Statement of Textbook Charges) and Form TEX 009 (Lost Textbooks) and for developing textbook selection procedures. An assigned textbook coordinator should have a job description that adequately describes the position's textbook responsibilities and have training on current TEA textbook procedures.

Although the administrative secretary to the director of Curriculum and Instruction had received instructions from the director of Curriculum and Instruction, she had not received training or been officially designated as the district's textbook coordinator. In addition the administrative secretary's job description had not been updated to include textbook coordinator duties.

According to the TEA Manual for Textbook Coordinators, dated April 1997, duties of a textbook coordinator are to control all textbook activity within the district and coordinate all textbook activity with the TEA Division of Textbook Administration. According to the manual, textbook coordinators should:

- as soon as appointed, request a strict accounting of adopted instructional materials within the system for which he/she is assuming responsibility;
- maintain all records of activity including textbook distribution to and transfer from all school within the system;
- ensure all books are numbered and the "Property of the State of Texas" is printed on the inside cover;

- collect all money from the schools remitted by students for lost or destroyed textbooks and control those funds until they are either sent to Textbook Administration or used to purchase replacements directly from the publisher or depository.

**Recommendation 58:**

**Designate a district employee as the district's textbook coordinator.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent obtains board approval to delegate authority for textbook responsibilities to a designated staff person.	May 2002
2.	The Superintendent designates an employee to officially undertake textbook coordinator duties and revises the individual's job description to include textbook coordinator duties.	June 2002
3.	The textbook coordinator contacts TEA and obtains current textbook guidelines.	July 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

RISD does not have a manual containing textbook policies or procedures for performing textbook activities such as receiving, issuing and inventorying textbooks, collecting for lost textbooks and storing unassigned textbooks.

Without a manual that provides detailed instructions on textbook policies and procedures, textbooks are often not ordered and distributed to schools when needed or properly inventoried and stored. This results in extra textbook expenses for the district and late delivery of textbooks to students. The district has been using the April 1997 Manual for Textbook Coordinators published by the TEA as its main source to provide guidance on textbook procedures. The manual provides for general responsibilities for textbook activities. However, district specific procedures are not included in the manual.

Some districts have developed textbook manuals that provide detailed procedures on how to manage a district's textbook needs. Kenedy ISD is a district with a detailed textbook manual with procedures that allow the district to maintain compliance with applicable TEA textbook rules. The

Kenedy ISD textbook manual allows anyone to find answers to questions in one easy-to-locate place. The manual contains:

- all correspondence from TEA's Division of Textbook Administration;
- a requisition packet for the next school year;
- downloadable textbook materials such as questions and answers to commonly asked questions pertaining to out-of-adoption textbooks, surplus materials, and rules and regulations;
- instructions for supplemental requests for textbooks; and
- district policies and procedures including the annual inventory.

**Recommendation 59:**

**Develop a textbook manual that includes policies and procedures for performing textbook activities.**

The new textbook coordinator should contact Kenedy ISD and review their textbook manual to use as a guide in developing one for RISD.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The textbook coordinator, with superintendent approval, reviews district needs and Texas Education Agency guidelines for management of textbooks.	April 2002
2.	The textbook coordinator develops procedures, creates a textbook manual and coordinates the draft procedures with principals.	May 2002
3.	The textbook coordinator submits the manual to the superintendent for approval.	June 2002
4.	The textbook coordinator distributes the procedures and provides instruction on the use of the manual to directors of Curriculum, principals and teachers.	August 2002
5.	The textbook coordinator evaluates textbooks procedures periodically to make sure the procedures are working effectively.	August 2002 -Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# Chapter 8

## FOOD SERVICES

This chapter examines Raymondville Independent School District's (RISD) food service operations in three sections:

- A. Organization, Management and Staffing
- B. Compliance and Monitoring
- C. Financial Management

School food service operations are responsible for providing students and staff an appealing and nutritionally sound breakfast and lunch at a reasonable cost in an environment that is clean, safe and easily accessible. Several factors are used to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of a district's food service operation including staffing, productivity, food costs, the amount of waste, maximum participation in breakfast and lunch programs, nutritional value and variety of meals served, the length of time students wait to be served, financial self-sufficiency and the ratio of meals served to the labor hours worked to create them.

School food and nutrition programs are important to student learning and health and disease prevention. Many districts view school meals as an integral part of the education process and strive to ensure quality and maintain affordability. Policy decisions are made with the goal of providing all students with the skills and environment needed to adopt good eating habits.

The Texas School Food Service Association (TSFSA) has identified Standards of Excellence for evaluating school food service programs. TSFSA states that effective programs:

- 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;
- 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.

# Chapter 8

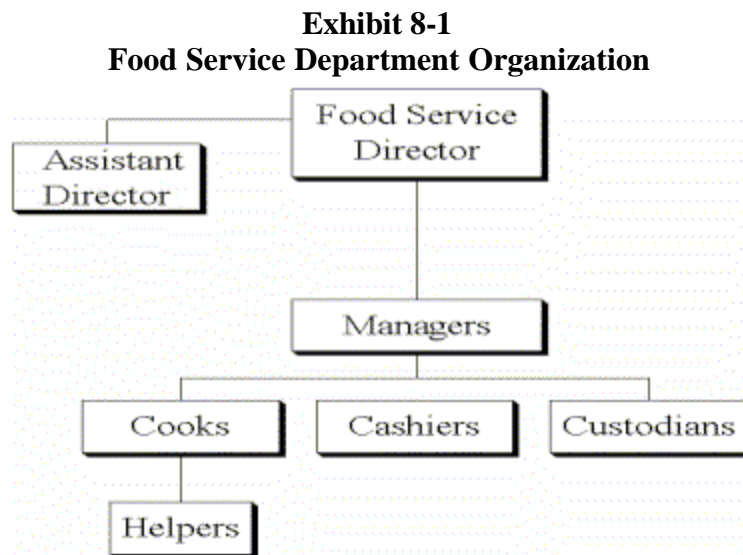
## FOOD SERVICES

This chapter examines Raymondville Independent School District's (RISD) food service operations in three sections:

### A. ORGANIZATION, MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING

RISD's food service operations are organized under the Food Service department and headed by a director who reports to the assistant superintendent. As of August, 2001, RISD contracted with Chartwells, a division of Compass Group USA, to provide consulting services for the Food Service operation. At this time, the RISD administration is only considering fully privatizing the district's Food Service department. The department operates four kitchens located at Raymondville High School, Myra Green Middle School and the Pittman and L. C. Smith Elementary schools.

**Exhibit 8-1** illustrates the department's organizational structure.



*Source: RISD Food Service department, November 2001.*

There are a total of 34 full-time employees and one part-time employee in the Food Service department. The number of years employed by the Food Service staff ranges from 1 to 29 years. The director has been at RISD for two years and more than 50 percent of the employees have been at RISD for more than 10 years. The average length of employment is 9.5 years.

Each cafeteria has a full-time custodian who sweeps and mops the dining area. The custodian's tasks differ slightly at each cafeteria. The tasks can include helping to take food ingredients out of the freezer and refrigerator, helping deliver ice chests and picking them up from classrooms, delivering commodities to each cafeteria and cleaning tables between lunch periods. The custodians will also help out as needed when other custodians are absent. The high school custodian delivers the lunch entrée which is prepared at the high school for the middle school daily.

RISD has experienced few problems with absenteeism but maintains a list of four people as substitutes. RISD does not use a substitute unless two or more employees are out. Helpers are moved around to accommodate absences. **Exhibit 8-2** reflects the daily staffing level per cafeteria.

**Exhibit 8-2  
RISD Food Service Staffing  
2001-02**

Campus	Position	Hours Expended on a Daily Basis
	Director	8
High School	Assistant/cashier*	7
	Manager	8
	Cook	8
	Cook	8
	Cook	8
	Cook	8
	Cook/cashier	8
	Helper	4
	Cashier/helper*	8
	Cashier/payroll/invoices*	8
	Custodian	8.5
	Cook	8
	Subtotal	91.5
Green Middle School	Manager/Cashier	8
	Cook	8
	Cook	8

	Cook/Cashier	8
	Helper	4
	Custodian	8
	Subtotal	44
Pittman Elementary	Manager	8
	Cook/cashier	8
	Cook/cashier	8
	Cook	8
	Cook	8
	Cook	8
	Cook	7.5
	Helper	4
	Custodian	8
	Subtotal	67.5
L.C. Smith	Manager	8
	Cook/cashier	8
	Cook/cashier	8
	Cook	8
	Cook	8
	Cook	8
	Helper	4
	Helper	4
	Custodian	8
	Subtotal	64
<b>Total</b>		<b>267</b>

*Source: RISD Food Service department, November, 2001.  
\*Administration Staff*

The high school and elementary schools are new and have fully-equipped kitchens. Myra Green Middle School is the only school in the district without a new kitchen. This kitchen is older and does not have the space

and equipment to support 547 students. Nonetheless, the middle school prepares its own breakfast meals and most of the lunch menu.

The warehouse for dry goods and freezer items is located in a building on the Pittman elementary campus commonly referred to as "Central." The manager responsible for overseeing the warehouse keeps the key to the building and the inventory delivery list in the new Pittman School. Deliveries of commodities are made as needed to three of the schools but are made every day to Myra Green Middle School because of space limitations in the food preparation area.

A safe and the mainframe point-of-service (POS) computer are kept at the old Pittman School. The middle and elementary schools lock up any money collected at Central on a daily basis. The high school food service personnel safeguard cash at their facility. The two new elementary schools do not have the POS computers set up in their cafeterias yet. The cashiers go daily to Central to input the number of meals served and a la carte sales.

## **FINDING**

The Food Service department provides temporary work and training to an economically disadvantaged individual under the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). The SCSEP is a grant program funded by the U.S. Department of Labor and administered through the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP).

The goal of the program is to assist enrollees in developing skills they need in order to obtain permanent jobs. The enrollees will stay with the program until they find employment, are hired by the host agency training them or get transferred for additional work experience. The host agency is responsible for providing appropriate training and a safe working environment and for bearing the cost of any health screening or security checks.

The department has hired a custodian who works 20 hours a week and is paid by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP).

## **COMMENDATION**

**RISD has offset the Food Service department's labor costs by participating in a United States Department of Labor program for older workers.**

## **FINDING**



The Food Service Department does not conduct its day-to-day operations according to its established organizational structure. This results in inefficiencies and confusion for the employees. The organization structure reflects the Food Service director supervising the four cafeteria managers and one food service operational assistant. The cafeteria managers are responsible for managing the operations and personnel on their campuses.

In actual operations, two cashiers from the high school work directly for the Food Service director. Part of their day is spent cashiering and preparing food in the high school. The remainder of the day they track invoices and student meals, order supplies, process payroll and perform other required tasks for the department.

The helpers are used as floaters for the cafeterias and are moved around as needed by the director. They have established hours at each cafeteria but their schedules can be changed based on workload and absences. They help out as needed, including washing out the ice chests that are used to transport breakfast to other campuses every day. At Pittman Elementary and Green Middle School, the helpers report to the manager and not the cook as shown in the organizational chart. Furthermore, the high school custodian receives his appraisal from the high school Food Service manager but the Food Service director determines his daily duties.

The cafeteria managers are not empowered to make decisions as managers. They supervise the day-to-day operation including overseeing meal preparation and service. The managers are not held responsible for the organization, planning, direction and control of the cafeteria. They do not make decisions on the budget, overtime, employee development, substitutes and labor hours. The operational data is provided only to the director, who then uses the data for analysis and decisions.

### **Recommendation 60:**

#### **Give cafeteria managers the authority and responsibility for managing their kitchens.**

The cafeteria managers should receive guidance and direction from the director but they need to manage their own cafeterias and personnel. They should have the power to make decisions concerning their staff, budgets, meal preparation, food costs, training and other management decisions. This would alleviate confusion and frustration about who is in charge. The managers should also be held accountable for management oversight of their cafeteria, including staffing levels in comparison to meals prepared; profit and losses; development of employees and daily operations. In addition, administrative support for the whole Food Service department

should be aligned operationally and functionally under the director and not be reflected under the high school cafeteria staffing.

Employees should know whom they work for and the same person should write their appraisals and make decisions concerning the work environment. Lines of authority are established to provide an efficient and effective organization resulting in a productive work environment.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The Food Service director and cafeteria managers assess and revise the department's current organizational structure.	April 2002
2.	The Food Service director presents the organizational structure to the assistant superintendent.	May 2002
3.	The superintendent presents the organizational structure to the school board for approval.	May 2002
4.	The Food Service director presents and then implements any revisions to the current structure.	August 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

The number of personnel in RISD's Food Service department is high in relation to the number of meals it prepares. Meals per Labor Hour (MPLH) is a standard measure of performance used to gauge the efficiency of school districts, hospitals, restaurants and other food service operations. MPLH is the number of meal equivalents served in a given period divided by the total hours worked during that period. **Exhibit 8-3** reflects the conversion rates RISD uses for meal equivalents:

**Exhibit 8-3  
Conversion Rates for RISD Meal Equivalents**

Lunch Meal	1	1 meal equivalent
A la Carte dollars	\$2.00	1 meal equivalent
Breakfast Meal *	2 breakfasts	1 meal equivalent

*Source: RISD Food Service department and Region One's Technical Assistance.  
Report for Food Service, March 7,2001.*

In the chart below, meal equivalents include breakfast, lunch and a la carte sales. RISD uses the conventional system of food preparation; preparing much of its menu from scratch. In contrast, the convenience system maximizes the amount of processed food and disposable wares. The review team used the guidelines provided in **Exhibit 8-4** to evaluate RISD's food service staffing in relation to food prepared.

**Exhibit 8-4  
Recommended Meals per Labor Hour (MPLH)**

Number of Meal Equivalents Served	Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH)
	Conventional System
Up to 100	8
101 - 150	9
151 - 200	10-11
210 - 250	12
251 - 300	13
301 - 400	14
401 - 500	14
501 - 600	15
601 - 700	16
701 - 800	17
801 - 900	18
901 - 1000	19
1,001 up	20

*Source: Adapted from Pannell, School Foodservice Management for the 21st Century, 5th Edition, 1999.*

MPLH are calculated by dividing the total number of meal equivalents by the total number of labor hours associated with providing those meals. If the MPLH rate is lower than the recommended rate, either the number of meals served is low or the number of hours worked is high. The number of hours worked is a function of two variables: the number of staff employed and the hours per worker. Both variables are controllable. To achieve recommended MPLH, in a situation where the MPLH is too low, a school food service operation would have to reduce the number of staff or the hours worked by each employee.

Since the high school prepares and delivers the main entrée for the middle school, a daily count of 100 meals is added to the high school's MPLH calculation and deleted from the middle school. The labor hours for the custodians are not included in the MPLH because they are not involved in food preparation. Labor hours attributed to overhead support for the whole Food Service department were not included in the high school's computation. **Exhibit 8-5** compares the MPLH for each school to industry standard.

**Exhibit 8-5**  
**RISD Food Service Department MPLH Comparison**  
**September 2001**

<b>Schools</b>	<b>High School</b>	<b>Myra Green Middle School</b>	<b>L.S. Smith Elementary</b>	<b>Pittman Elementary</b>	<b>District Averages</b>
Actual Meal Equivalents	1,150	671	791	1,075	921.8
Actual Labor Hours	69	38	56	59.5	55.6
Recommended Labor Hours	57.5	41.9	46.5	53.7	49.9
Variance in Hours	11.5	3.9	9.5	5.75	7.6
Actual MPLH	16.67	17.66	14.1	18.1	16.6
Recommended MPLH	20	16	17	20	18.2
Variance in MPLH	(3.33)	1.66	(2.90)	(1.90)	(1.62)

*Source: RISD Food Service department, September 2001 and School Foodservice Management for the 21st Century, 5th Edition 1999.*

The MPLH is lower in the high school and elementary schools than the industry standard. The total number of labor hours is high for the number of meals served. The middle school MPLH reflects that the number of hours worked is above the industry standard.

The MPLH is a performance measurement to gauge the efficiency of a cafeteria but it should also take into consideration factors affecting productivity. Factors can include use of disposable ware, use of pre-processed foods, kitchen design and condition, availability and location of time-saving equipment, workers' skill and delivery of meals to other locations.

The Food Service department has been working on increasing the MPLH for each of its cafeterias. The Regional Education Service Center I (Region 1) Technical Assistance Report and the Chartwells consulting group provided MPLH guidelines and recommendations to reduce labor hours. The district has already reduced a number of positions through attrition. The district also does not allow overtime hours, has reduced the number of work hours for some employee and does not use substitutes unless two or more employees are absent.

**Recommendation 61:**

**Establish a meals per labor hour standard, improve productivity and reduce labor to meet the standard.**

Though the district has already worked to improve the Food Service department's MPLH requirements, the Food Service director and cafeteria managers need to further develop a plan outlining specific MPLH standards for each cafeteria and how productivity will be improved and labor reduced to meet the standard.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The Food Service director enlists cafeteria managers in helping to develop specific MPLH standards and productivity improvements for each school.	April 2002
2.	The Food Service director finalizes the plan and presents it to employees via training sessions geared to increase productivity and reduce costs.	May 2002 and Ongoing
3.	Managers and employees implement productivity improvements.	May 2002
4.	The Food Service director and cafeteria managers evaluate the productivity and MPLH for each school.	June 2002

5.	The Food Service director and cafeteria managers determine a plan to reduce labor costs at schools that have not reached the optimal MPLH.	August 2002
6.	The Food Service director evaluates productivity each month.	Ongoing

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The district could choose to reach the recommended MPLH standards by reducing hours of some or all cafeteria workers, eliminating duplication or bringing productivity to an acceptable level. Eliminating three full-time equivalents (24 labor hours /eight per day) would enable the district to reach a recommended MPLH standard and would reduce labor costs by \$27,096 annually. The estimate is computed using September 2001 pay data. An entry-level employee with a starting salary of \$5.25 an hour working eight hours a day for 187 days and a 15 percent (per business manager) benefit rate equates to \$9,032 per employee annually.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>
Establish a meals per labor hour standard, improve productivity and reduce labor to meet the standard.	\$27,096	\$27,096	\$27,096	\$27,096	\$27,096

### **FINDING**

The director of the RISD Food Service department does not encourage food service certification or acknowledge training in job performance evaluations. Employees feel that the training they receive is inconsistent and sporadic. Although the district will pay for classes offered by other entities, the Food Service director does not encourage employees to attend. There are no tangible or intangible incentives provided as a result of certification.

Thirteen in-service training sessions were held during 1999-2000 and 2000-01 but none have been held in 2001-02. Past training covered topics such as meal documentation; paid holiday schedule; disposable containers; breakfast portions; inventory; civil rights training; local leave policy; basic hazards of food service and accident prevention. Separate duty-specific training has been provided to cashiers and custodians on a consistent basis.

Employees attended the Annual Nutrition Seminars in November of 1999 and 2000 but none were sent in 2001. The last job specific seminar employees attended was Region 1's Culinary Techniques training in February 2001.

Training is an essential element in the daily operation of a cafeteria. Personnel need to be aware of the latest developments in the food service industry that affect their daily operation. Training needs to be tied to specific responsibilities and performance standards. Certification and specific job related training would help develop employees into more valuable team members. Employees' performance and morale improves when management promotes and supports training. Written outlines of topics and main points are recommended documentation for training sessions.

**Recommendation 62:**

**Develop a plan for food service training that will enhance job performance.**

The plan should include job specific training that ties in to job performance standards and requirements. Training should be scheduled on a regular basis to provide consistency for employees.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The Food Service director and cafeteria managers survey the employees for suggestions on the type of training they need related to the job they perform.	April 2002
2.	The Food Service director and cafeteria managers evaluate suggestions and develop a plan outlining training requirements for the year and guidelines for certification classes.	April 2002
3.	The Food Service director submits the plan to the superintendent for approval.	May 2002
4.	The Food Service director presents the training opportunities, purpose and goals to the employees at an in-service meeting.	September 2002
5.	The Food Service director implements the program.	October 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

Food Service department employee annual pay raises are not based on annual evaluations or performance standards. There is no standard applied in determining pay raises. Pay raises in the Food Service department have decreased over the last two years while new management procedures have

been implemented. Forty-four percent of the employees received a \$.05 pay increase per hour in 2000-01 and 54 percent of the employees received the same amount in 2001-02. There are inconsistencies in the system. Some food service personnel have received an increase in pay while others' wages have remained the same.

This practice does not encourage employees to perform at their maximum level since pay raises are not tied to performance. Pay raises, based on individual employee performance and good attendance, would increase productivity. Employees need to know how pay raises are determined and what standards they are based on.

The superintendent has identified this as an area of concern. The district is reviewing the hourly employee salary schedules and working on a proposal based on years of service and job classification.

**Recommendation 63:**

**Modify personnel procedures including a standardized method to determine pay raises.**

Method should take into account performance standards, years of experience and duty responsibilities.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The Food Service director and superintendent consider setting salary schedules based on years of service, performance standards and job classification.	April 2002
2.	The Food Service director and superintendent develop a standardized method to determine salaries and pay raises and submit the plan to the board for approval.	May 2002
3.	The Food Service director presents the new method at an in-service meeting to the employees.	September 2002
4.	The Food Service director implements the new system.	October 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.



# Chapter 8

## FOOD SERVICES

This chapter examines Raymondville Independent School District's (RISD) food service operations in three sections:

### **B. COMPLIANCE AND MONITORING**

The federal government sponsors the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) to provide funding for meals for more than 27 million children each year in nearly 96,000 schools across the United States. The Texas Education Agency's Child Nutrition Programs Division oversees these programs in Texas public schools.

The School Breakfast Program began as a pilot project in 1966 and is administered at the federal level by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) through its Food and Nutrition Service. The project was originally designed to provide categorical grants to assist those schools serving breakfasts to children identified as nutritionally needy. Recognizing the importance of a nutritious breakfast, the USDA has actively promoted the School Breakfast Program and has made a commitment to improve the nutritional quality of all school meals.

In schools where at least 80 percent of the children enrolled are eligible for free or reduced-price meals a district may qualify for the NSLP and SBP. In an effort to reduce paperwork at the local level, Congress has incorporated three alternative provisions for the annual requirement verifying eligibility. The district will fall under one of three provisions.

Provision 1 certifies free meal eligibility status for a two-year period rather than on an annual basis. Provision 2 reduces application burdens and simplifies meal counting and claiming procedures. The school is allowed to set a baseline for reimbursement meals. The school is reimbursed for each free meal given to students. At the end of a four-year period the school has to reapply for the program. Provision 3 also reduces application burdens, meal counting and claiming procedures. The school simply receives the same level of Federal reimbursement and commodities each year. At the end of the four years the school has to reapply for the program.

RISD participates in the NSLP and SBP under Provision 2 and receives commodities through the USDA. The school district was approved to renew the NSLP and SBP for four additional years beginning with 2001-02. Public notices were sent to the local newspapers for 1999-2001 to

inform parents that all qualifying children in the district will receive free meals for the school year.

There is very little historical data on procedures the school district has used to secure applications for the National School Lunch and Breakfast programs. The Food Service director has been at the school district for two years and no applications have been completed in that time. Since RISD has already been approved for four additional years under Provision 2, additional applications are not required. The Food Service department is using the TEA guidelines for determining eligibility and the application process.

RISD has 2,654 students enrolled in its four schools. The school district has a closed campus policy, which increases meal participation in the district. Meal participation rate averages are shown in **Exhibit 8-6**.

**Exhibit 8-6**  
**RISD Overall Lunch Participation Rates**  
**September 2001**

Campus	Average Daily Attendance	Average Daily Lunch Participation by Number and Percentage		Average Daily Breakfast Participation by Number and Percentage	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Raymondville High	695	614	88.3%	606	87.20%
Green Middle	520	502	96.5%	418	80.34%
Pittman Elementary	727	711	97.8%	665	91.40%
L.C. Smith Elementary	535	522	97.2%	479	89.50%

*Source: RISD Food Service department, November 2001.*

RISD is reimbursed for student lunch and breakfast costs as shown in **Exhibit 8-7**.

**Exhibit 8-7**  
**National School Lunch and Breakfast Program**  
**Reimbursement Rates**  
**2001-02**

Category	Lunch	Breakfast
Full price	\$0.20	\$0.21
Reduced price	\$1.69	\$0.85
Free	\$2.09	\$1.15

*Source: USDA, School Lunch and Breakfast Program Fact Sheet, 2001.*

## **FINDING**

The district is expanding its point-of-sale (POS) system to all four cafeterias and sale transactions. A POS system usually refers to a standard computer or group of networked computers, running POS applications software and serving as a cash register. A POS system is used to prevent human error, increase accuracy of tracking, reporting cash received and to protect students from being identified or embarrassed by qualifying for free and reduced-price meals.

All four schools have the computers and software for their cafeterias. The middle and high school have the computers in operation. The students use a keypad to type in their student number and the information is processed immediately.

## **COMMENDATION**

**The RISD Food Service department has increased the accuracy of its tracking and reporting of cash sales and meal counts by expanding the use of an electronic computerized point-of-sale (POS) computer system throughout the district.**

## **FINDING**

Raymondville High School has a number of vending machines operating just outside the cafeteria during meal serving times.

The students buy the carbonated drinks and snacks from the vending machines and take them into the cafeteria. In the past there were signs prohibiting students from taking food from the vending machines into the cafeteria but they have been taken down. The USDA supports efforts to improve the school nutrition environment by reemphasizing the requirements to prohibit serving foods of minimal nutritional value (FMNV) in the food service area during meal periods. While it may not be a violation for RISD to have machines on the outside of the immediate service area, it is clearly a practice that contributes to poor nutritional habits. While students may prefer soft drinks and snacks to nutritional

items, the primary motivation for keeping the vending machines on during lunch is often to generate profits for activity funds.

Under the regulations of FMNV, school food authorities must establish rules to control the sale of FMNV including carbonated beverages. School meal programs contribute to better nutrition and healthier eating behaviors for children. Competitive foods, such as FMNV near cafeterias, undermine the nutritional integrity of the food service programs, discourage student participation in the program, and have diet-related health risks. As a result, it is good policy not to provide access to FMNV during student meal periods.

**Recommendation 64:**

**Disable the vending machines located outside the cafeteria during serving hours.**

The vending machines should be turned off when the cafeteria is serving food and 30 minutes before the breakfast and lunch periods.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The Raymondville High School principal assigns the responsibility for overseeing the vending machines to a staff member.	April 2002
2.	The staff member turns off the vending machines 30 minutes before the first serving period each day.	April 2002 and Ongoing
3.	The staff turns the vending machines on 30 minutes following the last serving of the day.	April 2002 and Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## Chapter 8

# FOOD SERVICES

This chapter examines Raymondville Independent School District's (RISD) food service operations in three sections:

### C. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The financial audit for 2000-01 has not been completed but according to financial records from Food Service director the Food Service department is operating with a surplus of over \$57,000 as of December 2001. The annual operating budget for Food Service department in 2001-02 is more than \$1.1 million. The proposed budget is listed in **Exhibit 8-8**.

**Exhibit 8-8**  
**RISD Food Services Proposed Budget and Estimated Revenues**  
**2001-02**

Description	Revenues	Expenditures
Local, Intermediate, Out of State	\$110,00	
State Program	\$38,350	
Federal Program and Non-revenues	\$1,037,000	
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,185,350</b>	
Payroll Costs		\$590,026
Contracted Services		\$63,000
Supplies & Materials		\$518,324
Other Operating Expenses		\$3,000
Capital Outlay		\$3,000
General Administration		\$4,000
Plant Maintenance & Operations		\$4,000
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>\$1,185,350</b>

*Source: RISD Proposed Budget 2001-02.*

**Exhibit 8-9** shows the Food service expenditures for RISD and its peer districts. The Food Service function accounted for 7.4 percent of RISD's total budgeted expenditures for 2000-01, which was the second highest percentage among its peer districts.

**Exhibit 8-9**  
**Percentage of Food Service Expenditures**  
**RISD and Selected Peer Districts**  
**2000-01**

<b>District</b>	<b>Food Service Expenditures</b>	<b>Percentage of Total Budgeted Expenditures</b>
Mathis	\$1,014,763	8.1%
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>\$1,222,500</b>	<b>7.4%</b>
Lyford	\$718,433	6.7%
West Oso	\$716,212	5.9%
Taft	\$571,050	5.9%

*Source: TEA, AEIS Reports 2000-01.*

**FINDING**

Raymondville ISD has entered into a consulting agreement with Chartwells for management services of the Food Service department. The agreement is for one year and commenced on August 27, 2001 for \$24,500. RISD also worked with Region 1 to improve overall operations in the Food Service department.

Chartwells has provided the district with an action plan outlining tasks and actions by individual schools. Recommendations include eliminating staff through attrition; utilizing dish room area to accommodate snack bars; adding french fries for additional a la carte sales; comparing profit and loss statements to the budget; and establishing Youth Advisory Councils at schools. Furthermore, Chartwells reestablished districtwide food service surveys conducted as recently as October 2001. As a result of these surveys, Chartwells has implemented Youth Advisory Committees at all four campuses to assess the quality of the food services and to make recommendations.

Region 1 did a technical assistance review of the Food Service department and reported the results on March 7, 2001. The purpose of the report was to evaluate the RISD Child Nutrition Program and make improvement recommendations. The report cited commendations such as implementation of POS computer system, breakfast in the classroom and a reimbursement snack bar at the middle school. Region 1 recommendations included the following:

- plan a budget on expected revenue using current industry standards
- charge all non-food service adults the full meal price or invoice the appropriate program
- eliminate over-time hours
- consider reducing hours from eight to six or four where appropriate
- write job descriptions for all employees
- establish pre-cost and post-cost menus
- implement self-serve of some side dishes at HS and MS
- evaluate cost of disposable items
- initiate a Food Service Student Advisory Committee for MS-HS and Elementary
- develop standards of appearance, serving method and temperature for each menu/food item

Region 1 helped the Food Service director compute the department's MPLH, break-even points and staffing patterns. Region 1 also is available to assist with training or technical assistance on future plans the district chooses to implement.

RISD's Food Service department has aggressively embraced the recommendations made by both Chartwells, Inc. and Region 1 including the establishment of a Food Service Student Advisory Committee, the production of monthly profit and loss calculations, and elimination of Food Service staff through attrition. As a result of the modifications suggested by the Chartwells contract and Region 1 services, RISD's Food Service department's operation has made a year-to-date profit of \$57,000 as of December 2001.

#### **COMMENDATION**

**RISD uses both Region 1 resources and a private industry contract to improve food service operations.**

# Chapter 9

## TRANSPORTATION

This chapter examines the Raymondville Independent School District's (RISD's) Transportation operations in two sections:

- A. Policies, Procedures, Operations and Staffing
- B. Vehicle Maintenance and Replacement

The primary objective of effective school transportation is to provide timely, efficient and safe transportation services to all students.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Texas Education Code (TEC) authorizes school districts to provide student transportation services between school and home, from school to career and technology training destinations, and for extracurricular activities. The federal Individual with Disabilities Education Act further requires districts to provide transportation services to students who must travel to receive special education services.

School districts are eligible to receive state funding for the transportation of regular and special education students based on funding rules established by the Texas Legislature. TEC states that districts are eligible to receive state funding for the transportation of regular and special education students between home and school and of Career and Technology students to and from vocational training locations. A district may also receive an additional amount of up to 10 percent of its regular transportation allotment to be used for the transportation of children living within two miles of the school they attend who would be subject to hazardous traffic conditions if they walked to school.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) reimburses districts for qualifying expenses according to a formula based on linear density as specified by the TEC for regular home-to-school transportation services. Linear density is the average number of regular eligible students transported daily divided by the daily route miles traveled. TEA uses this calculation to assign each school district to one of seven groups eligible to receive a different maximum per-mile reimbursement. TEA evaluates these group assignments every two years by recalculating linear densities with data from the first of the previous two school years.



# Chapter 9

## TRANSPORTATION

This chapter examines the Raymondville Independent School District's (RISD's) Transportation operations in two sections:

### A. POLICIES, PROCEDURES, OPERATIONS AND STAFFING

Section 42.155 of the TEC provides for a legislative appropriation for regular school program transportation for the 1999-2000 and the 2000-2001 school years calculated as shown in

**Exhibit 9-1.**

**Exhibit 9-1**  
**Linear Density Allotment**  
**1999-2000 through 2000-01**

<b>Linear Density Grouping</b>	<b>Allotment Per Mile of Approved Route</b>
2.40 and up	\$1.43
1.65 to 2.40	\$1.25
1.15 to 1.65	\$1.11
.90 to 1.15	\$0.97
.65to .90	\$0.88
.40 to .65	\$0.79
Up to .40	\$0.68

*Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), Handbook on School Transportation Allotments, revised May 2001.*

**Exhibit 9-2** shows the linear density for RISD and its peer districts for 1999-2000 and 2000-01.

**Exhibit 9-2**  
**Linear Density Data**  
**RISD and Peer Districts**  
**1999-2000 and 2000-01**

School District	Annual Ridership		Annual Mileage		Linear Density	
	1999-2000	2000-01	1999-2000	2000-01	1999-2000	2000-01
Raymondville	53,280	46,440	54,288	52,633	0.981	0.882
Lyford	91,980	91,620	114,448	112,661	0.804	0.813
Mathis	74,700	57,600	83,016	90,165	0.900	0.639
Taft	14,040	*	38,268	*	0.367	*
West Oso	26,280	23,580	19,355	17,675	1.358	1.334

Source: TEA, School Transportation Route Services Status Reports, 1999-2000 and 2000-01,

\*Numbers not available

For 2000-01, RISD received a reimbursement of \$0.97 per mile for regular transportation services based on the previous year's linear density of 0.981. The district's ridership decreased by 11.0 percent from 1999-2000 to 2000-01 though the mileage decreased only 3.1 percent over the same period.

Other than field trips, all special education transportation is also eligible for state reimbursement of \$1.08 per mile. For 2000-01, RISD reported 56,988 special education program transportation miles and received \$61,547 in reimbursement of expenses from TEA. RISD also reported 11,304 miles in providing transportation for 91 Career and Technology students and received reimbursement of \$2.05 per mile for a total of \$23,173.

**Exhibit 9-3** compares the expenses per mile for regular and special education transportation for RISD, its peer districts and the state from 1996-97 through 1999-2000. RISD's 1999-2000 expenses per mile for regular transportation ranked third among its peers while expenses per mile for special education program transportation were ranked second and were well below the state average. Cost per mile is calculated by dividing the district's total annual transportation operating costs by the total number of miles driven.

**Exhibit 9-3**  
**Transportation Operation Costs Per Mile**  
**RISD and Peer Districts**  
**1996-97 through 1999-2000**

District	1996-97		1997-98		1998-99		1999-2000	
	Regular	Special	Regular	Special	Regular	Special	Regular	Special
Taft	\$1.021	\$4.036	\$1.205	\$2.468	\$1.264	\$2.966	\$1.366	\$3.313
Mathis	\$1.473	\$0.903	\$1.549	\$0.847	\$1.895	\$1.017	\$1.893	\$1.262
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>\$2.601</b>	<b>\$0.829</b>	<b>\$1.389</b>	<b>\$1.233</b>	<b>\$1.421</b>	<b>\$1.100</b>	<b>\$2.046</b>	<b>\$1.161</b>
Lyford	\$1.583	\$0.616	\$2.043	\$0.998	\$2.345	\$1.116	\$2.549	\$0.941
West Oso	\$3.870	\$3.227	\$3.935	\$4.394	\$2.761	\$2.905	\$4.266	\$3.719
<b>State</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>\$1.816</b>	<b>\$1.802</b>	<b>\$1.912</b>	<b>\$1.977</b>	<b>\$2.045</b>	<b>\$2.198</b>

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operation Reports, 1996-97 through 1999-2000.

Note: "Special" refers to special education.

RISD and peer district transportation expenditures have increased considerably since 1996-97. **Exhibit 9-4** shows the annual transportation expenditures for RISD and its peer districts from 1996-97 through 1999-2000. RISD ranked third among its peer districts with a 35.1 percent increase in transportation expenditures over this period.

**Exhibit 9-4**  
**Transportation Expenditures**  
**RISD and Peer Districts**  
**1996-97 through 1999-2000**

District	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	Percent Change from 1997-2000
West Oso	\$329,515	\$287,035	\$259,110	\$363,256	10.2%
Taft	\$75,593	\$82,297	\$86,637	\$93,896	24.2%
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>\$292,960</b>	<b>\$336,065</b>	<b>\$328,746</b>	<b>\$395,692</b>	<b>35.1%</b>
Lyford	\$304,621	\$366,247	\$385,062	\$446,802	46.7%
Mathis	\$200,341	\$218,392	\$251,795	\$316,266	57.9%

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

**Exhibit 9-5** shows the categorical operating costs for RISD Transportation from 1996-97 through 1999-2000. Salaries and benefits increased 67.5 percent while purchased and contracted services increased by 190.5 percent and expenditures for supplies and materials increased by 65 percent.

**Exhibit 9-5**  
**RISD Transportation Operating Costs by Category**  
**1996-97 through 1999-2000**

Category	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	Percent Change from 1997-2000
Salaries & Benefits	\$137,760	\$149,365	\$221,060	\$230,783	67.5%
Purchased & Contracted Services	\$8,400	\$1,500	\$5,737	\$24,400	190.5%
Supplies & Materials	\$46,500	\$92,400	\$76,149	\$76,700	65.0%
Other Operating Expenses*	\$7,300	\$1,000	\$8,300	\$4,100	(43.8%)
Debt Service	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.0%
Capital Outlay	\$93,000	\$91,800	\$17,500	\$59,709	(35.8%)
<b>Total Operation Costs</b>	<b>\$292,960</b>	<b>\$336,065</b>	<b>\$328,746</b>	<b>\$395,692</b>	<b>35.1%</b>

*Source: TEA, Transportation Operation Reports, 1996-97 through 1999-2000.*

**Exhibit 9-6** shows each cost category as a percentage of the total transportation operation costs for each district for 1999-2000. RISD had the highest percentage for salaries and benefits expenditures and was just above the peer district average for supplies and materials.

**Exhibit 9-6**  
**Percentage Analysis of Operating Cost Categories**  
**RISD and Peer Districts**  
**1999-2000**

District	Salaries and	Purchased and	Supplies and	Other Operating	Debt Service	Capital Outlay
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	<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Contracted Services</b>	<b>Materials</b>	<b>Expenses</b>		
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>58.3%</b>	<b>6.2%</b>	<b>19.4%</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>15.1%</b>
Lyford	58.0%	1.2%	21.4%	2.4%	0.00%	17.1%
Mathis	57.4%	6.5%	13.7%	2.4%	0.00%	20.0%
Taft	47.0%	12.4%	10.8%	8.7%	0.00%	21.2%
West Oso	49.5%	4.1%	17.7%	5.4%	10.19%	13.1%
<b>Peer Average</b>	<b>53.0%</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>15.9%</b>	<b>4.7%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>17.9%</b>
<b>State Average</b>	<b>62.1%</b>	<b>10.2%</b>	<b>11.4%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>11.9%</b>

*Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Reports, 1999-2000.*

RISD's 1999-2000 route mileage totaled 225,107 miles. Total annual mileage for regular program transportation was 151,770 miles and special education program transportation was 73,337 miles. RISD reported 78,899 miles driven for extra- and co-curricular events. **Exhibit 9-7** shows the extracurricular mileage driven by RISD and its peer districts from 1997-98 through 1999-2000. RISD ranked second among its peers for the highest percentage of extracurricular miles in 1998-99 and 1999-2000.

**Exhibit 9-7  
Extracurricular Mileage  
RISD and Peer Districts  
1997-98 through 1999-2000**

<b>District</b>	<b>1997-98</b>		<b>1998-99</b>		<b>1999-2000</b>	
	<b>Extra-Curricular Miles</b>	<b>Percent of Total Miles</b>	<b>Extra-Curricular Miles</b>	<b>Percent of Total Miles</b>	<b>Extra-Curricular Miles</b>	<b>Percent of Total Miles</b>
West Oso	33,996	47.4%	54,559	58.6%	49,733	57.1%
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>96,478</b>	<b>38.4%</b>	<b>99,947</b>	<b>40.2%</b>	<b>78,899</b>	<b>35.0%</b>
Taft	23,220	35.7%	21,083	32.3%	21,083	32.3%
Mathis	54,994	37.0%	34,957	25.0%	41,387	21.9%
Lyford	28,337	14.7%	26,169	14.8%	42,227	21.6%

Source: TEA, *School Transportation Operations Reports, 1997-98 through 1999-2000*.

In comparison to peer districts, RISD has the second highest cost per rider and is 29.3 percent above the statewide average for 1999-2000 as shown in **Exhibit 9-8**. Cost per rider is calculated by dividing the district's total annual operating costs by its average daily ridership.

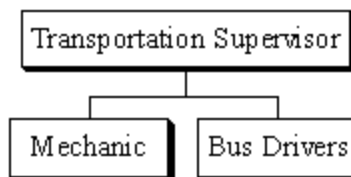
**Exhibit 9-8  
Costs Per Rider  
RISD and Peer Districts  
1999-2000**

District	Total Annual Operating Costs	Average Daily Ridership	Cost Per Rider	Percentage Above (Below) State Average
Taft	\$93,896	251	\$374.09	(34.5%)
Mathis	\$316,266	453	\$698.16	22.3%
Lyford	\$446,802	612	\$730.07	27.9%
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>\$395,692</b>	<b>536</b>	<b>\$738.23</b>	<b>29.3%</b>
West Oso	\$363,256	396	\$917.31	60.7%
<b>Peer Average</b>	<b>\$305,055</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>\$679.90</b>	<b>24.9%</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>\$780,948,057</b>	<b>1,368,134</b>	<b>\$570.81</b>	<b>N/A</b>

Source: TEA, *School Transportation Route Services Status Reports, 1999-2000, and School Transportation Operation Reports, 1999-2000*.

RISD Transportation activities are managed by a supervisor who reports directly to the assistant superintendent. The department's staffing structure is presented in the organizational chart below in **Exhibit 9-9**.

**Exhibit 9-9  
RISD Transportation Department Organization  
2001-02**



Source: *RISD Transportation Department, November 2001*.

The Transportation department is staffed with one supervisor, one mechanic who also drives a daily bus route, six full-time drivers and five part-time drivers. Several drivers drive morning and afternoon routes as well field trips and extracurricular activities. There are bus monitors who report to the school principals and are responsible for assisting special education students onto and off of the bus and maintaining order during bus rides. When the monitors are not assisting with bus activities, they are acting as teachers' aides in the special education classrooms.

RISD designs its future bus routes by reviewing manual bus logs which are written by drivers of existing routes. These logs specify stops, turns and distances. The Transportation supervisor rides each bus route approximately once each year to monitor whether or not buses are running the most efficient route possible and uses that information in the planning process.

### **FINDING**

RISD's Transportation department is not maximizing its resources by using a one run bus system.

RISD's school bell times differ only slightly from campus to campus. The elementary bell times fall 5 minutes before the secondary school bell times. To accommodate these bell times, district buses can make only one run in the morning and one in the afternoon. Moreover, the single morning run requires students of all ages to ride the bus together.

**Exhibit 9-10** shows all of the regular bus routes at RISD and the number of students transported each day compared to the capacity for each bus. As indicated, the district's bus capacity is underutilized.

**Exhibit 9-10**  
**RISD Ridership by Bus, Run, and Capacity**  
**2001-02**

<b>School Bus Number</b>	<b>Route Number</b>	<b>Route Type</b>	<b>Bus Capacity</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Percent of Capacity Used Per Run</b>
1	1	Regular	72	28	38.9%
3	3	Regular	72	45	62.5%
4	6	Regular	72	32	44.4%
5	2	Regular	72	27	37.5%

6	5	Regular	72	37	51.4%
7	4	Regular	72	33	45.8%
8	7	Regular	72	40	55.6%
10	12	Special to Brownsville ISD	72	5	6.9%
12	11	Regular T.S.T.C. Harlingen	72	11	15.3%
16	8	Special	16	16	100.0%
17	9	Special	16	11	68.8%
<b>Total RISD Ridership</b>			<b>680</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>50.2%</b>

*Source: RISD Transportation Department, October 2001. The total capacity does not include the ridership on buses 10 and 12. Including these routes would deflate the total capacity significantly.*

Bus numbers 2, 9, 11, 13, 14, and 15 are designated as spares and are only used when a primary route bus is being repaired. Overall, the Raymondville ISD operates routes at approximately 50 percent of its total bus capacity.

Many districts use multiple bell schedules allowing a single bus to run more than one route. If one bus is able to run two routes, the number of buses and drivers needed to transport all of the students could be reduced by as much as 50 percent. Furthermore, the more grade levels placed on one bus to one area lowers miles driven and increases the number of students transported (linear density).

**Recommendation 65:**

**Establish a staggered bell schedule for all schools in the district.**

Staggering bell times accomplishes several objectives. First, each bus could make four runs a day, two morning runs and two afternoon runs. Second, the quality of transportation provided to the students would improve through shortened travel times. Finally, the Transportation department's primary assets, its buses and drivers, will be used more efficiently.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**



1.	The superintendent establishes a committee made up of the Transportation supervisor and representatives of the school principals to determine bell times and a policy for delegating the authority to set bell times.	April 2002
2.	The Transportation supervisor reviews the suggested bell times with the committee.	May 2002
3.	The committee agrees to stagger bell times and forwards the recommendation to the district superintendent.	May 2002
4.	The superintendent forwards the recommendation to the district board.	June 2002
5.	The board adopts the recommendation.	June 2002
6.	The Transportation supervisor sends notices of the new bell times to parents.	July 2002
7.	The new bell times become effective.	August 2002

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Staggering the bell schedule at all district schools would allow RISD to adopt a two run system as opposed to a one run operation. A conservative estimate of the increase in efficiency due to this change would allow for the elimination of two full-time drivers and the sale of two additional dedicated route buses. Two full-time bus drivers working 40 hours per week at \$7.15 per hour for 40 weeks equals \$22,880. Adding a benefit rate of 15 percent for each employee brings the total to \$26,312 annually. Based on the current market for used school buses, the district should be able to sell two buses in their fleet for at least \$1,600.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>
Sell two buses	\$1,600	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Eliminate two drivers	\$26,312	\$26,312	\$26,312	\$26,312	\$26,312
<b>Net Savings/(Costs)</b>	<b>\$27,912</b>	<b>\$26,312</b>	<b>\$26,312</b>	<b>\$26,312</b>	<b>\$26,312</b>

### **FINDING**

RISD's salary and benefit expenditures for the Transportation department have increased by 67.5 percent since 1996-97 as shown in **Exhibit 9-11**. Drivers currently drive morning and afternoon routes and some also drive extracurricular routes such as athletic events and field trips. Of the district's

11 bus drivers, six are designated and paid as full-time employees complete with full-time benefits.

**Exhibit 9-11**  
**RISD Transportation Salaries & Benefits**  
**1996-97 through 1999-2000**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Salaries &amp; Benefits</b>
1996-97	\$137,760
1997-98	\$149,365
1998-99	\$221,060
1999-2000	\$230,783
Percent Increase	67.5%

*Source: Transportation Operation Reports, 1996-97 through 1999-2000, TEA.*

Although the district minimizes overtime scheduling and pay for its mechanic and drivers, several of the full-time drivers stay at the district during the day without transportation-related work to keep them occupied on a full-time basis.

Poor work scheduling in the Transportation department has contributed to the department's growing expenditures as well as a sense of low morale among employees. During the onsite visit in October and November 2001, the review team noted several occurrences of drivers sitting idle in the office during the duty day.

The Raymondville ISD employs many full-time employees in its Transportation department. Those designated as full-time also work during the school day for the district's Maintenance and Operations department, assisting with the district's facility maintenance and grounds keeping or performing small engine repairs.

**Recommendation 66:**

**Evaluate bus driver workload and optimize work schedules to minimize employee downtime.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The director of Transportation and assistant superintendent draft a plan to restructure the work schedules for the district's mechanic and bus drivers and submit to the superintendent for review and approval.	April 2002
2.	The superintendent approves the plan and announces the restructured schedule to all affected employees.	May 2002
3.	The Transportation department implements the restructured work schedule.	August 2002 - Ongoing
4.	The director of Transportation evaluates the department's workload and recommends schedule changes to the assistant superintendent annually.	March 2003 - Ongoing

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

RISD could retain the full-time status of its bus driver employees by scheduling them to assist the district's Maintenance department with facility maintenance duties during the school day. The district may also choose to reduce employee hours to part-time and restrict bus driver responsibilities to the transportation of students. The savings estimate assumes the retention of three full-time drivers who will perform facility maintenance and grounds keeping duties during the school day. The estimate further assumes the reduction of hours and benefits for three full-time employees to 25 hours per week with schedules to restrict duties to driving bus routes beginning in 2002-03. (Three bus drivers reduced by 15 hours per week at \$7.15 per hour for 40 weeks equals \$12,870. Adding a benefit rate of 15 percent for each employee brings the total to \$14,800 annually).

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>
Evaluate bus driver workload and optimize work schedules to minimize employee downtime.	\$14,800	\$14,800	\$14,800	\$14,800	\$14,800

### **FINDING**

RISD's bus driver hourly pay rates are not comparable with other local districts. RISD also has a shortage of qualified bus driver substitutes. The National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services reports that there is a shortage of school bus drivers in many parts of the nation, which is typical when there are many competing job opportunities.

Many of the current full- and part-time bus drivers have been employed by the district for several years. The part-time drivers run route hours, which typically begin early in the morning, then drive for a couple of hours and drive again in the afternoon. Because the substitute pool is depleted, any bus driver absence adversely affects the district's ability to provide timely and high quality transportation-delivery services. Though driver absenteeism is not a routine problem at RISD, there have been occurrences when other Commercial Driver licensed district employees have been called upon to transport students. Advertisements for drivers are placed in local area newspapers but response is poor because the pay is considered to be inadequate and not competitive with neighboring districts.

**Exhibit 9-12** shows that RISD's bus driver hourly wages are not comparable with wages of local districts.

**Exhibit 9-12  
Bus Driver Hourly Pay Rates  
RISD and Local School Districts  
2001-02**

<b>School District</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Average</b>
Harlingen	\$7.55	\$11.58	\$9.57
Lyford	\$7.12	\$13.99	\$10.56
San Perlita	\$7.43	\$9.29	\$8.36
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>\$7.15</b>	<b>\$7.15</b>	<b>\$7.15</b>
Local District Average	\$7.37	\$10.50	\$8.94

*Source: RISD Salary Schedule and Telephone interviews with the Transportation Department in each local school district, November 2001.*

**Recommendation 67:**

**Adjust the bus driver salary schedule to be more competitive with local school districts.**

The district should conduct annual salary surveys to ensure its level of pay and benefits remain in a range competitive with other local school districts. RISD may consider developing a salary schedule for bus drivers, which incorporates moderate annual increments based on years of service with the district.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The director of Transportation and the assistant superintendent conduct a bus driver salary and benefit survey among other local districts.	April 2002
2.	The director of Transportation and assistant superintendent develop an adjusted bus driver salary schedule and plan for annual increments and submit to the superintendent for review and approval.	April 2002
3.	The superintendent reviews the proposed salary schedule and submits to the board for approval.	May 2002
4.	The school board approves the proposed salary schedule.	May 2002
5.	The superintendent implements the approved bus driver salary schedule.	August 2002
6.	The assistant superintendent conducts annual salary surveys to maintain RISD's competitiveness among local districts.	September 2002 - Ongoing

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

A conservative estimate raises the bus driver minimum hourly pay rate by \$.35. The fiscal impact consists of six full-time drivers (40 hours) and five part-time drivers (25 hours) working 40 weeks and being paid an additional \$.35 per hour plus the additional 15 percent benefit margin.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>
Adjust the bus driver salary schedule to be more competitive among local school districts.	(\$5,877)	(\$5,877)	(\$5,877)	(\$5,877)	(\$5,877)

# Chapter 9

## TRANSPORTATION

This chapter examines the Raymondville Independent School District's (RISD's) Transportation operations in two sections:

### B. VEHICLE MAINTENANCE AND REPLACEMENT

RISD operates and maintains a fleet of 17 buses and four other vehicles at its Transportation facility. There is no documented bus replacement plan, but the director of Transportation and the mechanic annually assess the need for fleet repair and replacement. **Exhibit 9-13** shows the bus inventory by age as of November 2001.

**Exhibit 9-13**  
**RISD Bus Fleet By Age**  
**2001-02**

Vehicle Age	Number of Buses	
	Regular	Special
Less than 5 years	3	1
5 to 10 years	4	2
Older than 10 years	7	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>3</b>

*Source: RISD Transportation department, November 2001.*

**Exhibit 9-14** shows how the age of RISD buses compared with the age of peer district buses for 1999-2000. RISD ranked third (35.3 percent) for the number of buses older than 10 years.

**Exhibit 9-14**  
**Comparison of Bus Age**  
**RISD and Peer Districts**  
**1999-2000**

District	Age			Total Number of Buses	Percentage of Buses Older than 10 Years
	1-5 Years	5-10 Years	10 Years or Greater		
Lyford	8	1	8	17	47.1%

Mathis	12	7	0	19	0.0%
<b>Raymondville</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>35.3%</b>
Taft	3	2	3	8	37.5%
West Oso	5	5	3	13	23.1%

*Source: School Transportation Operations Reports, 1999-2000, TEA.*

## **FINDING**

RISD has fuel storage tanks for its Transportation department and participates in a purchasing cooperative with other regional Transportation providers for bidding and buying such things as bulk fuel, tires, vehicle parts and supplies.

Fuel is purchased by credit card when drivers must refuel while out of town. Bus and vehicle parts to include tires and lubricants are purchased from the district's approved vendor list and through the cooperative with Region 1.

## **COMMENDATION**

**RISD has implemented the use of cooperative purchasing arrangements to purchase fuel, tires, lubricants and supplies at the best available prices.**

## **FINDING**

RISD does not have a formal bus replacement plan, but the district's bus procurement pattern is shown in **Exhibit 9-15**. The district has purchased four regular buses and one special education bus in the last five years.

**Exhibit 9-15**  
**RISD Bus Inventory by Model Year**  
**November 2001**

School Bus Model Year	Date of Purchase	Number of Buses	
		Regular	Special
1979 Ward 72 Passenger	9/10/79	1	
1981 Blue Bird 72 Passenger	6/02/81	1	
1985 Ward 72 Passenger	9/01/85	1	
1987 Wayne 72 Passenger	4/06/87	1	

1987 Wayne 72 Passenger	4/06/87	1	
1988 Blue Bird 72 Passenger	7/04/88	1	
1990 Wayne 72 Passenger	5/23/89	1	
1991 Ford E-350 16 Passenger	3/1/98		1
1991 Carpenter 72 Passenger	2/11/91	1	
1991 Carpenter 72 Passenger	2/11/91	1	
1992 Blue Bird 72 Passenger	7/30/92	1	
1993 Carpenter 16 Passenger	2/09/93		1
1996 Thomas 72 Passenger	11/27/96	1	
1997 Crown/Carpenter 72 Passenger	5/21/97		1
1998 Crown/Carpenter 72 Passenger	12/17/97	1	
2001 Blue Bird 72 Passenger	8/01/00	1	
2001 Blue Bird 72 Passenger	7/01/00	1	
<b>Total</b>		<b>14</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Average Years of Age</b>		<b>11.6</b>	<b>7.3</b>

*Source: RISD Transportation department.*

The average age of RISD's bus fleet is 11.6 years for regular education buses and 7.3 years for special education buses. Districts that establish replacement plans based on an analysis of the fleet's age and condition and the district's capacity needs gain maximum use of their buses. Replacement plans also allow districts to budget funds for the orderly replacement of buses. A district can opt to purchase buses through the Texas Building and Procurement Commission (TBPC) if the specifications of available buses meet their required criteria

TSPR recommends a 15-year bus replacement cycle. Districts with good maintenance programs can extend bus life beyond the recommended 15-year cycle before replacement is needed.

Comal ISD adopted a vehicle replacement plan designed to maintain the necessary fleet size and concurrently reduce bus hazards by replacing buses once they reach the end of their useful life. This plan of replacement allows for staggered replacement costs.

**Recommendation 68:**



### **Develop and implement a formal school bus replacement plan.**

The bus replacement plan should be based on an analysis of the age, condition, and capacity of each bus in its fleet. This will help the district ensure that buses wear evenly and ensure that bus mileage can be accumulated evenly. Rotation of buses may also help identify which route combinations most evenly accrue mileage. Implementing a 15-year bus replacement plan with a fleet of 17 buses, Raymondville ISD should budget for the purchase of one bus each year. The bus replacement plan should remain flexible and anticipate changes in student enrollment.

### **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The director of Transportation determines a maximum age and mileage target for all district buses.	April 2002
2.	The director of Transportation adopts a bus rotation plan, which considers level of preventive maintenance, mileage targets and age of buses.	May 2002
3.	The director of Transportation and the mechanic monitor overall condition of the bus fleet to include annual mileage, wear and tear on rough routes, repair expenditures and age of individual buses.	May 2002 - Ongoing

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

RISD currently averages purchasing one bus each year. Assuming the purchase of 47-passenger buses over the next five years at an average price of \$51,000, the district can save approximately \$10,000 in each year based on the current average purchase price for a 72-passenger bus of approximately \$61,000. Planning for the purchase of smaller capacity buses could also save the district in fuel expenses, insurance and decreased maintenance expenses.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>
Develop and implement a formal school bus replacement plan.	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000

# Chapter 10

## COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

This chapter discusses the computer and technology services provided by the Raymondville Independent School District (RISD) in two sections:

- A. Organization and Management
- B. Maintenance and Support

Technology services in Texas public school districts vary. Some support administrative technology only, while others are responsible for supporting both administration and instruction through single or separate departments. Regardless of structure, a school district must be organized to achieve the instructional and administrative goals for the planning, implementation, integration and support of existing and new technology.

# Chapter 10

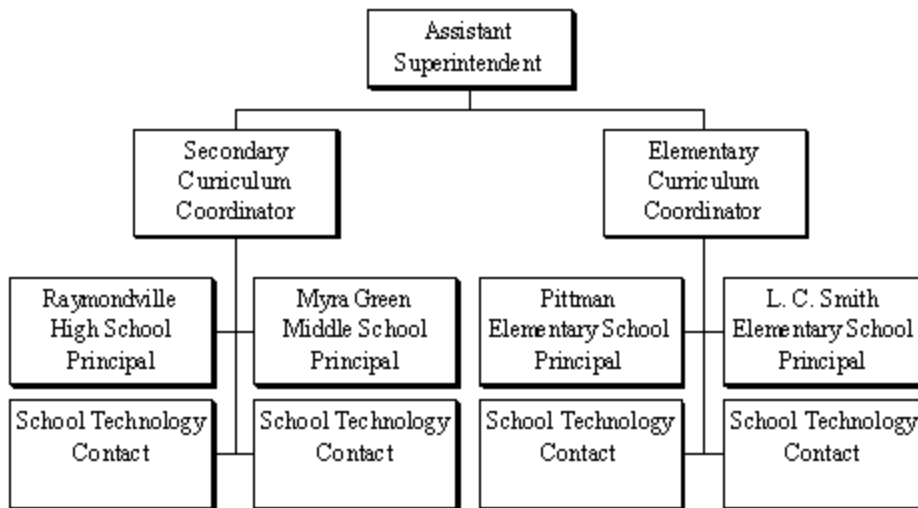
## COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

This chapter discusses the computer and technology services provided by the Raymondville Independent School District (RISD) in two sections:

### A. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

In RISD, the technology support services are divided into two departments: Instructional Technology and Administrative Technology. According to interviews, the Instructional Technology staff reports to the school principals as shown in **Exhibit 10-1**.

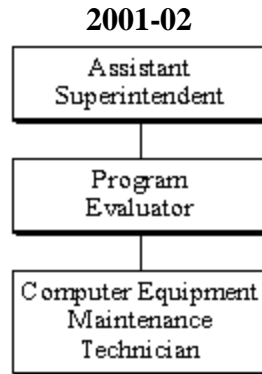
**Exhibit 10-1**  
**RISD Instructional Technology Operating Structure**  
**2001-02**



*Source: RISD program evaluator and assistant superintendent, November 2001.*

The Administrative Technology staff includes the program evaluator and a computer equipment maintenance technician. **Exhibit 10-2** displays the RISD Administrative Technology operating structure.

**Exhibit 10-2**  
**RISD Administrative Technology Operating Structure**



*Source: RISD program evaluator and computer equipment maintenance technician, November 2001.*

**FINDING**

RISD has exceeded the goals set out by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) in its *Long-Range Plan for Technology 1996-2010*. In the plan, which was reported to the 1997 Legislature, the agency set short-term, mid-term and long-term technology equipment goals for school districts. The short-term goal for 1997-98 for technology equipment was a student-to-computer ratio of 4 to 1. The mid-term goal for 1999-2002 was a student-to-computer ratio of 3 to 1. The long-term goal for 2003-10 is a ratio of 1 to 1. RISD has determined its technology needs for each school in the district in accordance with the TEA goals. With an average of 2.7 students to each computer, RISD has met the mid-term goal and is on target to achieve TEA's long-range goal of a 1 to 1 ratio before 2010. **Exhibit 10-3** displays the ratio of computers to students on December 4, 2001.

**Exhibit 10-3  
RISD Computer Inventory-Student to Computer Ratio**

School	Total Students	Computers	Student-to-Computer Ratio
High School	743	271	2.7:1
Myra Green Middle School	547	197	2.7:1
L.C. Smith Elementary School	547	214	2.5:1
Pittman Elementary School	743	258	2.8:1
<b>Totals/Average</b>	<b>2,580</b>	<b>940</b>	<b>2.7:1</b>

*Source: RISD program evaluator, December 2001.*

RISD receives several types of state and federal assistance for technology including a Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund (TIF) grant and a federal E-Rate discount. The TIF grant helps schools integrate the Internet into curriculum and instruction. In order to receive this grant, districts are required to submit an approved technology plan, create a technology task force, provide 10 percent in matching funds, purchase items from the TIF's suggested configuration list, participate in the TIF Tech training program and build a home page on the Internet.

The TIF grant provides links to local area networks and wide area networks so that improved instructional and technological resources will be available to teachers and students.

The federal E-Rate discount provides 20 to 90 percent of the cost to purchase telecommunications services, Internet access and internal connections. The discount level is based on the percentage of students participating in the federal free and reduced-price school lunch program. Because 87.4 percent of RISD students receive free and reduced-price lunches, the district receives a 90-percent discount.

**Exhibit 10-4** lists the financial assistance RISD obtained for technology for 1998-99 through 2001-02.

**Exhibit 10-4**  
**Technology Assistance Received by RISD**  
**1998-99 through 2001-02**

Type of Assistance	Amounts by School Year			
	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
TIF Grant	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$160,000
E-Rate	\$79,581	\$32,677	\$944,270	\$255,590
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$79,581</b>	<b>\$32,677</b>	<b>\$944,270</b>	<b>\$415,590</b>

*Source: RISD program evaluator, secretary to the RISD assistant superintendent and Region I Office of Technology Integration and Support, November 2001.*

The funding RISD obtained was used to upgrade the current technology infrastructure with fiber-optic cable that provides high-speed access to the Internet. This increased the speed of information transfer in classrooms and libraries and provided access to people and information throughout the district and beyond. It continues to help teachers and librarians do their

jobs better and aid in student instruction. Funding was also used to buy other computer equipment.

## COMMENDATION

**RISD has exceeded the TEA Technology Plan's mid-range ratio goal of 3 students to 1 computer by accessing grants and other funding sources.**

## FINDING

RISD's technology operating and reporting structure have not been reviewed or approved by the superintendent or the board. The board has not formalized job responsibilities or reporting arrangements and has not made them part of any district organization chart.

Prior to 2001-02, the program evaluator reported to the director of Federal Programs. The director became principal of L.C. Smith Elementary School for 2001-02 and has not been replaced, so the program evaluator reports informally to the assistant superintendent during 2001-02.

The computer equipment maintenance technician reported to the Technology coordinator prior to 2001-02. The coordinator resigned in June 2001 and was not replaced. For 2001-02, no supervisor had been identified for the computer equipment maintenance technician so the program evaluator assumed this responsibility.

### **Recommendation 69:**

**Develop an organizational chart that accurately reflects the reporting structure in Instructional Technology and Administrative Technology.**

The superintendent should confer with the assistant superintendent, elementary and secondary coordinators, program evaluator and school principals to develop a technology organizational chart that reflects existing instructional and administrative technology responsibilities and reporting.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent instructs the school principals to meet with their campus technology contacts to discuss the work they do and their interaction with other district staff regarding technology.	April 2002
2.	The superintendent calls a meeting of the assistant superintendent.	May

	elementary and secondary coordinators, program evaluator and school principals to determine the technology reporting structure and responsibilities assumed by staff at the campus and district levels. A draft of the technology organizational chart is drawn up in the meeting.	2002
3.	The superintendent distributes the draft of the organizational chart to all employees with technology responsibilities for their review and comments.	May 2002
4.	After necessary changes are made and a final organizational chart is adopted, the chart should be distributed to the board, central administrators and to each campus for distribution to all faculty.	June 2002

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

### **FINDING**

The District Technology Committee is not meeting regularly. Although the District Technology Committee's membership was approved by the board on October 9, 2001, as recently as January 2002 there had been no meetings of the District Technology Committee for 2001-02. Some campus technology committees have met, but they did not have the benefit of the District Technology Committee's input.

Many Texas districts have active technology committees made up of teachers, staff and administrators. Some include members of the community with particular technology expertise. Technology committees typically review technology training needs; evaluate technology for use by staff, teachers and students; prioritize funding and formulate detailed technology plans. Without an active districtwide committee and the coordination that it provides, RISD could experience fragmented technology efforts, unnecessary expenditures and inadequate training.

### **Recommendation 70:**

#### **Activate the District Technology Committee.**

The superintendent should activate the District Technology Committee and ensure that its membership includes teachers, administrators, staff and a technology professional. The committee should meet at least quarterly and provide the superintendent with a report of their meetings that can be shared with the board.

### **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent ensures that teachers, administrators, staff and a technology professional are members of the District Technology Committee.	April 2002
2.	The committee begins holding quarterly meetings and reporting to the superintendent.	April 2002

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

## **FINDING**

RISD does not have a Technology coordinator to manage technology issues. In June 2001, the Curriculum and Technology coordinator left the district and has not been replaced. The Technology coordinator was responsible for writing the TIF and other technology funding proposals, for providing status reports for technology grants, planning technology improvements, updating the district technology plan, providing information to staff and teachers on technology issues, organizing the District Technology Committee and identifying training needs and opportunities.

Since the Technology coordinator left, the district has been without technology leadership or direction and has not submitted the required TIF grant status reports, updated the district technology plan or identified technology training needs.

The program evaluator, elementary coordinator and secondary coordinator have assumed the technology coordinator's responsibilities, though they have not been given revised job descriptions or received training to take on those tasks. While this is a reasonable temporary solution, without one or more individuals assigned to oversee all of the district's administrative and instructional technology, the district's progress may falter and its continuing technology needs may remain unmet.

### **Recommendation 71:**

#### **Designate and train an Administrative Technology coordinator and an Instructional Technology coordinator for the district.**

The superintendent should seek recommendations from the District Technology Committee of staff who have the technology experience and knowledge to coordinate the district's technology needs. The superintendent should select one individual to coordinate Instructional Technology and one to coordinate Administrative Technology. They



should be members of the District Technology Committee and meet regularly to determine activities and needs that cross into both areas. The superintendent should ensure that each of the volunteers receives the training required for them to handle these additional responsibilities effectively and efficiently.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent asks the District Technology Committee members for recommendations of staff to accept the additional duties of Instructional Technology coordinator and Administrative Technology coordinator.	April 2002
2.	The superintendent selects the two most qualified staff and updates their job descriptions to reflect technology coordinator duties.	April 2002
3.	The superintendent notifies all district personnel of the new assignments and responsibilities.	April 2002
4.	The designated technology coordinators schedule and attend training.	May 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The training needs of each of these coordinators will be very different, but the Regional Education Service Center I (Region 1) provides a number of opportunities for training at an approximate cost of \$150 per day. The fiscal impact assumes RISD will send each technology coordinator to 2 days of training in 2002-03 and 1 day each in subsequent years. In addition, each coordinator will receive an annual stipend of \$250.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>
Designate and train an Administrative Technology coordinator and an Instructional Technology coordinator for the district.	(\$1,100)	(\$800)	(\$800)	(\$800)	(\$800)

# Chapter 10

## COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

This chapter discusses the computer and technology services provided by the Raymondville Independent School District (RISD) in two sections:

### **B. MAINTENANCE AND SUPPORT**

Improving technology in school districts requires districts to effectively manage a substantial investment in technology. A well-managed administrative technology and information services program must provide direction for the district on ways to use technology effectively, as well as provide adequate support for the maintenance, upkeep and replacement of equipment and software. Technology management is now a key factor in virtually every school district decision because technology is used to some extent in every functional area of a district.

Technical support, like training, significantly influences how effectively technology is used in the classroom. Teachers, even those who are experienced computer users, often encounter technology-related difficulties that interrupt their planning or classroom activities. Unless they receive quick responses to their questions, their effectiveness will be reduced.

When solutions to such problems are not provided promptly, teachers sometimes are forced to abandon the computers in the classroom and may be reluctant to resume even after problems are resolved. Schools that can resolve such difficulties quickly are best able to prepare their students effectively.

### **FINDING**

RISD does not maintain current inventories of its computer hardware or software for either staff or students. Computer inventories account for valuable technology hardware and software. Although a hardware inventory was completed early in 2001, the district had a surplus property sale in summer 2001 and sold a number of computers. No records were kept of serial numbers or other identifying information from the items sold. In Fall 2001, 48 computers were identified as missing. These could have been sold as surplus property, stolen or left in classes when school buildings were vacated during the move into new facilities at the elementary and high school. Because the inventory completed in early 2001 was not documented, it is not possible to determine what happened to the computers.

Without the creation and regular maintenance of software libraries and technology inventories, it is impossible for the district to ensure all copyrights and licenses are honored and to enforce guidelines regarding the acceptable uses of the materials. There is no central accounting, control or distribution of computer hardware and software.

**Recommendation 72:**

**Inventory current hardware and software at each school and at central administration and create districtwide inventories.**

Each school principal should use the district's 2001 hardware inventory to determine what changes have taken place since the inventory was completed. Additionally, each principal should ensure that an inventory is done of the software on that campus. The superintendent should assign someone to inventory the hardware and software that is in locations other than the campuses. When the individual inventories are completed, they should be kept and maintained by the principals or administrators assigned. A comprehensive districtwide inventory should be created by combining the individual inventories. It should be kept and maintained at the central office. An annual inventory should be made to maintain the inventory's accuracy.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent directs the school principals and other staff as needed to conduct an inventory of all technology assets.	April 2002
2.	The school principals and other assigned staff complete the inventories and submit copies to the superintendent.	May 2002
3.	Principals and assigned staff update individual inventories and the districtwide inventory when technology assets are acquired or disposed of.	Ongoing
4.	Principals and assigned staff conduct an annual inventory of all technology assets and submit the results to the superintendent.	April 2003 and Annually

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

RISD does not track the frequency or nature of computer and software maintenance problems. The district has a contract with Eclipse Consulting and Technical Services Inc. for network maintenance. All other maintenance of computer hardware and software is handled by the program evaluator and computer equipment maintenance technician.

When a technology problem arises at a campus, it is reported by a teacher or other staff member to the technology contact at that school. The contact then advises the program evaluator or computer equipment maintenance technician of the problem. No records of the problem or solution are maintained. Because there are no maintenance statistics, there is no knowledge of the variety or frequency of the problems that arise. There is also no understanding of the skills required to solve the problems, and the district is unable to make informed decisions about replacing or upgrading its hardware and/or software.

Taft Independent School District uses its district Web site for reporting computer and software problems and collecting maintenance statistics.

**Recommendation 73:**

**Collect and maintain computer hardware and software maintenance statistics.**

The program evaluator should establish a work-order system to initiate and track technology maintenance work. The system should identify when each problem was reported, a description of the problem and when and how the problem was corrected.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent instructs the program evaluator to develop a method for tracking computer hardware and software maintenance.	April 2002
2.	The program evaluator, with assistance from the computer equipment maintenance technician and the school technology contacts, develops a system for tracking technology maintenance.	May 2002
3.	The superintendent approves and implements the system.	June 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

RISD has no written, comprehensive disaster recovery plan. A comprehensive disaster recovery plan helps districts recover technology operations and critical data should a disaster such as fire, hurricane, flood, power fluctuation or computer virus occur.

There are 11 servers in RISD containing district financial, student, attendance, discipline, library and computer curriculum information. There is no official policy concerning saving or backing up important computer files. The program evaluator has verbally communicated to district personnel the importance of regularly saving information by backing up files. Interviews with staff indicate a variety of individual plans for backing up files, but without a district policy or process that ensures accountability there is no assurance that files are backed up on a regular basis.

The senior accountant and PEIMS coordinator back up the server containing financial and PEIMS information daily. There are three servers for the library system that are backed up at least weekly. Each elementary school has two servers for use in student instruction that are backed up daily. There is no one backing up the four servers used for the accelerated-reader program. The librarian backs up the servers at the junior high and high school. The server at Pittman Elementary is backed up by the assistant principal, and the server at L.C. Smith Elementary is backed up by a teacher on a daily basis.

In addition to backing up files locally to preserve information, the district provides important data to Regional Education Service Center I (Region 1) four times a year in its PEIMS submissions. These submissions are kept on a server in Region 1 and would be available to the district if the need arose.

**Exhibit 10-5** lists key elements of an effective disaster recovery plan.

**Exhibit 10-5  
Key Elements of a Disaster Recovery Plan**

<b>Step</b>	<b>Details</b>
Establish a disaster recovery team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Superintendent identifies a disaster recovery team including key decision makers, building management, users, key contractors and technical staff.</li> </ul>
Determine key information needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a complete list of critical activities performed within the district.</li> <li>• Develop an estimate of the minimum space and</li> </ul>

	<p>equipment necessary for restoring essential operations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a realistic schedule for beginning initial operations after a disaster.</li> <li>• Develop a list of key personnel and their responsibilities.</li> </ul>
Determine and maintain vital information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an inventory of all technology assets, including data, software, hardware, documentation and supplies.</li> <li>• Establish a reciprocal agreement with other schools to share equipment or lease equipment to allow the district to operate critical activities after a disaster.</li> <li>• Make plans to obtain hardware, software and other equipment to ensure critical operations are resumed quickly.</li> <li>• Establish procedures to obtain off-site back-up records.</li> <li>• Locate support resources that might be needed such as power supply, equipment repair, and moving and cleaning companies.</li> <li>• Make arrangements with vendors to provide priority delivery for emergency orders.</li> <li>• Identify data recovery specialists and establish agreements for emergency support.</li> </ul>
Specify details within the plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify individual roles and responsibilities by name and job title so everyone knows exactly what needs to be done.</li> <li>• Define actions to take before a disaster.</li> <li>• Define actions to take at the onset of a disaster to limit damage and loss.</li> <li>• Identify actions to take to restore critical operations.</li> <li>• Define actions to take to re-establish normal operations.</li> </ul>
Test the plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Test the plan on a regular basis and document results.</li> <li>• Analyze results to improve the plan.</li> </ul>
Deal with damage appropriately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should a disaster occur, document costs and videotape damage.</li> <li>• Be prepared to overcome losses until insurance</li> </ul>

	settlement issues are resolved.
Consider other significant issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simplify the plan.</li> <li>• Have one individual responsible for the plan, but structure and communicate the plan so others are authorized and prepared to implement the plan as needed.</li> <li>• Regularly update the plan to include changes made to your system.</li> </ul>

*Source: National Center for Education Statistics, "Safeguarding Your Technology." (Modified by TSPR.)*

The Glen Rose ISD has developed a comprehensive disaster recovery plan for handling the loss of its information systems which includes; emergency contacts for the Technology Department staff, the district's software and hardware vendors, protocols for both partial and complete recoveries and outlines designated alternate sites dependent upon the type of outage that occurs. This plan is available on Glen Rose ISD's Web site at: <http://www.grisd.net/tech/pandp.html>.

**Recommendation 74:**

**Develop a comprehensive disaster recovery plan and test it periodically.**

Obtain and review disaster recovery plans available from Region 1 and other school districts to speed the planning process.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent establishes a disaster recovery team, composed of department representatives from the central office, Payroll, Purchasing, Student Accounting and the campuses and appoints a team leader.	April 2002
2.	The disaster recovery team develops the disaster recovery plan.	April 2002
3.	The disaster recovery team leader presents the plan to the superintendent and board for approval.	May 2002
4.	With board approval, the disaster recovery team leader communicates the plan to district personnel.	June 2002

5.	The disaster recovery team runs a scheduled test of the plan.	September 2002
6.	The disaster recovery team leader reports the results to the superintendent and school board.	October 2002
7.	The disaster recovery team monitors ongoing plan reviews and tests and updates the plan as necessary.	Ongoing

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## **FINDING**

While RISD has established a Web site, the district does not maintain it or maximize its use to keep the community informed of current events. The RISD Web site includes links to schools, a listing of school board members, a district mission statement and a monthly calendar; but, it has not been updated since October 2000. The list of school board members is not current, and the calendar has no information on it.

The Internet is a cost-effective way to provide information in a timely manner to staff and community residents. Common uses of district Web sites include posting links to the individual campus Web sites, job opportunities, a directory of district phone numbers and e-mail addresses, athletic calendars, district staff and student awards and their recipients, the district mission statement, weather information, board meeting announcements and minutes, school menus and school closing information. District Web sites also can serve as the place for staff to report maintenance problems and for vendors to register.

Eagle Pass ISD's Web site includes information on board members, profiles of each campus, the local board policy handbook, dates and agendas of board meetings and links to educational resources.

Smithville ISD posts the summary of board actions taken at each meeting and other information pertinent to staff and the community, such as the demographics of the school, school calendar and the history of Smithville.

Alief ISD (AISD) posts its district newsletter, *The Communicator*, on its Web site. The three divisions of AISD - instruction, business and human resources-each post extensive information for staff and the community. For example, in the Instruction division, the Special Education department lists all services provided, information on Special Olympics, a teacher page, a parent page and information on assertive technology.



One Santa Gertrudis ISD (SGISD) teacher places her notes for the next class day on the Internet so that students must go to the Internet to retrieve them, encouraging students to become more familiar with the Internet. SGISD offers a Web Master course, and students enrolled in the course are responsible for designing and maintaining the SGISD Web site.

**Recommendation 75:**

**Train RISD high school students to maintain and expand the district Web site.**

Training high school students to maintain the district Web site would create an additional learning experience for students while providing a valuable tool for communicating useful information to schools, teachers, parents and the community. Assigning students the authority and responsibility of maintaining the district Web site will give the students a sense of pride in their accomplishments. The work could be conducted like a club with a teacher assigned to be a staff liaison.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent asks campus principals to recommend individuals willing to act as staff liaison to students selected to maintain the district Web site and selects one for each campus.	April 2002
2.	The superintendent directs the high school principal to select volunteer students to maintain the district Web site.	April 2002
3.	The selected students receive Web site development and maintenance training from a technology teacher, a community member or a Region 1 employee.	May 2002
4.	The students begin Web site maintenance.	May 2002
5.	The staff liaison reviews Web site consistency and quality on a regular basis and reports to the superintendent when the principal needs to make new volunteer assignments.	May 2002 and Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# Appendix A

## PUBLIC FORUM COMMENTS

### Comments - Part 1

As part of the Raymondville Independent School District performance review, a public forum was held at Myra Green Middle School. Members of the public were invited to record any comments they had regarding the RISD education system. Community members and school staff who participated in the public forum gave their comments about the 12 areas under review. These comments illustrate community perceptions of RISD and do not reflect the findings or opinions of the Comptroller or review team. The following is a summary of comments received by focus area.

#### ***DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT***

- The present "power group" and the central administration appointed by them have almost decimated employee morale and the effectiveness of our school. Site-based decision making was a joke with the previous administration and non-existent with this one except the fake "emergency" district site-based meeting they staged today (10-30-01) for your benefit.
- We had our first district site-based meeting yesterday. Administration is trying to put their own people on the committee as parent/community members instead of having a committee make that decision. District and campus site-based committees have no say in the budget process or how to use the budget. Administration has already made all of the decisions.
- What is the point of having a site-based committee if decisions they make are overruled by the superintendent? Our students are suffering and will continue to suffer when you have party animals trying to run a school. Our teachers need more backup from the administration.
- You can clearly see that the board is only doing what is good for the board. I've attended several meetings and have sometimes been left wondering who they are working for because it certainly isn't for the kids. They make decisions for everyone without consulting anyone. There have been times when members of the public are ignored when it's their turn to speak. I feel that the superintendent is not exactly sure of his duties. I don't understand why he needs an assistant superintendent.
- I am supposed to be on the district site-based committee and I have not been invited to a meeting since May. I have also called the superintendent twice and calls are never returned.
- Present board has made significant progress towards improving the district. The superintendent has always placed the student's needs

first. The site-based decision making committees are actively involved in decisions at each campus.

- I think that if the present administration would concentrate more on the education of our children, they could see better results. Their biggest concern is who are we putting in this or that position. Some of the administrators are too busy trying to correct their mistakes. Students at middle school and high school are doing poorly. Some teachers are fed up with the administration. They don't know what they are doing. When you have an assistant principal that has never been in the classroom, how can you expect that individual to run a school?
- I quit going to school board meetings eight years ago because of the closed format of no public interference with the board action. I do not consider an open meeting to be three minutes to speak before the deliberations begin. City and county meetings allow public input, but not school board meetings.
- Because of the intimidating and aggressive behavior of the school board, many highly qualified school staff personnel have left the Raymondville school district to seek employment elsewhere. This leaves us with a second level tier of school management. We even lost some largely qualified teachers to other nearby school districts. It takes a long time to retain good teachers and any loss is bad for the students.
- There is too much favoritism. The assistant superintendent is doing his real estate instead of finding better ways to make the district work. The so-called superintendent is playing golf when he should be conducting school business or being there for our students, parents or community.
- I always thought that TEA was right because they saw things in favor of the students, but seeing what they are doing now I feel that they have become political and are looking out for the wealthy landowners of Willacy County. I think that their decision to come down to RISD with a monitor is unwarranted. There are problems, but I feel our problems are not at a point where we deserve this visit.
- Governance is slowly but surely becoming a team of eight.
- Interim superintendent has taken on a huge job, but is bringing RISD together financially and educationally.
- Before there was a superintendent, business manager, CFO, finance consultant, director of curriculum, director of federal programs, director of technology, director of migrant funds and now we have a superintendent, assistant superintendent, elementary coordinator, secondary coordinator and a CFO. Five doing the work of eight and doing it a whole lot better.

- If this is a public forum, then why were two school board members here? Was this intimidation or will there be repercussions for my being accountable to my profession?
- Check out the district lawyer. Why is he suing TEA?
- Too many people were afraid to come tonight. We are afraid of being here because the two school board members were here taking notes.
- I feel intimidated by the fact that school board members were here while I was writing this. I love teaching but I wanted to speak out for the students. I don't want to lose my job.
- Assistant principal at middle school has never been in the classroom and has no experience. Her husband is a board member. She was already in the district, but she was promoted to the middle school so she can make sure teachers are treating her son right.
- I don't think the present school board is following any of the rules they are supposed to. They follow their own rules or they make them up as they go along.
- Incompetence is not to be tolerated. We want the board to be honest.
- When the prior superintendent was officiating, everything was out in the open. But now nothing is disclosed to the public. What information is given is usually incomplete, and supposedly will be brought for discussion at a later time. I have yet to see a later time come around.
- It concerns me that the new business manager is possibly related to school board members and administrators.
- The school board is trying to do the best it can, but most teachers have a horrible attitude and this is only hurting the students.
- Most of our board members have the frame of mind that this is their school district and that they can do whatever they want.
- They hired an interim superintendent who does not know anything because he can't make any decisions until he talks to the assistant superintendent.
- Board members meet at offsite locations and make decisions before they get to the actual meeting.
- Fired superintendent was brought back as interim. He was fired for job performance and hired back in July. The previous superintendent was well respected.
- The community has been so rejected by the school board for the last six months that I wonder if the people are represented, or if the board members have decided to run the school as a private agenda project. Without guidance from previous leaders, they have struck out on their own and have made many bad decisions and many enemies.
- I feel that staff at the High School is very uninformed about everything. Nobody seems to know what's going on from the

superintendent, school policymakers and principals. We (teachers) need to be a part of the loop.

- The school board members seem to be under plenty of scrutiny due to the publicity that the newspaper is providing. However, the reason previous board members have not been spoken about is because it is they who are spreading the gossip and mayhem. Please have your group investigate into previous school activities involving previous boards.
- Since the R.I.S.D. school board is the governing body of our school district, we need much improvement in the board. The board has no knowledge of parliamentary procedures. The board rules like a dictator and decisions are made without input from all board members.
- The man that is presently serving as the interim superintendent is one of the board's pals, so he is there with no qualifications for the job. He is presently attending classes during the day when he should be in his office running the school business.
- This area is the area that really has not only damaged our school district, but has divided a community. The existing board has not handled its responsibilities as set forth by policy. It has been a dictatorship by the board president and strengthened by board members that rule not on the betterment of the district or its students, but by personal obligations to the people that were promised jobs in the district in return for their support in the last election. They run their business so as to show the community that not only do they have power, but they are going to run the school system they way they see fit no matter what anyone says.
- The board micro manages the system through the superintendent and his assistant. The high school principal has little or no management skills. He was given the position because he had 10-15 yrs of experience working in the high school. Assistant principals and secretaries make most decisions. Assistant principal in middle school has no certification, but her husband is on the school board. I am a Hispanic male. I know for a fact that a lot of the decisions that were made by the current president and the board were racially motivated. If you look at all the lawyers, consultants, and accountants hired since the last election you will find that the majority are Hispanic where as before it was Anglo. Our community has been divided and it will only get worse. We need to take care of our kids first. We don't need to be bad examples.
- The governing board should be left alone to do their job. Many people have opinions, but the board has taken their opinions and thoughts about various school issues and put them in motion ---- not on a whim -- but often they've weighed the facts.

- New superintendent is doing a great job. Little by little, things are changing for the better. New super is open and receptive to new ideas.
- Superintendent is not certified for the job. I have heard directly from parents that they were unable to find either the superintendent or assistant superintendent in their offices. Central office personnel have complained of the same thing.
- Site-based committee members, especially at RHS, have felt that their committee is just for show. Very few of their decisions have been given any credibility.
- The assistant principal at Myra Green Middle School is not qualified for the position. Others who were qualified were passed over. She is related to a school board member.

### ***EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY***

- I believe Accelerated Reading should be implemented. My daughter used to love to read and especially enjoyed it if it was for a grade. Now she doesn't even read and she says it's not important. This school is not focusing on reading at all or at least it's not implemented. I believe my child was doing great when she was reading. Please don't take AR away from students. Even those that don't like to read will learn to like it once they see they have read a book for the first time.
- Administration is trying to lower grades of students. We have a grading policy but teachers are told to have some weighted grades. Do not factor in zeros so students can pass. In other words, students do not have to do any work. This makes it hard for teachers to teach the students.
- ESL classes are not helping the students. Parents at RHS have requested their children be taken out because they are not learning anything.
- I think that these people need to attend more training to become better educators. As far as parental involvement, our district took away the only resource for us as parents. The Parental Involvement Coordinator was the only source for teachers to set up conferences or get parents involved with their children. Especially with parents that speak no English at all. This is why many parents refrain from coming to school or speaking with teachers. There is not enough parental involvement.
- One of my main concerns is the overall lack of substance in the curriculum as presented these days and especially in Raymondville ISD. The lack of discipline that will lead to excellence later in life.
- I taught in the Raymondville ISD for 28 years. In the 60's, we seldom received a transfer student from another state who could

compete with our students or who had the background foundation that our children had.

- I taught before Bilingual and after Bilingual was begun. The 5<sup>th</sup> grades that I taught before Bilingual had such a competent foundation that they were on an equal footing overall. When I first became aware of the implications of the Bilingual programs, I thought "Oh, my goodness." All this will do is hold some of the children back. Sure enough, it happened.
- I have been told confidentially that the migrant program is going to suffer because of the student/teacher ratio at the beginning of school. It did not allow any slack when the migrants returned to town. Maybe it will work out. I hope so.
- It is stunning to me that the middle school does not have a full service ESL program and that students who cannot speak English are in classes (social studies, science) that expect full fluency.
- Middle school administrative policies regarding grading and standards seem either arbitrary or motivated by personal positioning. The graded Accelerated Reading program was recently abolished in favor of a voluntary reading program. That is not going to get at-risk students on grade level.
- Curriculum is based on TAAS tests from the previous year. Children are not taught basic subjects they will need when they graduate and are out in the community. I believe TAAS should be done away with and not emphasized so much as more funding for school. Children are being drilled to learn objectives on the TAAS to be recognized.
- Children in the middle school are put on two different levels, the blue team and the gold team. According to the school administration they are picked randomly, but a teacher told me that the children who have low grades and are in trouble are the ones put on the gold team. I believe the children are being discriminated against.
- When my child was in Special Ed for speech, she was going to be tested so she would not take the TAAS test. I found out from the Special Ed teacher they had more referrals during the period before the TAAS test.
- The GEAR-UP program is going well. Parents and students are gaining awareness about higher education. Students have the opportunity to visit colleges and universities in the area. Parents have a place to go to get information about college and information about their child's school scheduling and which classes will help them better prepare for college courses.
- TAAS scores for Myra Green Middle School are really good. School administration is making sure that all students have the opportunity to succeed. I have to compliment the district on their monitoring of Special Ed. Services. Special Education students and

all of the issues concerning them are handled very professionally and Wil-Cam really knows their stuff.

- Curriculum, student performance and programs are suffering due to the lack of leadership and better management. TAAS test scores will be down this year. Too much emphasis has been put on budget and putting unqualified people in positions that do not have the experience but were promised jobs.
- I am a middle school teen's single parent and I understand that Accelerated Reader is no longer part of the mandatory grades. My son has stopped reading and now that scares me to think that this is tolerated. I don't understand how grading policies can change without even being discussed with parents or the public. No wonder parents are taking their children out of this school district. I understand that the Myra Green middle school vice principal made it clear (threatened) to staff that if they released this information that they would be jeopardizing their positions.
- We have great teachers and wonderful students. Administration and teachers work hard to improve student performance. More funding is needed in the area of Special Education. This money needs to be utilized in more Special Ed instructors and diagnosticians.
- Administrators need to be harder on teachers. The teachers are not cooperating with administrators and the students suffer.
- My child goes to one of the campuses here and they revamped a long running grading policy. The old policy promoted reading. Since the new policy has been implemented, reading has diminished greatly. To make matters worse, the teachers have been threatened about their evaluations if they tell parents about this change. As a parent, I want to know what my child is graded on and changes should be made, not hidden.
- Test grades 25 percent, homework 5percent, participation 15 percent -- possibly part of the new system.
- Grading policy is not listed in the student handbook-Why are they hiding it from the parents?
- Grades have gone down. AP classes will be affected in high school and college. Talk about an injustice!!
- How can administrators at Myra Green Jr. High change grading policies without district policy being affected? Administrators have threatened their staff with lower PDAS scores if the parents of students were told. AR is a district program and now is no longer part of the mandatory grades. The kids had stopped reading so we started asking questions and that's how we found out. Reading is essential to life and now administrators that are supposed to be mandating high goals in education are threatening this. They are trying to make it retroactive to the last six weeks, which is a UIL



violation. They are also ripping off TAAS labels under the guise of confidentiality.

### ***PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT***

- Teacher morale is so low due to the health benefits the school offers.
- Health insurance is adequate.
- Health insurance for staff is better and costs less.
- Because of budget cuts the new administration had no choice but to put a freeze on hiring of new personnel. Positions that opened up in the district had to be filled from within.
- I don't know very much about hiring, but I do know that you don't put anybody with experience to work in the office just because she keeps tabs on the teachers or parents.
- At a meeting during the summer, our board president took it upon himself to hire an insurance company without bothering to check what qualifications they had. Because of strong opposition from the community and the school staff, they changed and got a good company.
- Health insurance seems to be working the right way and is less expensive.
- There is an administrator who is abusing workers' compensation. We know it, but proving it would be difficult.
- I understand that actions taken on this health insurance should be done expeditiously yet most cautiously. Many of the employed teachers couldn't even complain because of fear that their comments would anger the board.
- There needs to be an audit of certifications across the district. Maybe check raises for certain new administrators.
- There is no plan for staff development. There needs to be a five-year plan.
- Administrators should not be allowed to threaten its staff. Do administrators have the authority to change grading policies?
- All non-qualified, non-certified managerial staff are employed from middle school vice principals to superintendents. I guess it is okay for them to get certified while on school time daily and fiscally. This opens the door for unstable educators as well.
- I am concerned about the way the current administration has hired new personnel at higher salaries even though it is known that finances were running low. Instead, current employees could have been moved up or promoted to these positions. Some newly hired employees are known to be related to board members or to the new administration.
- This district seems to use the "good old boy" policy of hiring. If you are a friend of the school board members or one of their family

members, you can be assured of a promotion. If you aren't you need to keep an eye on your back. Demotions were handed out just because of who you are.

- Too many people hired in top positions are all related to board members or the superintendent somehow.
- Please evaluate and assess the hiring of the middle school assistant principal. She was an employee of the Wil-Cam co-op prior to her being hired as assistant principal.
- We need good teachers. The change in school board members has caused a lot of problems for a lot of good teachers.
- Teachers provide input on development needs through the campus improvement plans that are reviewed at least two times a year. Hiring practices remain appropriate.
- Staff should have ongoing development to be better able to teach our children.
- I have been told the school tax office will take a major hit. One top employee was fired and the other top employee is retiring and leaving the office in the hands of clerks. I hope all the business gets taken care of. I know they do no appraising, but who will take care of the clerical errors?
- Special Education classrooms where instruction is supposed to be one-on-one are overcrowded. There are not enough Special Education teachers and too many uncertified teachers.
- RISD's hiring practices are the same as they are everywhere else. The only difference is that this past year, there have been a lot of crybabies. Last year a lot of aids were let go and because of their lack of education and money, these people could not fight back. Now suddenly the people on top are getting demoted and the whole town hears about it.

### ***COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT***

- The dropping of the Parent Resource Center could prove to be a big mistake in the near future. Many people are questioning this move.
- I would like to see more business and parental involvement. I am recommending an alliance school initiative through the Texas Capital Investment and the superintendent does not return calls.
- Not enough community involvement. Parents feel intimidated. Some administrators show no support towards the community. As a parent, we feel that as we express ourselves they will not listen. Teachers get lazy and do not try to communicate with us. When parental involvement was within the schools, I remember seeing so many parents in school having conferences with teachers. Parents were able to help our students with the help of our parental involvement coordinator. We need this program back in our

system. Help us as parents by getting this implemented back in our system. This past week the district had a day that parents could visit with the teachers, but at the same time parents were coming in, teachers were having meetings so a lot of teachers missed out on a conference.

- We have big turnouts at the elementary PTO.
- External communication is being poisoned by the editor of the *Raymondville Chronicle*. A few positive articles from his paper and the school climate would be 100 percent better.
- Parent and community involvement is not in good shape right now.
- There is much desire for parental involvement. I am a "single" parent of three ranging from first to eighth grade. The only parental involvement initiated is elementary school. So far this school year (2001-2002), zero parental involvement in my teen's middle school. Last year, there were monthly meetings to understand grading systems, teachers, formatting, tutoring, college pre-requisites, etc. This year NOTHING.
- No internal or external communication.
- The elite school board members only partner with their preferential clients.
- The district places notices of any events in our local newspaper. Students also take school notices home. Parents are involved in Gear-Up. Way to go Gear-Up!
- Community involvement is at an all-time low. Anger and criticism of the school and board has been the main topic of conversation. The only thing that stopped it was the 9/11 terrorism in NY and Washington. That finally gave us something else to talk about.
- I feel like parents are not welcome in school. There are no parental involvement programs for parents available. Parents do not get to find out what is going on with their child's education until it is too late and they are failing. There are no parenting classes for parents after working hours, or at least they are not being publicized. The programs or services available for parents are not known at all to the community.
- There has never been any community involvement in our school district and there probably never will be.
- Parental involvement was a very good influence for our school, bonding the schools with the community. The school district now has taken these privileges away from the parents, students and school. The PRC trainers kept parents involved and talked about matters that concerned discipline and academic matters. Now that we have eliminated these services, a lot of discipline problems have occurred. Personally, I wish all parental involvement programs were kept.
- The newspaper hurts the community a lot.

- Our Parent Resource Centers were terminated due to budget problems. This was the mainstay of parents being able to get the information they needed to help their children at home. Once again, community relations have taken a hit due to current events. Relationships have taken a toll. Raymondville ISD has been labeled in the media as a school with no direction. Weekly letters to the editor have stained the community.
- There is no community involvement. So many people have given the school a bad reputation; more and more people do not want to get involved.

# Appendix A

## PUBLIC FORUM COMMENTS

Comments - Part 2

### *FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT*

- The new facilities are great, thanks to the people that were actively involved in passing the bond. Existing facilities serve the needs of students, yet renovations need to be made.
- Raymondville built a brand new high school that could not house the existing student population, much less allow for possible growth. The students have split lunches (which split half of the third period classes into two sections) because the new cafeteria was small to begin with, then usable space was cluttered with pretty, but very inefficient, furnishings that cost thousands of dollars. Construction was haphazard and inefficient. School board and central administration were wined and dined by contractors.
- We finally have brand new facilities and more than enough rooms to serve our kids.
- Maintenance and custodians are working regular hours and less overtime.
- I am generally satisfied with the new buildings. They seem to be kept clean. My understanding is that maintenance and custodial personnel have been cut due to money deficit.
- I think maintenance and custodial staff are overworked. Cutting back on these employees to save money is a mistake. More are needed.
- The Pittman campus has been lucky to have good hardworking custodial staff. The only problem is that they have shifts. They should all be on campus the whole day.
- Two elementary schools were built over the summer, one with an enrollment of 400 to 450 and the other with an enrollment of 650 to 750. The smaller campus was built like the larger campus and the front of the smaller campus had to be rebuilt at a cost of thousands of dollars at the insistence of one board member.
- The new high school was built without enough classrooms. The wings of older buildings are still being used. Communication between the new and old buildings is inadequate.
- Rooms are not cleaned well. Janitorial staff seems overworked and do not have time to do an adequate job.
- Lights are left on at the tennis court when there is no one playing.
- I believe someone in maintenance was living on the property where busses were being stored.

- Schools are dirty and unattended, yet the salary of custodial help is tremendously high. Staff is overpaid for the work they do. Money should be spent on supplies for the children.
- Energy use could be monitored more closely. Air conditioning units run continuously.
- Part of the high school does not have working bells and intercoms. Announcements can't be heard in the 500 and 600 wings of the high school. No bells make it hard to have fire drills. We have to set our watches to the bell and release the students at the right time.
- Energy is not used wisely. Thermostats are not controlled; covers are in place but are not locked.
- The district did not plan well for housing all students in the 500 and 600 wings. Students are scattered and there is no bell or intercom system in case of emergency.

### ***ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT***

- There is some kind of shell game going on with funds in both the present and previous administration. Waste and fiscal irresponsibility are characteristics of both administrations.
- The school has been successfully lifted out of a \$4 million deficit.

### ***FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT***

- Financial management needs to be addressed from the previous superintendent. Why were we in a deficit? Existing board has done an outstanding job in reducing the deficit.
- A group of concerned citizens of Raymondville contacted me when the news came out in the Chronicle that the school board had made decisions that placed the school district \$4 million in the red. There is an appearance that this has happened two times previously concerning one of the school board members. I called TEA, The Texas Rangers and the FBI that there might be criminal intent with the mismanagement of school funds.
- I hear we are getting a new financial manager so we will have to see later on the job he will do.
- Our schools are able to buy plants, pretty signs and curtains for the rooms, but they can't get pencil sharpeners or dry-board pens for the classrooms.
- The administration doesn't know how to budget. Now the board is suing TEA over sending a monitor? Who is paying for this?
- The administration had to reset payday for RISD because they took out a loan to cover expenses.
- The school seems to be in a financial bind. A lot of money seems to be unaccounted for due to the construction. We need to investigate what happened to all the money. Please check with the

business manager and previous superintendent. It seems that taxpayers pay for all the burden.

- School taxes were raised even though property value did not go up.
- There have been high-paying jobs created when people earning minimum wage were let go. The budget was in the red and new positions were created.
- Supposedly we're in the black now, and not in debt anymore, but the necessary supplies needed to teach are not being brought due to budget cuts.
- \$3 million of bonds were allocated for the construction at the middle school. In order to balance the budget, bonds were sold. It's my understanding this was not legal.
- All money issues to this point have been very vague. As a parent of the district, I feel that better accounting should be given to the public and taxpayers in the community. We need to see for ourselves how the budget is going. It is feared by many that due to our budget problems, improper use of available money is being practiced.
- School taxes are high.
- School budget is now in the black. Monitoring of purchases is good and done often.

### ***PURCHASING AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT***

- Previous superintendent had too much purchasing power. Again, we should have never been in a deficit.
- Purchasing practices and contracting for both administrations are highly suspect, at the least very incompetent.
- People who want honest information from board members are not openly disputing purchases now being made.
- Lately, there have been a lot of problems with purchasing because of the new school board president. He thinks he can do and say whatever he wants. He has not done any competitive shopping. If he wants something, he gets it.
- Science/chemistry teacher was told there was no money to equip the lab.
- Large print textbooks and assistive technology device for Special Ed student, which should have been ordered at the end of last year were not. Students did not get the device until the end of October.
- I don't agree with out of town banking; it is an inconvenience.
- Competitive bidding is helpful. I am concerned that storage and warehousing could be better.
- The current administration does not have the knowledge to make proper purchasing decisions. Close supervision will be needed.
- There were no reading textbooks or HBJ Language textbooks the first six weeks of the school year. The reason for this was that the

assistant principal did not submit the order to the state before she left for summer vacation. Our new assistant principal had to order the books during the first six weeks period.

- Our storage area is the old car dealership on FM 3168. During the summer, books and furniture could be seen outside. These books and furniture belonged to the teachers of the L.C. Smith campus. Some teachers still can't find their supplies.
- Lack of money has kept all campuses without paper and Xerox machines. What are teachers to do when we are told to give the Benchmark test and Meck test. Students in middle school have to take tests using the overhead machine and then they are not given enough time to finish their tests.
- The school is buying textbooks that are not being used by students. Students are being taught strategies to be able to do well on TAAS test.
- Why did the board purchase land for over \$200,000 when we knew they were overspending on the high school facility? Because of this, there was no money left for the elementary (Pittman) library that had been originally allotted for this.
- Furniture was to be replaced for teachers and students and suddenly there was no money.
- Why did this school term begin without reading textbooks at the elementary level?
- There is no contract for copiers or paper and teachers have to spend their paychecks on school supplies so their students can practice for TAAS.
- Textbook purchasing and storage is okay.
- Sometimes not enough textbooks for students.

### ***FOOD SERVICES***

- Children do not get enough time to eat.
- High school cafeteria is too extravagant. It should not be necessary to have two lunch periods. Poor planning from previous administration. Quality and nutritional value of food is adequate to meet student's needs. High school students are involved in planning menus.
- Cafeteria food is skimpy. The breakfasts are mostly thrown away. Lunches seem to be palatable, but not nearly enough.
- Brand new facilities make eating more enjoyable.
- Chartwells food consultants will give quality service.
- Food is bland, ice cold, and the meals that are supposed to be hot are soggy and soupy. The servers are pleasant, however, I guess to make up for the void. One question: why pizza for breakfast?
- The cafeteria facilities are great, especially the high school cafeteria. I think the quality of food could be improved. I hear my



kids complain a lot about this and I think it's a waste seeing all that food being thrown away because kids are not eating it.

- Food services is short on custodians.
- Too many of our students are at risk for diabetes and yet the vast majority of the food being served is carbohydrates. Also, many breakfasts have been served and the breakfast pizza is served half raw.
- Students in Myra Green are grown up. They are being fed very little during lunch and they have little time to eat. And, sometimes food doesn't even look good to eat, just looking at it makes you feel like not eating.
- Children are not eating because the food is either cold or spoiled. The cooks are not cooking. The teachers need the community and management support.
- The new facilities available for our children are nice. Especially now that each campus has it's own cafeteria. Some food is still moved around from main point of origin to certain campuses thus raising issue of how well food is preserved.
- Not enough eating time between lunch shifts.
- The quality of food is low standard, very repetitious menus resulting in students not receiving proper nutrition.
- Food service is terrible! There was plastic found in the enchiladas. The meals are NOT balanced. Diabetes is a very real health issue to Hispanics and look at what is being served! Portions are not adequate to age. There is no presentation and food is blandly colored. Breakfast pizzas have been served raw on more than one occasion at Pittman.
- I feel that serving breakfast in classrooms is too much for the workers, plus a big mess in the rooms.
- The food is good and nutritional. Some kids do not like the food, but as a parent I am pleased.
- Not enough room in the cafeteria for all students at High School.
- To begin with, the food itself is horrible. Breakfast is cold and they serve the same food and students are tired of the same thing. I believe some meals are not nutritional enough. Kids are constantly complaining.
- The food is not nutritious or healthy. I feel that the quality of the food is very bad. My child says that they do not give the full serving. I have been present when not all the children get served all the food as they ran out. Most of the meals are cold and processed and just thrown in the oven. Today children are overweight; they need well-balanced healthy meals. My child has complained about sour milk and one child got ill. Also, powdered eggs are not cooked correctly. Milk is being reused. Snack bar food is greasy and the food is cold.

- I invite you to eat breakfast and lunch at Pittman Elementary. Don't let them know you will be eating at the school. The breakfast (pizza) is served cold and raw at the bottom. The milk is sometimes outdated and sour. They run out of food and sometimes when teachers go to buy lunch they don't have any food. One of the problems is that the cafeteria (kitchen) that serves from 650-750 students was built smaller than the old cafeteria. The new cafeteria has fewer ovens. Not enough vegetables are served, but plenty of starches. The meat patties are cold and raw in the inside. I've told students if it doesn't taste good you don't have to eat it.

### ***TRANSPORTATION***

- Transportation services have done an excellent job. Bus drivers are courteous and always place the student's needs first.
- Bus routes are being modified to fit the needs of our kids.
- New busses would be helpful.
- Our transportation department is great. Our drivers are well-trained. They do complain about their pay. They have been cut back to not drive any more than 40 hours.
- Bus drivers drive too fast. Buses do not have air conditioning.
- Buses run on a timely schedule. I have not heard of safety problems.
- Transportation appears to be adequate. Are buses regularly serviced and are the driver's records clear? There was a Special Ed driver that no one wanted to ride with because she was dangerous and was reported several times.
- School buses are in good condition but the seats are a bit small. Bus drivers could be a little more experienced when it comes to "out of town" routes.
- Our school does not have enough buses or bus drivers to go out on a field trip if they are using the buses on the same date for another organization.
- My understanding of bus drivers is that a criminal check should be done. I would check the background on some of those drivers.

### ***SAFETY AND SECURITY***

- Student discipline at the high school is nowhere to be seen. Some students are reprimanded while others get nothing. Our campus police are hardly seen throughout the campuses. They only help sometimes. Most of the time they say it's not their job.
- At school football games there is no discipline. Children are running and many are under bleachers. Student parking is too far from the athletic building and my daughter has to walk late at night after out-of-town games (usually after 10:00 p.m.).

- Rules are set but not kept, especially for preferred students. The middle school vice principal sets a radical dress code change to suit her child and this affects the whole school. What is acceptable for one is not for another.
- The junior high needs more personnel to enforce student discipline. Fights occur because of lack of staff to supervise students.
- Discipline policies are fair to students and parents. Safety is the priority. Officers are visible and friendly.
- Campus security for the most part is inept and poorly organized. It started that way under the direction of the previous superintendent and has not improved except that they have pretty uniforms. Discipline practices are inconsistent and less effective as a result. AEP students for high school are housed in the 700 wing on campus. The students are out of control and frequently are able to interact with the general student population. The AEP for several years has been a pathetic token and now it is worse.
- Student discipline policies are strict yet fair, and all administrators carry out policies in a fair manner.
- Alternative Education needs to be more structured.
- Campus police need to be trained.
- Safety and security is in good hands right now and it should be getting better.
- Discipline at the middle school has gone down. So far, my child is afraid to come to school sometimes. This was not the case with the previous administration.
- With the dress code change at the high school, students feel like they can do whatever they want. Now discipline needs to be stricter.
- I think our safety and security can't be any better. There are some students that probably need discipline, but there aren't many. Hiring school police is a great asset.
- The policies are good, but security personnel need to be given the boot and the administration needs to find real security.
- Discipline is out of control. Present administration at the high school is not strong in that area. The Alternative Center is a big joke. Students get out of class for ridiculous reasons. Our Police Department could do a little better job of monitoring.
- Alternative education in our system is a joke. The students sent there do not learn. It's like comparing it to "cell block D." Student discipline is worse now due to the fact that administration does not enforce policies (dress code and behavior) through their staff. People are not held accountable for not doing their job. School law enforcement does not respond as needed.
- The middle school needs more people disciplining a large number of children. Two administrators are not enough.

- Safety and security of students is good. Having Police on campuses keeps truancy low. Security guards do a good job of keeping students safe and help administration with discipline matters.
- I am pleased with student discipline at the junior high. The safety, security and law enforcement program is good.
- Children are being picked on in front of teachers and not stopped. There are children being pushed and the other children are not getting in trouble.
- I believe if a child is late for class they should not be punished with in-school suspension when it could be the parents or another good reason.
- I think discipline has changed this year. Students have no respect for teachers. They get away with everything and they do it. In previous years if a student was disrespectful he or she was sent to a certain room away from the campus. Now, when students get into fights, they are put in AEP where there is no discipline.
- Mothers are afraid for their daughters here. Discipline is terrible.
- Kids are being promiscuous in the restrooms.
- My concern is about the school dress code, disciplinary actions, etc., because even the student body has made many comments that dress codes are not being enforced mostly at the high school level.
- The faculty doesn't care to enforce policies. Many complaints have been made also about discipline problems at the junior high. This problem has gotten worse.
- No consistency in administrative discipline to students. Some students get punished while other students get off free. It depends on who the student is. Students walking the halls at the middle school are not punished. A lot of tardiness. Students have the run of the school.

### ***COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY***

- I visited the computer lab in April of last year and half of the computers were not working.
- Last year we thought a grant made it possible to purchase computers, and then we found out that they are on a lease purchase. Poor management of funds. Attendance and grading systems are currently meeting teacher's needs.
- We could use more computers and software for our students. Many other schools are well advanced in that area. If we had better or more computers, I think our students would be more prepared for college.
- Emphasis needs to be placed on staff development.
- New hardware is available to students.
- Pittman campus is the only campus to be technology trained.

- The only computer access really is elementary and intermediate. There is nothing to help my middle school team. Not even the simple keyboarding classes can be offered because no one is certified. When we ask the counselors about this, all that is said is they don't know or can't disclose. Probably for fear of their job being terminated. Please send help! I still have two more children in elementary and intermediate to worry about.
- This area is pretty good. Computers are up-to-date, but sometimes not the programs. Training is needed and more time spent on training programs.
- More technology training is needed. More help needed for repairing equipment and installing software.
- This area has suffered due to not being able to stay up with current software for students in middle school and high school. Children in the lower grades are more automated minded due to the challenges presented to them through computers. As our children get into the higher grades the automated skills are not as challenged.
- For a middle school with so many relatively new computers, it is a shame that our students do not have more technology interaction within the curriculum. This has to do with a lack of teacher training in both equipment and strategies
- Senior citizens should have access to the computer labs with continuing education in computers. Rio Hondo has such a program and why can't Raymondville learn the procedure and produce the training.
- The last eight years of my teaching were in seventh grade Reading Improvement. Our students used the computer-assisted instruction, which I thought was very good for them. Even though they were behind, the ones who were industrious made great strides because they had to depend on themselves. There was no way they could cheat the computer and no way they could bluff the computer. The program we used at that time was C.C.C.
- The school has not given enough attention to the computer needs of the students, but I feel that has more to do with money. I've met teachers from RISD that still cannot run a computer without any help.

# Appendix B

## DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

Demographic Data/Survey Questions

### *Demographic Data*

1.	<b>Gender (Optional)</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>			
		0.0%	33.3%	66.6%			
2.	<b>Ethnicity (Optional)</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Anglo</b>	<b>African American</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Other</b>
		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
3.	<b>How long have you been employed by Raymondville ISD?</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>1-5 Years</b>	<b>6-10 Years</b>	<b>11-15 Years</b>	<b>16-20 Years</b>	<b>20+ Years</b>
		0.0%	0.0%	11.1%	22.2%	44.4%	22.2%
4.	<b>Are you a(n):</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Administrator</b>	<b>Clerical Staffer</b>	<b>Support Staffer</b>		
		0.0%	11.1%	77.7%	11.1%		
5.	<b>How long have you been employed in this capacity by Raymondville ISD?</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>1-5 Years</b>	<b>6-10 Years</b>	<b>11-15 Years</b>	<b>16-20 Years</b>	<b>20+ Years</b>
		0.0%	22.2%	33.3%	0.0%	33.3%	11.1%

### **A. District Organization and Management**

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	22.2%	0.0%	0.0%	22.2%	55.6%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	22.2%	0.0%	11.1%	33.3%	33.3%

3.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	22.2%	11.1%	0.0%	33.3%	33.3%
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	50.0%
5.	Central administration is efficient.	22.2%	44.4%	0.0%	22.2%	11.1%
6.	Central administration supports the educational process.	22.2%	44.4%	0.0%	22.2%	11.1%
7.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	22.2%	11.1%	0.0%	33.3%	33.3%

### **B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement**

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
8.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%
9.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	22.2%	33.3%	22.2%	0.0%	22.2%
10.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	11.1%	33.3%	33.3%	22.2%	0.0%
11.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	11.1%	33.3%	44.4%	11.1%	0.0%
12.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
	a) Reading	22.2%	77.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	b) Writing	22.2%	66.7%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%
	c) Mathematics	33.3%	55.6%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%

	d) Science	33.3%	55.6%	0.0%	0.0%	11.1%
	e) English or Language Arts	22.2%	77.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	f) Computer Instruction	11.1%	66.7%	0.0%	22.2%	0.0%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	11.1%	77.8%	0.0%	0.0%	11.1%
	h) Fine Arts	11.1%	66.7%	11.1%	0.0%	11.1%
	i) Physical Education	22.2%	77.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	j) Business Education	11.1%	77.8%	0.0%	0.0%	11.1%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	11.1%	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%	22.2%
	l) Foreign Language	11.1%	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%	22.2%
13.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a) Library Service	11.1%	66.7%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	22.2%	44.4%	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
	c) Special Education	22.2%	55.6%	0.0%	11.1%	11.1%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	11.1%	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%	22.2%
	e) Dyslexia program	11.1%	66.7%	11.1%	0.0%	11.1%
	f) Student mentoring program	11.1%	44.4%	11.1%	11.1%	22.2%
	g) Advanced placement program	22.2%	44.4%	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
	h) Literacy program	12.5%	50.0%	12.5%	0.0%	25.0%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	22.2%	22.2%	22.2%	11.1%	22.2%
	j) Summer school programs	22.2%	44.4%	22.2%	11.1%	0.0%
	k) Alternative education programs	22.2%	11.1%	11.1%	33.3%	22.2%



	l) Bilingual/English as a Second Language program	22.2%	44.4%	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
	m) Career counseling program	11.1%	55.6%	11.1%	0.0%	22.2%
	n) College counseling program	11.1%	66.7%	11.1%	0.0%	11.1%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	11.1%	22.2%	11.1%	33.3%	22.2%
	p) Drop out prevention program	11.1%	33.3%	0.0%	33.3%	22.2%
14.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	11.1%	22.2%	33.3%	11.1%	22.2%
15.	Teacher turnover is low.	11.1%	0.0%	11.1%	55.6%	22.2%
16.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	11.1%	33.3%	0.0%	33.3%	22.2%
17.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	22.2%	22.2%	22.2%	11.1%	22.2%
18.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	12.5%	12.5%	0.0%	50.0%	25.0%
19.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	11.1%	33.3%	22.2%	22.2%	11.1%
20.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	33.3%	33.3%	11.1%	0.0%	22.2%
21.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%	11.1%	22.2%
22.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	55.6%	33.3%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%
23.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	33.3%	0.0%	22.2%	22.2%	22.2%

### C. Personnel

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
24.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	22.2%	11.1%	22.2%	22.2%	22.2%
25.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	11.1%	33.3%	11.1%	33.3%	11.1%
26.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	11.1%	22.2%	33.3%	0.0%	33.3%
27.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%	33.3%	33.3%
28.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	11.1%	33.3%	0.0%	22.2%	33.3%
29.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	22.2%	11.1%	11.1%	33.3%	22.2%
30.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	22.2%	55.6%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
31.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	11.1%	11.1%	22.2%	22.2%	33.3%
32.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled.	22.2%	11.1%	22.2%	22.2%	22.2%
33.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	33.3%	22.2%	22.2%	0.0%	22.2%

34.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	22.2%	33.3%	11.1%	11.1%	22.2%
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#### D. Community Involvement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
35.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	22.2%	11.1%	11.1%	44.4%	11.1%
36.	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	44.4%	22.2%	11.1%	0.0%	22.2%
37.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	22.2%	11.1%	22.2%	11.1%	33.3%
38.	District facilities are open for community use.	25.0%	12.5%	12.5%	12.5%	37.5%

#### E. Facilities Use and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
39.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	22.2%	22.2%	0.0%	11.1%	44.4%
40.	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	22.2%	33.3%	11.1%	22.2%	11.1%
41.	Schools are clean.	22.2%	55.6%	0.0%	11.1%	11.1%
42.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	22.2%	44.4%	0.0%	22.2%	11.1%

43.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%	37.5%	12.5%
44.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%	11.1%	22.2%

### F. Financial Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
45.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	22.2%	33.3%	11.1%	11.1%	22.2%
46.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	11.1%	44.4%	22.2%	22.2%	0.0%
47.	The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	11.1%	55.6%	11.1%	0.0%	22.2%
48.	Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	22.2%	22.2%	22.2%	22.2%	11.1%

### G. Purchasing and Warehousing

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
49.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	11.1%	33.3%	11.1%	22.2%	22.2%
50.	Purchasing acquires high quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	11.1%	66.7%	0.0%	11.1%	11.1%
51.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for	11.1%	55.6%	22.2%	0.0%	11.1%

	the requester.					
52.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	11.1%	44.4%	22.2%	11.1%	11.1%
53.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	22.2%	33.3%	33.3%	11.1%	0.0%
54.	Textbooks are in good shape	22.2%	33.3%	33.3%	11.1%	0.0%
55.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources for students.	33.3%	55.6%	0.0%	0.0%	11.1%

## H. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
56.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	22.2%	44.4%	0.0%	11.1%	22.2%
57.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	11.1%	44.4%	11.1%	33.3%	0.0%
58.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	11.1%	44.4%	11.1%	11.1%	22.2%
59.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	11.1%	77.8%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%
60.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	11.1%	77.8%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%
61.	A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	33.3%	55.6%	0.0%	0.0%	11.1%
62.	Students receive fair	22.2%	44.4%	0.0%	11.1%	22.2%

	and equitable discipline for misconduct.					
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### I. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
63.	Students regularly use computers.	44.4%	33.3%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
64.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	44.4%	33.3%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
65.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	22.2%	44.4%	0.0%	11.1%	22.2%
66.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	44.4%	33.3%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
67.	The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	22.2%	44.4%	22.2%	0.0%	11.1%
68.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	22.2%	33.3%	11.1%	11.1%	22.2%
69.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	44.4%	22.2%	22.2%	11.1%	0.0%

# Appendix B

## DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

Verbatim

*Verbatim: District Administrative and Support Staff*

- Thank you for asking about my comments regarding the educational performance of RISD. First of all we need to have a well educated school board, that are respected in our community, some of these men are jokes in our town, like a well known drunk. Not only do they not let the public address them but they have to set an appointment to be heard. I have had the misfortune of being in a room and been verbally abused by one, for no reason, just because they are board members they think, they can walk in and take control. These board members need to take some kind of schooling in becoming school board members, they take things for granted and for one or two workshops they attend and that is if they attend, they just go for the free trip and free drinks. Another thing I would like to mention is that our CFO has resigned. Due to the fact that she is a woman and of her age the board thinks she is incapable of becoming a business manager. The board hired an individual who will now be our next business manager who has no knowledge of school finances. I hope they have made the right choice. We are already in trouble with TEA and they are hiring a man who is related to a board member and is related to the superintendent's best friend, and the interviewing committee consisted of members of the site based management committee. The leader of the group just so happens to be a very good friend of the superintendent, it seems they knew who they wanted to hire and the CFO was not even considered for an interview where she had applied. I think by letting go of the CFO is just causing more trouble than we are asking for. This new person has no idea what the CFO has done to balance our troubled deficit, she is very knowledgeable in all areas starting with workers' comp to GASB. We are losing a person with knowledge in all fields. I would like to also mention that the assistant principal who just happens to be a board members wife, just so happens to land a job that wasn't even advertised publicly, has the authority to fire people as she did her first day on the job and was not have that individual replaced, well that person has been replaced. Thank you for your time and I am not sure if this was appropriate for myself to say but someone needs to know what is going on in our school system. This is causing our children's morale and self esteem to degrade to a lower

standards. We need to have better qualified individuals in the High School administration and in the middle school.

- Misuse of funds by previous Administration which has caused the district to be under a 3 million deficit.
- The Raymondville School District has had excellent teachers in the past. I hope that the current administration will continue to provide equal curriculum development and instructional support in both Elementary and Secondary levels.
- On 6/7/01 the RISD Board of Trustees released a superintendent and named an interim. That was followed by a reduction in force, re-assignments and resignations. Programs currently in place were effectively run by the former administration. The new administration doesn't have the experience or knowledge on setting priorities on the running of the district and it's programs. The district has lost and continues to lose "key" people that kept things running smoothly and effectively. Vacant positions are being filled by friends or relatives of the board and/or the administration, rather than by better qualified applicants. The new administration may have had good intention in the beginning but it has turned into placing personal feelings and agendas before the education of our children.
- Administration do not wish to hear dissenting arguments about future problems that may develop. Central office personnel do not believe in an open door policy or access to provide input to granting information on purchasing equipment or supplies. Teaching Assistants being allowed to teach students at the secondary level without the presence of a certified teacher being present.
- Since I worked in the central office I observed during the summer a board member in the schools business office sitting at the business computers and reviewing all financial businesses. I have worked 20+ years and have never seen a board member sitting at a business computer. In past years they call the secretary to the superintendent and request reports that they might need. He would even work on the weekend and work with the chief financial officer of the district at the time. Is of my opinion uncalled for to see a board member working at the school business computer and parading in and out of the school safe.



# Appendix C

## CAMPUS ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

Demographic Data/Survey Questions

(n=69)

### Demographic Data

1.	<b>Gender (Optional)</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>			
		13.0%	15.9%	71.0%			
2.	<b>Ethnicity (Optional)</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Anglo</b>	<b>African American</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Other</b>
		0.0%	14.5%	0.0%	68.1%	0%	17.4%
3.	<b>How long have you been employed by Raymondville ISD?</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>1-5 years</b>	<b>6-10 years</b>	<b>11-15 years</b>	<b>16-20 years</b>	<b>20+ years</b>
		8.7%	21.7%	21.7%	14.5%	15.9%	17.4%
4.	<b>What grades are taught in your school?</b>	<b>PK</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
		46.4%	47.8%	47.8%	47.8%	50.7%	49.3%
		<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
		30.4%	31.9%	37.7%	34.8%	33.3%	33.3%

### A. District Organization & Management

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings	0.0%	11.6%	17.4%	23.2%	40.6%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	0.0%	34.8%	11.6%	11.6%	34.8%
3.	School board members	0.0%	5.8%	17.4%	23.2%	46.4%

	understand their role as policymakers and stay out of the day-to-day management of the district					
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	0.0%	11.6%	40.6%	11.6%	30.4%
5.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	0.0%	5.8%	42.0%	11.6%	34.8%
6.	Central administration is efficient.	0.0%	28.9%	31.9%	17.4%	15.9%
7.	Central administration supports the educational process	0.0%	34.8%	28.9%	17.4%	17.4%
8.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	0.0%	17.4%	28.9%	28.9%	23.2%

## B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	11.6%	40.6%	0.0%	28.9%	11.6%
10.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	11.6%	44.9%	0.0%	23.2%	17.4%
11.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	5.8%	28.9%	40.6%	23.2%	0.0%
12.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	0.0%	17.4%	52.2%	28.9%	0.0%
13.	The district provides curriculum guides for all	5.8%	46.4%	17.4%	28.9%	0.0%

	grades and subjects.					
14.	The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	5.8%	46.4%	28.9%	17.4%	0.0%
15.	The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	5.8%	23.2%	57.9%	11.6%	0.0%
16.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
	a) Reading	0.0%	57.9%	23.2%	11.6%	5.8%
	b) Writing	0.0%	57.9%	28.9%	11.6%	0.0%
	c) Mathematics	0.0%	52.2%	28.9%	11.6%	5.8%
	d) Science	0.0%	52.2%	28.9%	17.4%	0.0%
	e) English or Language Arts	0.0%	57.9%	34.8%	0.0%	0.0%
	f) Computer Instruction	0.0%	40.6%	47.8%	11.6%	0.0%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	0.0%	40.6%	40.6%	7.2%	11.6%
	h) Fine Arts	0.0%	46.4%	28.9%	11.6%	5.8%
	i) Physical Education	0.0%	57.9%	34.8%	0.0%	5.8%
	j) Business Education	0.0%	40.6%	46.4%	7.2%	0.0%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	0.0%	46.4%	34.8%	5.8%	7.2%
	l) Foreign Language	0.0%	34.8%	40.6%	17.4%	0.0%
17.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a) Library Service	5.8%	40.6%	40.6%	5.8%	5.8%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	5.8%	52.2%	34.8%	5.8%	0.0%
	c) Special Education	0.0%	57.9%	28.9%	11.6%	0.0%
	d) Head Start and Even	0.0%	28.9%	57.9%	0.0%	11.6%

	Start programs					
	e) Dyslexia program	0.0%	34.8%	34.8%	17.4%	5.8%
	f) Student mentoring program	0.0%	28.9%	34.8%	23.2%	11.6%
	g) Advanced placement program	5.8%	40.6%	34.8%	11.6%	5.8%
	h) Literacy program	0.0%	23.2%	57.9%	11.6%	5.8%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	0.0%	28.9%	28.9%	34.8%	7.2%
	j) Summer school programs	7.2%	57.9%	23.2%	11.6%	0.0%
	k) Alternative education programs	7.2%	34.8%	28.9%	17.4%	11.6%
	l) English as a Second Language program	5.8%	34.8%	40.6%	17.4%	1.4%
	m) Career counseling program	7.2%	34.8%	40.6%	17.4%	0.0%
	n) College counseling program	5.8%	34.8%	34.8%	23.2%	1.4%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	0.0%	17.4%	46.4%	28.9%	5.8%
	p) Drop out prevention program	0.0%	11.6%	46.4%	28.9%	11.6%
18.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	5.8%	28.9%	46.4%	11.6%	5.8%
19.	Teacher turnover is low.	5.8%	7.2%	40.6%	23.2%	23.2%
20.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	0.0%	34.8%	23.2%	28.9%	11.6%
21.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	0.0%	5.8%	28.9%	40.6%	23.2%
22.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory	0.0%	23.2%	52.2%	17.4%	5.8%

	performance.					
23.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	0.0%	46.4%	17.4%	11.6%	23.2%
24.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	0.0%	57.9%	40.6%	1.4%	0.0%
25.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	0.0%	63.8%	23.2%	5.8%	5.8%

### C. Personnel

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
26.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	0.0%	17.4%	28.9%	11.6%	34.8%
27.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	5.8%	17.4%	46.4%	5.8%	17.4%
28.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	5.8%	40.6%	11.6%	17.4%	23.2%
29.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	5.8%	23.2%	17.4%	23.2%	28.9%
30.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	5.8%	28.9%	17.4%	17.4%	28.9%
31.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	7.2%	23.2%	46.4%	5.8%	17.4%
32.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	17.4%	63.8%	0.0%	5.8%	11.6%

33.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	7.2%	11.6%	34.8%	17.4%	28.9%
34.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	7.2%	23.2%	40.6%	17.4%	11.6%
35.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	7.2%	11.6%	52.2%	11.6%	17.4%
36.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	7.2%	17.4%	23.2%	11.6%	40.6%

#### **D. Community Involvement**

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
37.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	7.2%	28.9%	23.2%	46.4%	0.0%
38.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	0.0%	7.2%	17.4%	46.4%	28.9%
39.	District facilities are open for community use.	0.0%	28.9%	34.8%	23.2%	11.6%

#### **E. Facilities Use and Management**

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
40.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide	0.0%	5.8%	46.4%	34.8%	11.6%

	input into facility planning.					
41.	Schools are clean.	0.0%	63.8%	0.0%	34.8%	0.0%
42.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	0.0%	63.8%	0.0%	17.4%	17.4%
43.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	0.0%	34.8%	5.8%	40.6%	17.4%
44.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	0.0%	57.9%	11.6%	17.4%	11.6%

### F. Financial Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
45.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	0.0%	17.4%	57.9%	0.0%	23.2%
46.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	0.0%	23.2%	34.8%	23.2%	17.4%
47.	Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	0.0%	17.4%	40.6%	23.2%	17.4%

### G. Purchasing and Warehousing

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
48.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	5.8%	23.2%	17.4%	34.8%	17.4%
49.	Purchasing acquires high quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	0.0%	28.9%	34.8%	23.2%	11.6%

50.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requester.	5.8%	28.9%	52.2%	5.8%	5.8%
51.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	11.6%	23.2%	28.9%	28.9%	5.8%
52.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	17.4%	63.8%	11.6%	5.8%	0.0%
53.	Textbooks are in good shape	0.0%	75.4%	11.6%	5.8%	5.8%
54.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	11.6%	63.8%	11.6%	5.8%	5.8%

## H. Food Services

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
55.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	0.0%	52.2%	11.6%	5.8%	28.9%
56.	Food is served warm.	5.8%	46.4%	11.6%	5.8%	28.9%
57.	Students have enough time to eat.	5.8%	52.2%	5.8%	11.6%	23.2%
58.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of the day.	5.8%	75.4%	5.8%	5.8%	0.0%
59.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	5.8%	46.4%	5.8%	34.8%	5.8%
60.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	5.8%	57.9%	11.6%	17.4%	5.8%
61.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	11.6%	57.9%	11.6%	5.8%	11.6%
62.	Cafeteria facilities are	23.2%	57.9%	5.8%	5.8%	5.8%



	sanitary and neat.					
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### I. Transportation

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
63.	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	5.8%	52.2%	5.8%	17.4%	17.4%
64.	The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	11.6%	57.9%	11.6%	17.4%	0.0%
65.	Buses arrive and leave on time.	11.6%	52.2%	5.8%	17.4%	11.6%
66.	Adding or modifying a route for a student is easy to accomplish.	0.0%	46.4%	23.2%	11.6%	17.4%

### J. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
67.	Students feel safe and secure at school.	11.6%	52.2%	11.6%	17.4%	5.8%
68.	School disturbances are infrequent.	0.0%	46.4%	17.4%	17.4%	17.4%
69.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	5.8%	57.9%	17.4%	17.4%	0.0%
70.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	0.0%	34.8%	34.8%	23.2%	5.8%
71.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	0.0%	11.6%	28.9%	40.6%	17.4%
72.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	0.0%	75.4%	17.4%	0.0%	5.8%
73.	Security personnel are respected and liked by	0.0%	75.4%	17.4%	0.0%	5.8%

	the students they serve.					
74.	A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	5.8%	57.8%	17.4%	11.6%	5.8%
75.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	0.0%	69.6%	5.8%	11.6%	11.6%
76.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	5.8%	34.8%	23.2%	23.2%	11.6%

### **K. Computers and Technology**

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
77.	Students regularly use computers.	0.0%	69.6%	11.6%	17.4%	0.0%
78.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	0.0%	63.8%	11.6%	23.2%	0.0%
79.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	0.0%	81.2%	17.4%	0.0%	0.0%
80.	The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	0.0%	63.8%	11.6%	17.4%	5.8%
81.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	0.0%	34.8%	28.9%	23.2%	11.6%
82.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	11.6%	40.6%	17.4%	28.9%	0.0%
83.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	11.6%	63.8%	11.6%	11.6%	0.0%

# Appendix C

## CAMPUS ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

Verbatim

### *Verbatim: Campus Administrative and Support Staff*

- Replacing custodians takes a long time at cafeterias because it needs to be approved by administration. It's more work for other co-workers.
- This does not pertain to education, but persons that were laid off and had worked for the district many years should have been hired instead of hiring persons belonging to the same political group that is school board now. This school board does their own rules. We lost a well-liked, respected and helpful superintendent because of politics. Our new interim superintendent was fired when he was a facilitator in RISD middle school.
- Ever since the new administration came in the schools have changed drastically. We have no discipline, the teacher's morale is down and everyone is afraid to voice their opinion in fear of losing their jobs. The school board members are seen on weekends at the business office with the superintendent. I have been given more responsibilities ever since they let an office worker go.
- As an educator under the RISD present administration, I am very dissatisfied with the present school board and central administration. Our interim superintendent is not close to being certified and his record of employment includes one year experience in many different fields. He has been known to be less than honest, both as an educator and as a private individual. The school board member's central staff are all personal friends who tend to look after one another and their only interest is "scratching each other's backs".
- I can't remember working in an environment, in and out of the education arena, in which morale is as low as it is at the high school. It has dropped steadily over the past three years, and this year is definitely the worst. It is affecting the students. That for me is the bottom line. Personal agendas, both the present and the previous administration, take precedence over the student's education.
- Employees are treated differently throughout the district concerning absences, overtime/comp time. In addition, administration tends to show favoritism I believe to be politically motivated. Some female employees wear short skirts and low-cut blouses. This does not look professional nor set a good standard for

our female students and is against student dress code and should be against faculty dress code.

- I feel that the food service personnel are very low paid for the hard work these ladies do. Look into the very low wages for them.  
Thank You.
- School security at the secondary campus is much to be desired. School security not visible between periods. Closed campus has not deterred students from leaving between periods.
- We have worked extremely hard over the last few years in our district to reach the status we just recently achieved. Due to the numerous changes in administration throughout the district, it is my fear that the success will be short-lived. The district morale has plummeted over the last six months and has suffered damages that will take years to repair. The student's needs within the district should always be at the highest level of priority.
- I feel that the present board is trying to make ends meet at staff and sometimes at student's expense. I feel from what I see is going on that the present board is trying to blame what's going on at past administration including board, but some of the present board members are part of the past board, as are some of the administrators. How can a superintendent with no experience run a school district?
- Students and teachers should get served more during lunch and it should be free breakfast. It should be free for teachers and teacher's assistants. Only certain teachers receive free food. Because only Special Ed teachers receive free breakfast and lunch, assistants should receive a pay raise. We need principals that have qualifications working with kids. We should have a superintendent not an interim.
- The recent school board actions are going to affect the students enrolled at all the campuses of R.I.S.D.
- Our district has been lacking in administration knowledge. Teacher and support staff morale is at a record low. Support staff is one of the lowest pay scales in the state. Our school board politics is in complete chaos. Please help us as soon as possible. Thank you for taking an interest in our school district.
- I have only worked at this district for four years now as a professional. I enjoy the school's atmosphere a great deal. Everyone I've met has been wonderful.
- I feel our school district is in trouble with the new school board. Tensions have been real high and staff afraid of their job termination does not say anything at meetings. Our children are doing well in school considering our state of problems.
- Teacher's salaries are low compared to other school districts; however, coach's stipends are equal to or greater than most other school districts. Schools focus on dress code issues (example -

tucking shirt tails in), but ignore bigger issues like teen pregnancies, drop out rates, special Ed students in AEP. There are too many discipline problems for a school this size; a boot camp for the county has been suggested. The cafeteria food is not healthy - a lot of starch and few green vegetables. Decisions aren't based on data; they're based on traditions.

- My biggest concern is that students receive the best education possible from their classroom teachers, that they not view their role as merely a source of income. I believe teachers of low performing students should give account as to whether they have tried their best to convey to their students the knowledge and skills they need or taken a casual approach.
- Our school is not the same. The morale at our school is low. We have a school board who knows little of what it is doing. They have assigned people who have little or no knowledge of what they are supposed to be doing. If these people are not doing their jobs how do they expect our students to learn? They believe it's not what you know; it's who you know.
- Staff is not qualified for student's needs. Food in the cafeteria is always cold and simple. Always the same thing. Bus drivers are never given any raise or appreciation; only those who are relatives to main office are preferred. Old busses. Teachers are never recognized for their hard work. After all they do teach our children better than parents do.
- I believe that Raymondville ISD places too much emphasis on athletics, rather than education. I believe that the support staff is severely underpaid. Some of them have been employed with the school for 20 or 30 years, yet are earning wages one or two dollars above minimum wage.
- Morale is at an all time low. Seems to be a power struggle with school board. We have administrators disciplining without proper training or educational background. Family members related to the superintendent moved to other positions without anyone given the opportunity to apply for that position. Others known to board members or superintendent put in positions without proper educational backgrounds. Computer in superintendent's office pulled from a school that was using it for educational purposes. All central staff and newly created positions were given raises. What about the rest of the school district?
- Why is it there is no money in the district for raises for a paraprofessional but there is money for board members and spouses to go on a trip and a football game or hire a cafeteria consultant just to tell them just add a cashier to the line and not change the food being served? The way we see things here is different. Yet they spend money but there is no money. It's hard to understand who's right and who's wrong.

- Due to the problems that exist in our current board of trustees and administration, I feel that the educational performance of our students is failing due mainly to the lack of leadership from principals and assistant principals to enforce or make the proper decisions concerning discipline, attendance, dress code, etc. There exists a tremendous lack of professionalism from the board, interim superintendent, assistant superintendent, as well as administration in the high school. Because of the lack of leadership and professionalism this has led to the low esteem of the majority of staff and ultimately the student body.
- Raymondville ISD is no different than any other school district. It has its positive side as well as its negative. Everyone at the district is trying to do their best for the children of RISD.
- There is a lack of communication between the superintendent's office and the campuses. The superintendent is not respected. He is a political appointee and not qualified for the position. I'm embarrassed to work for this district!!
- Morale seems to be at an "all-time" low. School board members are running to push through their personal agendas. The lack of respect shown between school board members, administrators, and teachers is affecting the students. A quality education for all students does not seem to be the priority of school board members or administrators.
- Until May of 2001, we had a school to proud of. We had an administrative staff that was knowledgeable and had a sincere interest in our students and their education. They had high morals as well as high expectations for the students of RISD. Our new school board, superintendent and administrators care only about themselves, their relatives, their friends and POWER! Many qualified teachers and administrators left our district due to the administrative changes. Raymondville has always had a reputation of having students who were polite and neat in appearance. This is no longer true. There is no discipline in our schools. When there is no discipline, there is no learning going on. I would not have my child in the Raymondville school district today.
- More money should go to keep students at the high school level in school. There are too many girls that get pregnant and have babies and drop out of school. There are students that fall behind on their credits and get discouraged and drop out.
- The educational performance at RISD has been improving the last 5 to 6 years. I'm very nervous about this year's performance due to low teacher morale, the changes in administrative leadership, the decline in student discipline and the uncertainty of what changes this board may make throughout the year.
- Present board and administration have done an excellent job in regards to the financial mess left behind.

- Since this new administration has stepped in there is no discipline in our schools. Administrators believe in having a friendly relationship with students, therefore, students feel like they are in control. The junior high level has too many discipline problems. The high school level students are also in control. These students step in and out of classrooms whenever they decide. Teachers have left the district for this reason and many more are planning to retire in December. Our schools were known for having the best discipline. The cafeteria workers are overworked and understaffed and yet Region One says they need to cut staff.
- Too much politics. People who do the dirty jobs don't get raises. Check everybody's pay salary and compare.
- In my opinion, I feel that all board members and administrators need to work in a fair and professional way instead of the "compadre" way. They should work for the children of all Raymondville and not just for only a few kids. We should always remember that children should always be first in education. Unfortunately in Raymondville "politics" comes first. We have forgotten about tomorrow's leaders, our children, they should always be first not our "compadres".
- I am so embarrassed by the performance of the superintendent and school board. Nepotism does exist. If you are not related or a girlfriend, etc. you are not promoted. The students are learning to hate others and to seek revenge by what the adults are doing to each other.
- I am puzzled by the present situation of the district. The morale in the elementary camps where I work is very low. This in turn affects the performance of the staff. Changes that were recently made have affected everyone in general. It would be very wise to investigate thoroughly all actions that have taken place within the last couple of weeks.
- Within the last two years, the school system has been dropping. The changes that are being made are only for the benefit of only the right staff and if you know them. New positions were made up like, assistant superintendent secondary curriculum coordinator. About 4 more high- paying jobs were made up, some up to \$65,000. The school board has been terminating employees left and right. A lot of the personnel were moved to different positions. I asked myself, do they have the proper certification for the positions? You could check off how employees left the system because of how they were being treated. Employees without education could move forward or a position would be created for them with good pay and leave. The ones at the bottom had nowhere to go. RISD was a good school 10 years ago. We don't have a good administration anymore because if you don't know them you don't have a good job and salary. Too much money is

being paid out. Check how the new director is running the cafeteria. Please help. Assign the master to school.



# Appendix D

## TEACHER SURVEY RESULTS

Demographic Data/Survey Questions

(n=95)

### Demographic Data

1.	<b>Gender (Optional)</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>			
		16.8%	27.4%	55.8%			
2.	<b>Ethnicity (Optional)</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Anglo</b>	<b>African American</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Other</b>
		23.1%	31.5%	0.0%	43.2%	1.1%	1.1%
3.	<b>How long have you been employed by Raymondville ISD?</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>1-5 years</b>	<b>6-10 years</b>	<b>11-15 years</b>	<b>16-20 years</b>	<b>20+ years</b>
		2.1%	22.1%	18.9%	15.8%	12.6%	28.4%
4.	<b>What grade(s) do you teach this year?</b>	<b>PK</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
		4.2%	9.5%	10.5%	8.4%	11.6%	14.7%
		<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
		21.0%	25.3%	24.2%	22.1%	25.3%	29.5%

### A. District Organization & Management

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings	4.2%	7.4%	15.8%	24.2%	48.4%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	5.3%	5.3%	11.7%	33.0%	44.7%
3.	School board members work well with the superintendent.	13.8%	30.9%	28.7%	9.6%	17.0%
4.	The school board has a	3.2%	4.2%	6.3%	28.4%	57.9%

	good image in the community.					
5.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	5.3%	7.4%	13.8%	28.7%	44.7%
6.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	5.3%	5.3%	20.0%	27.4%	42.1%
7.	Central administration is efficient.	4.2%	15.8%	16.8%	36.8%	26.3%
8.	Central administration supports the educational process	6.3%	29.5%	16.8%	25.3%	22.1%
9.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	3.2%	15.8%	37.9%	22.1%	21.1%

### **B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement**

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
10.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	12.6%	29.5%	2.1%	34.7%	21.1%
11.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	8.4%	38.9%	8.4%	26.3%	17.9%
12.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	5.3%	27.7%	20.2%	33.0%	13.8%
13.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	4.3%	29.8%	26.6%	28.7%	10.6%
14.	The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	7.4%	36.8%	6.3%	32.6%	16.8%
15.	The curriculum guides	5.3%	38.3%	17.0%	28.7%	10.6%

	are appropriately aligned and coordinated.					
16.	The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	5.3%	38.9%	11.6%	25.3%	18.9%
17.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
	a) Reading	11.6%	56.8%	7.4%	21.1%	3.2%
	b) Writing	11.6%	58.9%	8.4%	16.8%	4.2%
	c) Mathematics	10.6%	59.6%	8.5%	16.0%	5.3%
	d) Science	9.5%	50.5%	11.6%	24.2%	4.2%
	e) English or Language Arts	10.6%	63.8%	8.5%	13.8%	3.2%
	f) Computer Instruction	5.3%	43.2%	22.1%	23.2%	6.3%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	6.3%	50.5%	16.8%	21.1%	5.3%
	h) Fine Arts	8.4%	38.9%	16.8%	25.3%	10.5%
	i) Physical Education	8.5%	57.4%	12.8%	13.8%	7.4%
	j) Business Education	3.2%	19.1%	45.7%	22.3%	9.6%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	3.2%	24.7%	37.6%	24.7%	9.7%
	l) Foreign Language	3.2%	34.0%	33.0%	20.2%	9.6%
18.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	b) Library Service	3.2%	45.7%	13.8%	26.6%	10.6%
	c) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	5.3%	47.4%	17.9%	22.1%	7.4%
	d) Special Education	13.7%	54.7%	10.5%	16.8%	4.2%
	e) Head Start and Even Start programs	2.1%	30.9%	54.3%	7.4%	5.3%
	f) Dyslexia program	5.4%	22.6%	32.3%	28.0%	11.8%

	g) Student mentoring program	4.3%	13.8%	34.0%	34.0%	13.8%
	h) Advanced placement program	4.3%	37.2%	34.0%	20.2%	4.3%
	i) Literacy program	2.1%	24.5%	44.7%	20.2%	8.5%
	j) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	3.2%	26.6%	23.4%	29.8%	17.0%
	k) Summer school programs	8.5%	38.3%	12.8%	34.0%	6.4%
	l) Alternative education programs	2.2%	22.6%	25.8%	28.0%	21.5%
	m) "English as a second language" program	6.5%	26.9%	21.5%	31.2%	14.0%
	n) Career counseling program	0.0%	10.8%	43.0%	34.4%	11.8%
	o) College counseling program	1.1%	14.0%	40.9%	32.3%	11.8%
	p) Counseling the parents of students	0.0%	7.5%	26.9%	46.2%	19.4%
	q) Drop out prevention program	0.0%	15.1%	35.5%	35.5%	14.0%
19.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	4.3%	23.7%	10.8%	44.1%	17.2%
20.	Teacher turnover is low.	3.2%	12.9%	5.4%	35.5%	43.0%
21.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	2.2%	27.2%	10.9%	38.0%	21.7%
22.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	2.2%	29.3%	22.8%	30.4%	15.2%
23.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	3.3%	3.3%	7.6%	37.0%	48.9%
24.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory	2.2%	35.2%	31.9%	24.2%	6.6%

	performance.					
25.	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	8.5%	54.3%	12.8%	20.2%	4.3%
26.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	5.5%	36.3%	8.8%	34.1%	15.4%
27.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	5.5%	64.8%	6.6%	12.1%	11.0%
28.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	23.4%	55.3%	9.6%	10.6%	1.1%

### C. Personnel

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
29.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	5.3%	36.2%	6.4%	39.4%	12.8%
30.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	2.1%	48.9%	17.0%	22.3%	9.6%
31.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	3.3%	30.4%	26.1%	30.4%	9.8%
32.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	2.1%	10.6%	20.2%	50.0%	17.0%
33.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	2.1%	8.5%	31.9%	37.2%	20.2%
34.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	2.1%	33.0%	14.9%	35.1%	14.9%
35.	District employees	17.2%	76.3%	4.3%	0.0%	2.2%

	receive annual personnel evaluations.					
36.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	1.1%	5.3%	10.6%	51.1%	31.9%
37.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	1.1%	23.7%	38.7%	25.8%	10.8%
38.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	2.2%	29.0%	34.4%	20.4%	14.0%
39.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	2.1%	25.5%	11.7%	25.5%	35.1%

#### **D. Community Involvement**

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
40.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	5.3%	32.6%	10.5%	40.0%	11.6%
41.	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	4.2%	31.6%	15.8%	34.7%	13.7%
42.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	0.0%	9.5%	13.7%	51.6%	25.3%
43.	District facilities are open for community use.	3.1%	16.7%	30.2%	34.4%	15.6%

#### **E. Facilities Use and Management**

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
44.	The district plans for facilities far enough into the future to support enrollment growth.	2.1%	20.2%	16.0%	35.1%	26.6%
45.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	2.1%	11.6%	15.8%	36.8%	33.7%
46.	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	0.0%	17.0%	40.4%	22.3%	20.2%
47.	The quality of new construction is excellent.	0.0%	24.2%	13.7%	41.1%	21.1%
48.	Schools are clean.	6.5%	55.4%	6.5%	18.5%	13.0%
49.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	2.2%	40.9%	11.8%	32.3%	12.9%
50.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	2.1%	33.0%	7.4%	45.7%	11.7%
51.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	7.4%	52.1%	14.9%	19.1%	6.4%

## **F. Financial Management**

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
52.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	3.2%	23.2%	15.8%	34.7%	23.2%
53.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal	4.3%	20.7%	26.1%	26.1%	22.8%

	management techniques.					
54.	Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	4.3%	24.5%	22.3%	23.4%	25.5%

### G. Purchasing and Warehousing

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
55.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	2.2%	23.7%	11.8%	34.4%	28.0%
56.	Purchasing acquires high quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	3.2%	25.8%	23.7%	33.3%	14.0%
57.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	3.2%	35.1%	24.5%	25.5%	11.7%
58.	Vendors are selected competitively.	1.1%	24.7%	40.9%	23.7%	9.7%
59.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	2.1%	31.9%	11.7%	28.7%	25.5%
60.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	11.0%	49.5%	6.6%	23.1%	9.9%
61.	Textbooks are in good shape	7.4%	63.8%	13.8%	11.7%	3.2%
62.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	5.3%	44.7%	6.4%	33.0%	10.6%

### H. Food Services

	Survey Questions	Strongly	Agree	No	Disagree	Strongly
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		<b>Agree</b>		<b>Opinion</b>		<b>Disagree</b>
63.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	2.1%	26.6%	7.4%	38.3%	25.5%
64.	Food is served warm.	4.3%	51.6%	19.4%	17.2%	7.5%
65.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of the day.	11.8%	77.4%	4.3%	4.3%	2.2%
66.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	5.3%	42.6%	13.8%	25.5%	12.8%
67.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	3.2%	50.0%	4.3%	20.2%	22.3%
68.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	9.6%	55.3%	12.8%	16.0%	6.4%
69.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	9.6%	79.8%	8.5%	2.1%	0.0%

### **I. Safety and Security**

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
70.	School disturbances are infrequent.	1.1%	43.0%	5.4%	30.1%	20.4%
71.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	3.2%	29.8%	25.5%	29.8%	11.7%
72.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	0.0%	14.9%	19.1%	45.7%	20.2%
73.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	1.1%	23.4%	10.6%	48.9%	16.0%
74.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	7.4%	57.9%	14.7%	15.8%	4.2%
75.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	3.2%	51.6%	23.2%	16.8%	5.3%
76.	A good working	10.5%	55.8%	25.3%	7.4%	1.1%

	arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.					
77.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	4.2%	41.1%	3.2%	26.3%	25.3%
78.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	1.1%	28.4%	15.8%	38.9%	15.8%

### J. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
79.	Students regularly use computers.	11.6%	62.1%	4.2%	18.9%	3.2%
80.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	8.6%	55.9%	4.3%	26.9%	4.3%
81.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	8.4%	65.3%	5.3%	18.9%	2.1%
82.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	13.8%	68.1%	4.3%	12.8%	1.1%
83.	The district meets student needs in classes in computer fundamentals.	6.3%	55.8%	12.6%	23.2%	2.1%
84.	The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.	3.2%	25.5%	34.0%	27.7%	9.6%
85.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	14.7%	54.7%	6.3%	20.0%	4.2%

# Appendix D

## TEACHER SURVEY RESULTS

Verbatim: Teachers

### *Verbatim: Teachers*

- The educational performance of Raymondville ISD is good in accordance to "State Recognition". We work our best to serve the students. Parental Involvement is lacking and would really make a difference towards the success of our students.
- Teacher morale is at an all-time low for the following reasons: discipline is lax and ineffective; academic standards are being lowered so "everyone can succeed (pass)"; no budget for supplies; campus has not had a workable copy machine in 3-4 weeks. No word as to when one will be available; administrators do not support or back faculty but want to tell how to teach; campus and district site based management committees have not met; insurance committee did not meet to discuss district coverage; interim superintendent is perceived as a puppet of the board and its "loose cannon" president. Majority of other administrators are close friends or relatives of board members or superintendent. One principal assistant has never taught in the classroom and is not even eligible for mid-management certificate.
- My concern is the course the school board has taken. One man makes the decision and coerces other to concede. I'm worried that the superintendent may not be qualified or strong enough of character to stand up to school board and represent the students of this district. The central administration and school board spin the truth when discussing issues with the public. Frankly, most of the staff feels we can't trust the central administration or the school board. However, there are some exceptional administrators at the campus levels that do everything they can to make our jobs in the classroom easier.
- Teacher morale is at an all-time low. Many teachers are contemplating leaving the district. Many of our experienced administrators were forced to resign and have left the district. Others have been placed in positions they did not want. Many friends and family members of our current administration and board have been given promotions to positions of their choice.
- Educational performance in my campus had been great until the newly elected school board members were put in office. Student discipline has declined because of the student code of conduct selected by the new board. Personnel have been put in duties in areas in which they are not certified to teach and also in administrative duties such as principal.

- I feel that many staff members feel insecure about teaching positions because they are not "friends" with the right board members. I want to be able to do my best, but I feel very worried about some of the decisions that are made by the school board. I feel our first priority should be to educate the students, but the school board seems more intent on placing "friends" in leadership positions and demoting well-qualified excellent administrators in order to free up positions for less qualified friends and family.
- Raymondville ISD is going down "fast." Part of this is due to the financial problems we are having, but most of the problems are political. Ever since the new school board and superintendent came in ("got control"), the changes that have taken place are ridiculous. They shuffled around so many competent people, that these competent people left the district (which is what the board wanted) and they were replaced with close friends and/or family members that were not qualified. Some positions (like PRC at RHS) were not filled to save money, but this caused more problems. Parental involvement at every grade level should be a top priority. Every time we turn around, something is cut to save money and we are known as the school with no money. The "politics" in Raymondville has changed the atmosphere in the school and attitudes of many in this district. The kids are taking advantage of the changes and the inexperience of our administration and are "worse" than they have ever been. If something doesn't happen soon to get Raymondville ISD back "on track" then many more of the remaining competent teachers will leave at the end of the year.
- I think the survey speaks for itself - too many "disagrees" are something to be looked at. Our school district needs to be looked at. I feel students are not receiving the best because of our district's problems. This affects teachers, which in turn affects students.
- Raymondville has always been a proud community, but the politics of our school has always been an axe in our back. Only until the multiple factors on all sides of the political realm work, live and learn from each other, will there ever be any progress at this school district. I hope you Carole Rylander and whomever else the state plans to send can make our community whole again. The day I do fear though is when you and the state leave and the sunset and darkness approaches will the same predators come out of hiding once again??
- Combining special education classrooms is not always conducive to the least restrictive environment for the students. This type of situation creates additional stress on the teachers and paraprofessionals in this environment because of the different stimuli that is in the classroom. Proper settings (conditions) are essential for learning.

- I feel the new administration is doing a fine job. I feel racial tension has been elevated. This is simply because of the change in the new administration. I will continue to pray and support the people in office.
- Thank you for giving me the chance to answer these questions. Right now our opinions do not count with the current board and most of our staff is afraid to express their opinions for fear of retaliation and loss of their jobs.
- The superintendent is not qualified nor certified to be where he is. The assistant superintendent, however, is completely capable of running the district. He's doing it already! Too much nepotism. Any is too much. Need to stop placing people in positions for which they are not qualified.
- School board seems to be more concerned about themselves and others, instead of the students.
- Children learn best in a stable environment. I do not feel that this district has that stability any more, and I fear the impact this will have on our students. We do not have the resources to provide our students with the best. For example, we have not had a properly working copy machine on our campus for almost four weeks now. Why aren't they getting fixed?
- Educationally speaking, Raymondville ISD strives to give each child the best education with the resources that are available. This school year there is a sense of strife, racial tension and community division that are not caused by the administration but by misguided community individuals. These individuals have lost control and the community is becoming aware of all the underhanded deals that were committed by these individuals. These so-called community individuals continue to cause problems for Raymondville ISD by continuing to attack our "voted" board members and qualified administrators and teachers. These "community individuals" need to accept the fact that votes can no longer be bought with a "bag of onions".
- Raymondville has been in the past and still has the potential to be an excellent place to teach. For the most part the administration lets the teachers do what they have to do and only intervene when necessary. Three years ago I would never have contemplated the position the district is in now. Teacher morale was high, coming to work each day was a pleasure and quite literally it was all pretty much sunshine and cookies. So was Yugoslavia during the Winter Olympics. Things are not quite that bad in Raymondville but the "Balkanization" of the community is very apparent. As a pretty much neutral observer I can see several different groups in the community. Over the past 10 years I have seen these groups pull for power several different times. The past 5 years the school board elections have been very interesting. With all the different groups

trying to take control. The elections for school board have defined how the school administration is set up and with every new election changes always occur. In 10 years I have had 4 superintendents, 6 principals, 8 different assistant principals, and a whole slew of central office changes. The one bit of continuity has been the teachers who have tried to maintain some sense of control. Our current high school administration is new at their jobs but the staff supports them or is at least willing to give them some room to grow. The high school administration is fully supportive of the staff. I could ramble on for several pages but instead I will list some suggestions that could make the district better: bring back the Parent Resource Center. Parental contact will improve student performance. Stick to one schedule not 1/2 year and all year courses. One or the other but not both. Get all the fancy decorations out of the lunchroom, put in regular tables and have one lunch period instead of split lunch. This would allow for lunch meetings for clubs and increase student participation in school activities and make the school more attractive for students. Many companies support worker activities, so should schools. We used to have a study period from 8:00 to 8:45. This would be good for tutoring, club meetings, etc. Administration should pay more attention to site based on the district level. It has improved on the campus level; it will work on the district level as well. More communication between different schools; elementary-middle-high school. Teacher recommendations for GT - Pre AP courses get rid of total open enrollment for Pre-AP classes. Stick to strategic planning goals.

- We used to have an excellent Parent Resource Center. The person who operated it at the high school provided a valuable service to assist teachers in contacting parents and students. This program was done away with and student performance has dropped. That is not the only reason but it is one cause. We have great custodians. While we have good workers they have been cut back.
- Raymondville ISD was leading the community in an optimistic view for all. The past superintendent was equally involved with the students, teachers, and administrators. He was leading the district in a positive direction. He honestly and sincerely cared for the students and worked in their best interest. I am sorry that politics has ruined this district now that he was pressured to leave. The new superintendent and new school board have gotten their way and are basically working for their best interest, not the students or teachers. Please help us and our students.
- The present school board along with the superintendent and assistant superintendent are only interested in themselves and their power. They have replaced qualified administrators with family members that don't know what they are doing. They were also

given larger raises. They cut so many jobs, teachers, assistants, janitors and administrators that our school is running on a skeleton crew. Our insurance was cancelled only to be replaced by their friend's company that was not qualified. Our copying machines do not work. Audio machines were not repaired over summer. Janitorial supplies are not ample for campus, plus each campus must order their own. The morale is very, very low.

- We need help. At our campus we have not had plain paper copies for at least two weeks. The Accelerated Reading program has been dissected and we feel that it will be affecting our TAAS/TEK scores and discipline is at an all time low. We feel mainly because of the assistant principal. Concerns include the possible lacking of the vice (assistant) principal credentials. We have been told that she has never been in a classroom so how can she observe teachers who have been around for years. Finally, teachers are afraid to say anything because we know that school board politics has made its way into the school, campus and classroom. If this continues we will surely lose more teachers. Also, there are too many administrative positions such as assistant superintendent who seems to be the only one who has answers to our questions.
- My students demonstrate an inability to create coherent English sentences and to perform simple math calculations such as percents, fractions and use of signed numbers. The students are conditioned to perform for a test (TAAS) but demonstrate no learning or critical thinking skills. Because of an emphasis on multiple choice testing the students demonstrate that they can recognize the correct answer but cannot form it by themselves.
- Teacher morale is going down at middle school. Many discipline problems. Administrators lax on dress code. Teacher's power on grading, class work, homework and test grade is being taken away. Accelerated Reader program, which has been real good, now teachers no longer use a grading leverage. If it is not graded the middle school student will not do it - Read.
- Our Parent Resource Center was closed because of lack of funds and our parents are in need of those materials. We have too many parents who feel that they have nowhere to go. They need materials to help their children.
- Raymondville ISD is a small school district with excellent teachers and good students. It is a downright shame that the local newspaper prints derogatory remarks made by one community member who is trying to ruin the hard work behind the new administration.
- Our district needs a lot of help in many areas. There are too many ineffective people running and working for our district. It is who you know, not what you know.

- It seems to me that some people in central office are only looking out for themselves and could care less about the students. A prime example of this was the ordering of textbooks this year and how the money was spent on campus beautification instead of teacher supplies at one campus. This needs to be equal at all campuses if they want us to be the same.
- It depends as to who you are as to what you receive. Elementary received 2 dry board markers, no erasers and are still waiting on pencil sharpeners for the rooms. Curtains, etc. have been purchased to please the eye, but needed things for the education of the students seem to come secondary. Reading books arrived after first six weeks of school.
- It's so obvious that some administrative positions were opened and are not necessary. Why is an assistant to the superintendent needed when our district is in the red? I understand the philosophy with "Teach for America" but administration lacking in credentials are ignored. We had a high dropout in the 70's and 80's (or further back) because of overcrowded classes in middle school and high school. The same thing for this coming year.
- Teacher morale at Raymondville ISD is at an all-time low. I do not respect the administration in charge of the school I teach at. It is hard to adhere to the requests and stipulations made by an administration that doesn't have any classroom experience. Discipline problems are daily and seem to be increasing. Favoritism is shown to certain students and teachers. I enjoy my work and have always loved being a teacher. This year though has made me really stressed and worried. I truly fear for our students and our district. Please help us! We need an impartial party to come in and help straighten out our district.
- The current superintendent and school board work well together because he was hand picked with no other applicants. Currently there is a major problem among the extra-curricular supplements. I currently have to use a textbook that was published in the 1980's. The books are in bad condition. The biggest problem we have as a district is trying to overlook the current administration and focus on teaching the students. The morale of the current staff is at an all time low; teachers do not look forward to going to work where they aren't appreciated. When you have administrators who have never been in a classroom trying to lead a professional staff there will be major conflicts due to their inexperience.
- With our new leadership at the middle school, administrative decisions are seemingly arbitrary or motivated by personal relationships of the assistant principal. The principal and assistant principal are all but absent from any curricular or instructional leadership roles. Poor quality teaching in some cases and rampant



student misbehavior are the results. Please bring high standards for students, teachers and administrators back to MGMS.

- School board pre-selected the superintendent who I believe has no certification or qualifications nor does he support the entire staff. I have worked very hard for this district and have been very loyal to the district and my administrators, but as of this year all faculty seems to be very cautious and uneasy. Dismissals (firing), write-up memos, re-assignments and literally verbal reprimands in public audiences have lowered the professionalism and self esteem of the faculty. Several teachers have resigned as department chairpersons because of non-support and unreasonable teaching requests from our board and central office personnel. I doubt very seriously that our TAAS test scores will be near past scores because of the new policies the new board and superintendent have implemented. Dress code guidelines have become very lax and class disruptions are more frequent. Cafeteria food fights, which have never happened in my teaching experience at Raymondville, are now commonplace because our new central office policies have become very lenient and the students have realized that they can get by with many infractions because our administrators tolerate it. Teachers are blamed for not understanding. Many excellent teachers in our district are even planning retirements because they are in a no-win situation. We need help getting our school district back to the pleasant work place it used to be.
- I personally am very happy and very pleased working at RHS.
- The school district is in turmoil due to the actions taken by the present school board. As a result, the image of the school board is a bad one. There is no opportunity for public input at school board meetings because of the manner in which these meetings are conducted. The President of the local school board conducts these meetings as he wishes. He has the last word and he has made this publicly known to the whole community. Secondly, school board members do not listen to anyone unless they know that you are part of their political circle. Because of this, one does not feel comfortable going to a school board member and voicing any concerns - not even as a parent, much less as an employee. Our community has frowned upon many of the actions that this district has taken especially regarding personnel. How can you have a "quality school" when the superintendent cannot be an effective leader? He cannot be an effective leader because he does not have the qualifications to be a leader, much less a superintendent at the helm of a school district. He is nothing else but a puppet for several members of the school board. Another issue is the hiring of unqualified persons. Many of the vacancies that were filled within the district (especially teaching positions) were done as political favors and with people without the proper credentials. Again, if

you were part of their circle of friends (the superintendent's and board members) you were well taken care of. Another issue is our budget. According to our school board president and superintendent, our budget is now balanced. If this is the case, why have we as teachers been deprived of supplies? Why do we have to pay to have our copies for student assignments done elsewhere? Where is all the money? Perhaps it has been diverted to other areas besides instruction, like top administrator salaries. One thing is for sure, the interest of the children or their education has never been the first priority here!

- Everything has changed this school year for us. Since our superintendent is not respected by many the newspapers are constantly criticizing him and the school board. The problem with our district is that students are given too many chances to behave better, but they don't. It's the same group of students who are constantly in the office. One big concern I have is I do not understand why the duplicating machines are not repaired quickly. We cannot get copies to do our work with the children. Another thing is we should be required to turn off the lights every time we go out of our classroom. There is so much waste of energy.
- In practically all disputes that arise, there is a political motive. These motives leave way to hasty decisions and as a consequence through a ripple effect the students sometimes are negatively affected.
- We were on a good path toward technology and training with the former administration. The only glitch was that the younger teachers were priority but we understood the future had to be looked after. The present administration has taken us back 10 to 15 years on every aspect, on every level. We lost many good teachers when this new administration came in.
- Our district had earned high TAAS scores and 3 of 4 schools had been state recognized, educating students has been a priority, and we have had great discipline. With the last school board election many things changed. A qualified superintendent was forced out and replaced by a person with few qualifications for the job. Capable administrators were reassigned and replaced by less qualified personnel. Talented teachers also resigned. The current school board is interested only in its own agenda. They do not care about the teachers and students. We have few supplies and no copiers. The board has power and is only interested in keeping it. A great school district has been ruined by the selfishness of a few people. They either have no idea or do not care how they hurt the future of our students.
- The educational process was improving each year under the former administration. We were very close to becoming a recognized district. Our new superintendent and board moved in with a

vengeance, firing established entities, displacing key administrators and replacing them with less qualified and less respected individuals. Our town was so upset and fearful because of the actions of this angry, vengeful group of people that over 50 educators have gone to other places, and more are planning to leave. We do not trust this group of people at all. The only stable campuses are the two elementary schools. They have good leadership but the high school and the middle school are in dire circumstances.

- Things here are shaky. New board members have changed how things operate. I assume once they settle in and figure things out it will get better. We as teachers knew this was coming. Some things the board could have handled differently, but to blame them for all our problems is silly. Same tactics, different board.
- Possibly the biggest injustice that I see is the lack of planning by counselors. We have seniors that have to drop classes because they are told they have to take a more important class. Some freshmen are taking several electives and one core class. Suggestions: maybe incoming freshmen should have some sort of "degree plan" made for them at the start of school and follow through each year. The other big injustice is I hear the words from the board and superintendent "the kids come first", but I feel in most cases that their own personal agendas are more important.
- Teachers may be given the opportunity to suggest programs and/or ideas; however, the final decision is the principal's and not the site-based decision making committee. Our assistant principal has no classroom experience and cannot possibly relate to our classroom situations and needs.
- Curriculum guides are not utilized on our campus. Our sixth grade G/T teacher is not certified and she has a total of 26 students in her GT Language Arts class. No real gifted instruction in place.
- Students do not follow lesson plans of any sort in the Alternative Education Program. They are seen walking around - "releasing stress" - or in the weight room.
- Our district does not reward competence and experience. This year we demoted our campus counselor to a classroom teacher. We hire assistant principals with no classroom experience.
- New construction quality is far from excellent. The buildings are experiencing leaks and a problem with cracks in walls and floors.
- There is not much discipline in the cafeteria. Not enough supervision. Food fights in early October caused the entire student body to be "punished". Principal and assistant principal were not on campus at the time. Not consistent with discipline.
- Several students walk around campus constantly. We hired two truancy officers for this reason, but the problem still exists. Students walk through hallways before and after school - this is

against school policy. Policies not enforced. Recently the girl's bathroom window was knocked out during school hours in a scuffle. Fights constantly break out during the lunch break or between classes.

- Politics seems to be the primary focus of our school board. Our student's education seems secondary. I believe there is something wrong with this picture!
- I have been overwhelmed with classroom discipline. I feel I do not have the support of the administrators in providing me the training needed to better prepare me in this area. I feel more staff development is needed to help teachers.
- The administrator/relative web is so tight that qualified applicants do not stand a fair and honest chance at being hired.
- Very well organized - teaching is done on target with curriculum. Everyone works as a team together to make sure that success of student's education is met appropriately.
- The impression exists that the current board ran to "get rid of" many staff and faculty, and indeed there were wholesale changes in administration. There is no continuity in anything. I feel that none of the changes were made to improve education. Lack of continuity is not peculiar to the current board.
- Reimbursements are not being made. Since closure of local bank accounts deposits are not timely. No checkbooks are provided to campuses to pay campus bills and reimbursements. Teachers are told not to spend personal money, but no other funds are provided to keep an effective program running. Student discipline is at its worst in four years, making controlling a classroom more time consuming and affecting instruction.
- Both elementary schools have been recognized but the public never hears about the good the teachers are doing, rather just the problems with management of the district administration and the board.

# Appendix E

## STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS

Demographic Data/Survey Questions

(n=49)

### Demographic Data

1.	<b>Gender (Optional)</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>			
		0.0%	53.1%	46.9%			
2.	<b>Ethnicity (Optional)</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Anglo</b>	<b>African American</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Other</b>
		2.0%	6.1%	0.0%	89.8%	0.0%	2.0%
3.	<b>What is your classification?</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Junior</b>	<b>Senior</b>			
		0.0%	46.9%	53.1%			

### A. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
1.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	6.1%	57.1%	16.3%	20.4%	0.0%
2.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	6.1%	40.8%	32.7%	12.2%	8.2%
3.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
	a) Reading	10.4%	60.4%	18.8%	8.3%	2.1%
	b) Writing	10.2%	69.4%	14.3%	4.1%	2.0%
	c) Mathematics	20.4%	69.4%	10.2%	0.0%	0.0%
	d) Science	18.4%	63.3%	12.2%	6.1%	0.0%
	e) English or Language Arts	12.2%	73.5%	12.2%	2.0%	0.0%
	f) Computer Instruction	10.2%	57.1%	18.4%	12.2%	2.0%

	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	12.0%	60.0%	20.0%	4.0%	4.0%
	h) Fine Arts	12.5%	64.6%	22.9%	0.0%	0.0%
	i) Physical Education	22.4%	59.2%	16.3%	0.0%	2.0%
	j) Business Education	6.1%	57.1%	24.5%	12.2%	0.0%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	4.1%	51.0%	32.7%	12.2%	0.0%
	l) Foreign Language	10.2%	44.9%	22.4%	16.3%	6.1%
4.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a) Library Service	4.1%	40.8%	18.4%	28.6%	8.2%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	32.7%	42.9%	20.4%	4.1%	0.0%
	c) Special Education	16.3%	49.0%	28.6%	6.1%	0.0%
	d) Student mentoring program	6.1%	24.5%	38.8%	20.4%	10.2%
	e) Advanced placement program	26.5%	42.9%	16.3%	10.2%	4.1%
	f) Career counseling program	6.1%	28.6%	32.7%	26.5%	6.1%
	g) College counseling program	4.0%	38.0%	26.0%	22.0%	10.0%
5.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	0.0%	30.6%	10.2%	28.6%	30.6%
6.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	14.6%	52.1%	8.3%	22.9%	2.1%
7.	The district provides a high quality education.	2.0%	44.9%	26.5%	20.4%	6.1%
8.	The district has high quality teachers.	6.1%	26.5%	40.8%	22.4%	4.1%

## B. Facilities Use and Management

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
9.	Schools are clean.	4.1%	42.9%	20.4%	26.5%	6.1%
10.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	2.0%	51.0%	20.4%	22.4%	4.1%
11.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	0.0%	30.6%	24.5%	28.6%	16.3%
12.	Emergency maintenance is handled timely.	0.0%	38.3%	27.7%	23.4%	10.6%

### **C. Purchasing and Warehousing**

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
13.	There are enough textbooks in all my classes.	10.4%	56.3%	6.3%	18.8%	8.3%
14.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	8.3%	68.8%	10.4%	6.3%	6.3%
15.	Textbooks are in good shape	4.2%	43.8%	14.6%	22.9%	14.6%
16.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	6.3%	54.2%	12.5%	18.8%	8.3%

### **D. Food Services**

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
17.	The school breakfast program is available to all children.	18.8%	62.5%	6.3%	12.5%	0.0%
18.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	0.0%	16.7%	16.7%	33.3%	33.3%

19.	Food is served warm.	0.0%	25.0%	12.5%	39.6%	22.9%
20.	Students have enough time to eat.	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%	29.2%	54.2%
21.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of the day.	6.3%	62.5%	8.3%	6.3%	16.7%
22.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	10.4%	20.8%	0.0%	33.3%	35.4%
23.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	6.3%	54.2%	14.6%	10.4%	14.6%
24.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	20.8%	58.3%	8.3%	12.5%	0.0%
25.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	4.2%	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	12.5%

### E. Transportation

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
26.	I regularly ride the bus.	6.3%	14.6%	39.6%	12.5%	27.1%
27.	The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	2.1%	16.7%	62.5%	10.4%	8.3%
28.	The length of my bus ride is reasonable.	0.0%	20.8%	75.0%	2.1%	2.1%
29.	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	4.2%	18.8%	68.8%	6.3%	2.1%
30.	The bus stop near my house is safe.	2.1%	6.3%	85.4%	4.2%	2.1%
31.	The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	2.1%	10.4%	81.3%	4.2%	2.1%
32.	Buses arrive and leave on time.	4.2%	6.3%	70.8%	12.5%	6.3%
33.	Buses arrive early	2.1%	12.5%	72.9%	8.3%	4.2%



	enough for students to eat breakfast at school.					
34.	Buses seldom break down.	8.3%	8.3%	68.8%	10.4%	4.2%
35.	Buses are clean.	8.3%	22.9%	50.0%	12.5%	6.3%
36.	Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	10.4%	20.8%	56.3%	6.3%	6.3%

### F. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
37.	I feel safe and secure at school.	10.4%	39.6%	16.7%	27.1%	6.3%
38.	School disturbances are infrequent.	8.3%	47.9%	27.1%	14.6%	2.1%
39.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	16.7%	41.7%	27.1%	8.3%	6.3%
40.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	0.0%	12.5%	20.8%	29.2%	37.5%
41.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	0.0%	14.6%	25.0%	37.5%	22.9%
42.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	8.5%	36.2%	34.0%	12.8%	8.5%
43.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	4.2%	22.9%	29.2%	27.1%	16.7%
44.	A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	2.1%	41.7%	35.4%	16.7%	4.2%
45.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	4.3%	23.4%	17.0%	21.3%	34.0%

46.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	4.3%	27.7%	17.0%	25.5%	25.5%
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### G. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
47.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	4.2%	45.8%	4.2%	27.1%	18.8%
48.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	4.2%	37.5%	14.6%	35.4%	8.3%
49.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	10.6%	59.6%	8.5%	14.9%	6.4%
50.	The district offers enough classes in computer fundamentals.	16.7%	43.8%	12.5%	16.7%	10.4%
51.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	6.3%	37.5%	16.7%	27.1%	12.5%
52.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	14.6%	37.5%	14.6%	25.0%	8.3%

# Appendix E

## STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS

Verbatim: Students

### *Verbatim: Students*

- Whatever comments I may have regarding the way the school is being run has no bearing whatsoever on what changes will be made. NO matter how much validation our claims may have, the Raymondville School District will always consist of power-hungry administration and self-pleasing school board. With such administrative (and useless) positions as "Dean of Instruction" and "Assistant Superintendent", it's no wonder that our district is in the disarray it is. These people should be more concerned with educating students, not lining their own pockets.
- I think that we need to be provided with new textbooks because the ones we have are all torn apart and written on. Some of them don't even have all the pages. For example in mine a lot of pages are missing in the Glossary. When I have to do my chemistry homework it is very hard, because most of the time we have to define words.
- Well, in my personal opinion being at school at 7:45 is ridiculous. Last year when we came to school at 8:45 was a more reasonable time. Students had enough time to get ready in the morning and they wouldn't be as tired. Another concern is the lunchtime. I feel we have no time to eat and enjoy our lunch. We are too rushed and do not enjoy our food. The food that they serve us can be made better and served.
- More parents, teacher involvement. Documents of how much money is spent and how it is used and if it benefits the children and teachers at school As children we are supposed to have adults that are setting good moral examples. Fairness needs to improve and also the need to listen to the voices of the student body. Most of us have good intentions for our school. We are our future. The education that I'm receiving is well rounded but it could use just a little help. Thank you.
- I feel that the educational performance of Raymondville ISD is okay, considering that most of the administration and staff aren't qualified for the job they do anyhow. None of the departments have any money, and every time we ask for needed supplies, they just change the subject and send us away. The Science department had exactly \$12.00 at the beginning of the semester to share between science teachers. There is obviously something someone is overlooking. Maybe instead of creating useless positions such as "dean of instruction" and "truant officer," they should consider the

education and well being of the students. For the past couple of years our education has been put aside. The administration probably thinks that students are too naive to notice or comprehend, but we are well aware of the dishonesty and corruption behind every administrative position. Maybe my comments won't change much, at least you know that the students do have opinions and do care.

- We want to know where our money that we gave to pay taxes goes. I feel that parents in this community would like to know as well. It is not fair that parents pay taxes and don't know where it goes. The school administration will not let the people's voice speak out to give their opinions. Racism is also a problem in our school board.
- Breakfast should be served from 7:45 - 8:00 and not at the end of the 1st period when it is all cold. The classroom temperatures vary from day to day. Some days the rooms will be cold enough for a jacket and others will be hot causing students to become lethargic in our work. The school board is actually a puppet board. Please help.
- It doesn't matter what I write. It's not going to change anything no matter how many complaints this school will never change. I'm a senior and will out of here in May, so why should I care about the underclassman getting a better education than me.
- I don't understand why the school district is trying to obstruct the placement of a monitor at school board meetings and such. If they have nothing to hide, then what are they afraid of? Besides, our school is already the laughing stock of the valley. Why else would a superintendent be appointed who won't even be able to acquire the proper credentials until many years from now. It seems strange he was appointed over five or more better qualified individuals. Plus, how is paying more money to keep a monitor from coming to RHS, and making a practice of giving friends and family, excuse my language, jobs such as dean of education, truancy officer, and assistant superintendent going to solve the district's financial woes. As long as this practice continues, RHS will continue to drown on its own pool of ignorance money mismanagement, and uneducated school authorities. P.S. Not one but two truancy officers.
- Parents should be shown where the money goes or is spent on. All that money that was lost or misplaced should be found. The students at RHS have not really been affected by it, but our parents have because of the taxes that our parents pay. The school board doesn't let us or parents speak out on certain occasions. Where did all the money go?
- Closed campus is not a good idea because if you take away a student's freedom you've taken away his ability to learn and grow. The dress code is also a big disappointment because some of the

rules are just ridiculous. One of them being, no shorts which makes no sense to me.

- I disagree about having breakfast in class. I liked it better when we ate in the cafeteria. I also liked it when we came to school at 8:45 now we come at 7:45. The other reason is that we have closed campus and we got a shorter lunch period. We do not get enough time to eat. Split lunch is not good either. We would like to eat with our friends.
- I disagree about the time in the morning. We shouldn't have to eat breakfast in class. We don't have enough time to eat lunch. We wait in line for more than 15 minutes. We only have 10 minutes to eat lunch. We should have open campus again because some people don't have the lunch they serve.
- The Internet service is always down, a few teachers are under qualified, the food is cold most of the time, there's hair in the food, school should inform parents where the money is allocated, and football players shouldn't have special treatment.
- One thing that I disagree with is that we have separate lunches. Why do we have a cafeteria if we can't eat with our close friends? It was better having an open campus. Why not build a bigger cafeteria? We should also have breakfast in the cafeteria not in class that's why we have a CAFETERIA. The schedule to come to school should change to the normal time 8:45 a.m.
- We as students have not been deeply affected by the District's debt at school. However our parents are the ones paying for the school. How could so much money be unaccounted for? They should be informed on where their money goes.
- It needs to improve a lot. Need to start school at 7:45 a.m. like last year.
- We have football program that needs a bigger weight room and more training program. We need longer lunch and passing time between periods.
- We need an open campus for more lunch time- OUR FOOTBALL TEAM IS GREAT. We have a great football program.
- Raymondville Independent School District has a good football program and school lunch time needs to be extended. Also let guys wear shorts and allow more time between classes.
- I think the dress code should be altered because we live in the HOTTEST part of Texas and we have to wear pants everyday. We should be able to wear long shorts because of the heat.
- I don't really think there's anything wrong. I just go to school.
- None
- I feel that this school district does meet academic requirements.
- I've only attended Raymondville ISD for three months. I don't know too much about it yet.

- Not everybody gets breakfast in the mornings. They should serve breakfast in the cafeteria. Discipline is not fair. I was tardy once and I got 10 DH. Athletes are not treated the same. They can do whatever they want and not get in trouble. I.S.S. is a big joke. The people in there would rather be in ISS than in class because they don't do anything in ISS. School rules are nonsense. We can't have food or drinks in the classroom but yet we have breakfast in the classrooms. The lunch lines are too slow. It takes forever to get food. And they make you take food that you don't even want. Not to mention the food is distasteful. It's always cold and the food doesn't taste good. The time between classes is not long enough. I have to go all the way across campus; I'm always at least one minute tardy. I never have enough time to go to the bathroom during the break.
- The money given to and used by the school is more important than the students' educations. Not enough teachers are teaching up to the standards they are suppose to be teaching.
- I feel that the students here aren't getting a proper education because the main issue is politics and money. I don't think the students' needs are being met. I feel that only certified teachers should be teaching. If they aren't certified they should go back to school to further and advance their education.
- School should inform parents on where their tax money is being spent. Students have not been affected by the loss of money although the parents have been. School board does not allow public to voice their opinion on certain occasions. Thank You
- As a student at RHS I feel that the school has not satisfied me. One of the main problems is the money being spent by the district; parents should be notified where the money is being spent. The environment in our school is not so pleasant, the classrooms are too cold or either too hot. Sometimes we can't even learn because of the coldness. The main problem is the money and where it is being spent.
- Teachers and staff are often obnoxious. For who you are or who your parents are. The school never meets students' need in the classroom. And the school is also broke...for having truant officers that can fine you for going to the restroom. The school needs to find ways to make money.
- I am an honor student, there are no complaints, and there should be more students like me.
- Librarians are too strict. Lunch should be longer. Open campus.
- Library lady always look at you mean and observe you on the Internet.
- Lunch is no good we wait too long for food and by the time we eat the food it's either gone or cold. Breakfast and lunch are substantial.

- The school temperature is cold. The cafeteria food is ugly. The nurse doesn't help us. Don't have enough time to eat.
- Schools are cold and the nurse is mean and does not deserve to be here. Librarians are too strict. Our lunch should be longer.
- Schools are cold, nurse doesn't help us out, librarians are too strict, lunch food isn't good, lunch should be longer, and we need to go out and eat.
- Not enough classes for students seeking career in automotive industry.
- Need better personnel and security personnel. Need more time to eat. My freshman year was all right but as I grew older the school district grew stricter.

# Appendix F

## PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

Demographic Data/Survey Questions

(n=207)

### Demographic Data

1.	<b>Gender (Optional)</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>					
		12.4%	37.8%	49.8%					
2.	<b>Ethnicity (Optional)</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Anglo</b>	<b>African American</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Other</b>		
		11.8%	11.8%	0.0%	73.5%	0.0%	2.8%		
2.	<b>How long have you lived in Raymondville ISD</b>		<b>No Response</b>	<b>0-5 Years</b>	<b>6-10 Years</b>	<b>11 Years or More</b>			
			4.7%	7.5%	5.6%	82.2%			
4.	<b>What grade level(s) does your child(ren) attend?</b>	<b>PK</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	
			7.6%	11.2%	10.2%	13.2%	13.7%	12.7%	14.2%
		<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	
			18.3%	13.7%	14.7%	15.7%	18.3%	13.7%	15.2%

### A. District Organization and Management

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings	7.3%	15.5%	16.5%	22.3%	38.3%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	6.8%	14.1%	12.7%	26.8%	39.5%
3.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	7.3%	16.2%	24.0%	22.0%	30.4%
4.	The superintendent is a	5.8%	15.6%	27.3%	21.0%	30.2%



respected and effective business manager.					
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## B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5.	The district provides a high quality of services.	5.4%	26.1%	20.2%	33.5%	14.8%
6.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	7.0%	23.6%	32.7%	23.6%	13.1%
7.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	5.0%	21.0%	35.0%	25.0%	14.0%
8.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	5.5%	25.0%	38.5%	22.0%	9.0%
9.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
	a) Reading	10.1%	62.0%	8.6%	13.9%	5.3%
	b) Writing	10.6%	56.7%	12.0%	16.8%	3.8%
	c) Mathematics	12.6%	59.9%	9.7%	12.1%	5.8%
	d) Science	10.6%	60.6%	10.1%	13.5%	5.3%
	e) English or Language Arts	10.6%	60.6%	11.1%	13.5%	4.3%
	f) Computer Instruction	10.7%	52.2%	16.1%	13.7%	7.3%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	9.7%	61.3%	12.6%	12.6%	3.9%
	h) Fine Arts	10.1%	50.7%	18.8%	16.4%	3.9%
	i) Physical Education	12.7%	61.0%	12.2%	6.8%	7.3%
	j) Business Education	8.9%	36.9%	33.0%	15.8%	5.4%
	k) Vocational (Career	9.8%	38.5%	28.8%	15.6%	7.3%

	and Technology) Education					
	l) Foreign Language	8.3%	34.6%	26.8%	21.0%	9.3%
10.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a) Library Service	9.3%	51.2%	16.1%	14.6%	8.8%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	7.4%	50.2%	22.7%	15.8%	3.9%
	c) Special Education	10.0%	51.5%	25.0%	8.5%	5.0%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	8.8%	37.7%	38.7%	8.3%	6.4%
	e) Dyslexia program	4.0%	19.0%	56.0%	11.5%	9.5%
	f) Student mentoring program	5.5%	25.9%	40.8%	19.4%	8.5%
	g) Advanced placement program	7.9%	37.4%	31.0%	16.7%	6.9%
	h) Literacy program	6.9%	30.0%	40.4%	16.3%	6.4%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	7.3%	25.4%	31.2%	23.9%	12.2%
	j) Summer school programs	10.3%	45.6%	24.0%	13.2%	6.9%
	k) Alternative education programs	7.5%	33.8%	36.8%	15.4%	6.5%
	l) "English as a Second Language" program	8.9%	35.6%	37.1%	13.4%	4.9%
	m) Career counseling program	6.8%	27.3%	30.7%	23.9%	11.2%
	n) College counseling program	7.3%	27.8%	32.2%	19.0%	13.7%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	7.3%	21.9%	27.8%	26.3%	16.6%
	p) Drop out prevention program	7.0%	16.4%	38.3%	23.9%	14.4%

11.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	9.7%	26.7%	15.0%	24.3%	24.3%
12.	Teacher turnover is low.	5.9%	15.8%	36.9%	17.7%	23.6%
13.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	7.9%	20.2%	23.6%	28.6%	19.7%
14.	A substitute teacher rarely teaches my child.	9.2%	25.7%	20.4%	27.7%	17.0%
15.	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	13.0%	44.4%	17.4%	14.5%	10.6%
16.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	13.0%	46.9%	15.5%	13.5%	11.1%
17.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	18.3%	60.6%	5.8%	10.1%	5.3%
18.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	14.1%	39.3%	30.1%	12.6%	3.9%
19.	The district provides a high quality education.	12.0%	31.7%	21.6%	22.1%	12.5%
20.	The district has a high quality of teachers.	13.0%	25.6%	23.7%	28.5%	9.2%

### C. Community Involvement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
21.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	9.1%	23.6%	15.4%	30.3%	21.6%
22.	District facilities are open for community use.	7.7%	19.6%	28.7%	26.3%	17.7%
23.	Schools have plenty of	7.2%	16.9%	19.8%	33.3%	22.7%

	volunteers to help student and school programs.					
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#### D. Facilities Use and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
24.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	6.9%	15.7%	24.5%	28.4%	24.5%
25.	Schools are clean.	16.4%	57.0%	6.8%	13.5%	6.3%
26.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	16.3%	48.6%	16.3%	13.9%	4.8%
27.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	14.5%	33.8%	26.6%	17.9%	7.2%
28.	The district uses very few portable buildings.	11.6%	56.5%	26.1%	4.3%	1.4%
29.	Emergency maintenance is handled expeditiously.	10.6%	36.2%	38.2%	10.1%	4.8%

#### E. Asset and Risk Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
30.	My property tax bill is reasonable for the educational services delivered.	6.6%	27.5%	25.6%	18.8%	21.3%
31.	Board members and administrators do a good job explaining the use of tax dollars.	4.1%	9.8%	17.1%	30.0%	38.9%

#### F. Financial Management

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
32.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	4.4%	13.7%	45.4%	14.1%	22.4%
33.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	5.3%	15.0%	30.6%	26.7%	22.3%
34.	The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	3.9%	14.3%	37.4%	22.6%	21.7%
35.	Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	2.9%	13.7%	42.4%	21.9%	19.0%

### **G. Purchasing and Warehousing**

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
36.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	11.1%	68.6%	10.6%	7.2%	2.4%
37.	Textbooks are in good shape	9.7%	64.7%	11.6%	8.7%	5.3%
38.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	12.1%	53.9%	12.6%	13.1%	8.2%

### **H. Food Services**

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
39.	My child regularly purchases his/her meal from the	11.2%	40.8%	16.5%	22.3%	9.2%

	cafeteria.					
40.	The school breakfast program is available to all children.	30.4%	58.0%	7.2%	2.4%	1.9%
41.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	8.7%	32.8%	18.8%	18.4%	21.3%
42.	Food is served warm.	9.7%	46.9%	15.0%	16.9%	11.6%
43.	Students have enough time to eat.	7.8%	36.4%	8.2%	25.2%	22.3%
44.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of the day.	11.1%	64.2%	9.2%	9.2%	6.3%
45.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	7.3%	41.7%	19.1%	15.7%	16.2%
46.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	9.7%	56.3%	11.6%	9.2%	13.1%
47.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	13.7%	49.3%	18.5%	9.8%	8.8%
48.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	15.5%	66.5%	9.7%	4.4%	3.9%

### I. Transportation

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
49.	My child regularly rides the bus.	7.4%	12.9%	33.2%	29.2%	17.3%
50.	The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus	5.4%	19.3%	65.8%	4.5%	4.9%
51.	The length of the student's bus ride is reasonable.	3.9%	21.6%	67.2%	3.4%	3.9%
52.	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	8.7%	37.4%	44.2%	6.3%	3.4%
53.	The bus stop near mv	9.4%	19.8%	64.8%	3.5%	2.5%

	house is safe.					
54.	The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	8.3%	21.6%	62.7%	5.4%	2.0%
55.	Buses arrive and depart on time.	9.3%	26.0%	59.8%	2.9%	2.0%
56.	Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	8.9%	29.1%	59.1%	1.0%	2.0%
57.	Buses seldom break down.	8.3%	20.0%	63.4%	4.4%	3.9%
58.	Buses are clean.	7.8%	26.8%	56.6%	5.4%	3.4%
59.	Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	7.9%	28.2%	56.4%	4.5%	3.0%
60.	The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	5.9%	29.6%	57.1%	3.9%	3.4%

## J. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
61.	Students feel safe and secure at school.	12.0%	53.8%	8.2%	16.3%	9.6%
62.	School disturbances are infrequent.	6.3%	48.8%	16.9%	19.8%	8.2%
63.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	8.2%	32.0%	18.4%	27.7%	13.6%
64.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	6.8%	24.6%	26.1%	22.7%	19.8%
65.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	8.7%	26.1%	20.8%	28.5%	15.9%
66.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with	6.8%	48.8%	30.7%	8.3%	5.4%

	principals and teachers.					
67.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	7.8%	40.0%	28.3%	16.1%	7.8%
68.	A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	9.7%	55.1%	22.2%	7.2%	5.8%
69.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	7.2%	41.1%	16.4%	18.8%	16.4%
70.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	4.8%	28.4%	31.2%	24.5%	11.1%

### K. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
71.	Teachers know how to teach computer science and other technology-related courses.	6.8%	47.3%	27.0%	12.6%	6.3%
72.	Computers are new enough to be useful to teach students.	10.7%	60.2%	15.5%	8.7%	4.8%
73.	The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	8.2%	51.5%	19.9%	14.1%	6.3%
74.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	7.8%	39.8%	25.7%	18.0%	8.7%
75.	Students have easy access to the Internet.	7.7%	52.7%	20.8%	11.1%	7.7%



# Appendix F

## PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

Verbatim: Parents

### *Verbatim: Parents*

- In my opinion, the RISD is not preparing our children for what waits for them out in the real world whether it is going to work or going to college.
- I am tremendously afraid for the education of my children. That Raymondville HS will not have the teachers that are able to teach well because of the administration decisions that are made. It seems to me that the school board is not making decisions that are in the best interest of the students. The decisions made are purely childish resentment. Students come first!
- There has been a lot of commotion within the school district since we've gotten a new superintendent. The only concern that I have are the drastic changes. Some office administrators being teachers and teachers becoming office administrators. I'm scared my children will lack a healthy education, because of all these changes. P.S. I want both my children to graduate and to be able to go to college. And in college, I want them to feel sure of themselves and to feel they were well prepared in high school for it. Thank You
- Whole school district is messed up
- School board only hires own relatives
- Being a graduate of 1978 - many things change of course, but not in the betterment of a district. Today's school board members are self-serving and cut-throats. Many a people have quit their jobs - pulled students all because these same people we (they) voted for turned as soon as their friend (other school board members) was voted in, and they decided to do their own thing. Parents, teachers, students have all lost with this board (together they have had 6 to 8 years to make it better). Someone does need to make a thorough investigation.
- According to the handbook 2nd and 3rd graders have a minimum of 45 minutes of homework, not true, they have 2 to 3 hours of homework. The children's backpacks are too heavy to carry on their backs. They carry too many books and sometimes they don't even use them (books) for homework. Cafeteria-the staff at Pittman elementary expect for the children to keep their voices down when the staff are yelling at the children. Very UNHAPPY with the system.
- We the public have been disappointed in some of the school board members. They do not listen to the public, and they think they

could run peoples lives. I think RISD needs guidance in some of their actions (or all)

- A large number of teachers and staff left the district this past year and were replaced by uncertified teachers. The superintendent is not certified and is not respected in the community. In school board meeting if a person would like to speak to the board, they would most likely be told to leave (not asked but told.)  
Raymondville ISD is in need of leadership.
- I believe that the principal and assistant principal are just looking out for themselves and not the students. Since last year, around September our teacher that teaches reading and English was out the whole year of school. We had a substitute taking over the class. This year the same teacher is out. She only came two weeks to school, so we started with another substitute. I feel they do not get the proper education since a substitute is not certified to teach nor has the knowledge to present information verbally. Especially in subject where all they do is go by the book, read, and answer questions on the book. They do not make it interesting or exciting. The students get bored of the same thing over and over. I know this because they have told me this. They wish they had their own teacher back. I believe it is frustrating for the students and for the substitute. I feel that the principal should have already hired somebody with experience in teaching these subjects (reading and English). I feel they are ignoring the situation and putting the substitute in very difficult position.
- I would also like to comment on the fact that Myra Green Junior High has new principal every year. Every time a new principal comes in, that principal fires the secretary and put his or her own secretary. This year is even worse.
- I think the dress code has gone out of hand. Need more computer classes, and help students out and counsel students in the importance of a college degree. Thank you for caring.
- My children think that cafeteria food is being served too cold and it should be warm. Also, the juices don't taste as good even though the expiration date hasn't passed, yet we need to change the district for the better sake of our children, thank you.
- Why are we made to pay school taxes for city schools and for schools within the county? We should not be forced to pay city taxes, school taxes and county taxes to keep the schools open in San Perlita and La Sara. These kids should be bused into Raymondville schools. Neither of these two farming communities are more than ten minutes away from Raymondville.
- The RISD has been an above average district in my opinion for a number of years, particularly in the area of student discipline and conduct. This situation is one of rapid deterioration. The "new" school board has driven off a large number of good teachers in a

single year - via early retirement, being hired because they represent the other side of politics, or just plain moved on to better districts. Additionally, good students with financially able parents are also leaving. I am hoping that the TEA will seize control of the district before it is too late!

- Raymondville has lost lots of respect for leadership and being responsible. They need help for the mess they have gotten into.
- As a parent, I feel very concerned about the present status of our school district. I strongly believe the education of our children has been seriously affected due to the present administration. We need someone to step up and intervene to save our children from possible catastrophe. With the new administration taking over, we lost a lot of excellent teachers that didn't want anything to do with them. They were forced to hire teachers that weren't qualified and we should seriously question their abilities. That concerns me because are they preparing our children for their future and college plans. These people had one goal in mind and it certainly wasn't to improve the performance of RISD. You need to look into issues of racism, nepotism, favoritism, and personal vendettas to name only a few.
- Our son has attended Raymondville High School for 4 years, and he has gotten a good education. Sometimes our children complain about little things, but I'm sure that the educators make choices where they have the student's best interest in mind. We have no complaints about our sons education.
- I am very worried about my children's educations. My children say there is no discipline in school. Students are very disrespectful. The new school board believes in been very lenient which has resulted in the students taking control. If there is no discipline there can't be enough learning going on. My daughter is a Junior and has received the best education. She is taking AP courses and she has been very fortunate to have some of the best teachers. Though after the new administration moved in many of these teacher left. My son will be going to Junior High. And I am very concerned about him.
- I am concerned about the recent administrative changes, including the interim superintendent and his ability and credentials to lead RISD. I am also concerned about the loss of quality teachers due to the new school board changes. The school board is not an effective medium to support our educational goals and needs. Last year, RISD had all but one campus recognized by TEA. I worry about the outcome this year as it applies to my child and his classmates. Furthermore, I worry that the new school board's actions or inactions may hinder a quality education.
- What kind of encouragement is RISD showing our students? Every year, the school district holds a boring Honor Roll Banquet. This is

sad! Most other schools encourage students by presenting them with trophies and plaques, while RISD provides a ridiculous enchilada dinner! Keep up with today's way of encouraging kids.

- RISD is in bad fiscal condition.
- To whom this concerns: I was born raised in Raymondville, graduate from Raymondville High, and my children go to school here. What I would like to see is, more security in the middle and high school, plus teachers need to get more education classes so they can give our kids a better education, for our school board to get along because they are the ones that put the example for our kids. To see this bitterness between each other also affects our children in their education plus in themselves. Thank you for this survey.
- To me, as a parent and as a staff member, I feel our kids don't get enough food at lunch. If they want seconds they have to pay for leftovers from another day. Thank You
- I feel that the education system has not changed for the better. I feel instead of things or the methods improving it's still at the same place or not improved. The teachers need additional help with their classrooms plus there should be more options for the higher grade students to choose from as far as subjects that will really help them in years to come.
- I feel that they have too much authority and that they don't know how to use it right. I also feel that the kids don't have enough time to eat their lunch and that sometimes kids are not treated equally. Please keep an eye out for us since they don't give us a chance to participate in any of the decisions that they make concerning our kids. They never give kids enough food. They feed the high school kids as if they were still in Pre-Kindergarten.
- There has been a lot of changes which a lot of parents are concerned about. The school board there are people serving who know nothing about our community needs as for our new superintendent he is not well respected and not liked at all. It would be in the interest of everyone if we do have a thorough investigation.
- We have come very close to pulling our children out due to our school board and all their unqualified cronies that they plugged into administrative positions! We lost so many outstanding teachers and administrators to this racial school board which means we also lost many good citizens. The majority of the districts personnel and the majority of Raymondville cannot wait until elections in May. Our children need to be ready in college and this is not going to happen with a school board that wants to rule!
- RISD is a joke. And the board members appointed him as superintendent. RISD is a three-ring circus!

- The school board we have now has lost the reason that they were elected. They're too much nepotism and retaliation.
- There have been many changes at the school. Teachers are at the losing end. They look upset and frustrated with the amount of work. Discipline is bad. The principal does not support them because she does not do discipline. If you can please help the teachers so that they can help our students. They are good teachers, but the administration is not there for them.
- School board is not working for the betterment of the community. This board is led by a politically based majority including the president of the board. They base their laws and regulations on what they want, not what is good to develop a good, strong, education oriented program for our up coming generation.
- Our school was once a perfect school, now the board members have destroyed our schools. They have ruined teachers, superintendent, students and other stuff. I am glad the Hispanics are rising to the top. The students need college counseling and help from our counselors, not just their own children but all others as well.
- Our teachers need to better educate themselves then try to teach our children. We need better principals and other administrators.
- Poor-Middle School-no discipline is noted - not used fairly for all students - some more disciplined more than others.
- Morale is at its lowest.
- Administrators are in place without proper background documents, and are disciplining without proper background training.
- My only comment is getting rid of the school board. They have no respect for the public or for themselves. They hire their cousin's girlfriend, spouse, godparents and so on. They even pay them more than people who have been there longer.
- I feel that the school board has not met the needs of the community due to the mismanagement of the school district. I think that the object of the school district has done a disservice of the community and students.
- The whole board needs to be "booted out" and replaced by more competent individuals.
- I believe that our school district needs some improvement.
- Raymondville ISD is a good school.
- The new superintendent is not qualified, he has never held a position higher than asst. principal. Board meetings are a joke. The strongest administration are the elementary principals. RISD needs help!!!
- They need more help for students so they won't act badly in school.
- This survey was hard to fill out, as I do not know what goes on at school except what my daughter tells me. I do know that there is a drug problem that is not being addressed. The school does not

notify me when my daughter is absent. I am very dissatisfied with the school.

- I feel my child is not getting a good enough education because all through her elementary years so much of the school year was spent on worksheets for passing the TAAS tests. Science and spelling were neglected. My child is in the reading gifted and talented class but she cannot spell!!! I asked her why she was not graded on spelling and she was told that as long as her answers were correct the spelling would be overlooked. Is there something that can be done about TAAS? All the school seems to teach is how to pass TAAS.
- Two of my children got hurt in school. Was not satisfied the way the two different situations were handled. I did not hear anything about the way our nurses are handling our children in school.  
Thank you
- My child attends Myra Green middle school and I am concerned because there have been numerous fights, as well as food fights, and other activities that should not be occurring at school. My child has told me that on certain days students will declare it girls day. I don't think this is appropriate. My concern is what are the principal and the assistant principal doing about this? Or are they even aware that this is going on at this campus?
- I think since the school district let go of so many RISD employees that work outside like maintenance. I feel the district shouldn't let go of so many workers for the reason that these workers are parents too, and would be like a security guard be attentive of anything strange going on especially now that these thing that are going on. I think we need more security surrounding our schools especially elementary. Thanks.
- It used to be a district that parents could trust their children to educators when quality education used to be satisfactory. Within one year, this suddenly changed as the administration changed. The pride once felt of our children's educators aren't here anymore. Some of the teaching faculty is responsible for teaching our children a subject(s) that they are not fully content or qualified to teach. Some have admitted to that openly during parent/teacher meetings. That in itself can be viewed as educator disloyalty to their own field of endeavor. I've seen this school at it's worst!
- I am really disappointed with the school district, and administration. Raymondville has never been in this kind of financial bind.
- RISD has lost many of its top administrators over there past six months. There are totally unqualified individuals serving in various capacities including interim superintendent and assistant principal. The board of trustees regularly exceeds its authority. Our combined tax rate is capped by local statute at \$1.50. That rate has

been exceeded by current board. There are also serious questions about how the proceeds from bond sales are being used. Also, serious questions about how Federal and state money are used. Please send someone to look into these matters.

- The problems that this district faces is the school board which doesn't let people express their opinion and doesn't let people agree or disagree whatever the situation is. The board does whatever they want without the public notice. Also teachers are put to teaching two or three classes which I don't think the students are getting the right education they need. Thank you.
- Please help make this new school become a better place to learn, teach and work. Our children are at risk here! I have never seen things this bad! Hope you can make a difference.
- I feel that the RISD educational performance needs to be improved for the benefit of our children. There needs to be better services available to our children for better learning. The school needs to be more organized inside and out and safety needs to be an issue. There is too much of an easy access to the campus by anyone and in this day and age that is not good. There needs to be more security. And school board members need to act their age and do their job correctly instead of goofing around!!!
- The school board needs to clean-up their act.
- School board meeting should be open to the public and school board members should recognize parents and faculties opinion.
- Myra Green School - math building bathroom is frequently locked, some teachers threaten students and once they are angry they lose their temper easily. One teacher encouraged a student to fight (she was in a gang before being a teacher).
- I feel this district is under review because our old school board did not maintain proper care of our school. The school has been under construction for almost two years. I think somebody should look into that and where is all the money going too.
- Education in this district needs more guidance toward the future. With the school board now that will NEVER happen. The school board now seem to rule the school. It is their way or the highway.
- The teaching methods are pretty good. I believe my son is getting a good education.
- I am pleased with RISD!
- I feel that our school should be monitored. We have a lot of wrong things going on in our district. Our kids at RHS wait too long to eat. Our students have to teach our teachers how to use the computers. They need more training.
- The school ISD need better programs for handling dropouts, drugs, and gangs on campus. The board members are more worry about who's the boss instead of serving the public interest!

- Students need more foreign language classes and more occupational classes. Students need to learn more manners. Counseling would be excellent for six grade students.
- I truly believe that our schools and teachers are doing very well. It's the school board president and some of its members that might disrupt the community and disappoint some of our best teachers by trying to run a "compared system." Which in the long run loses all interest in our kids in school and their needs.
- Everything seems well.
- I, as a parent, feel that there should be more crossing guards around the Elementary schools. Most young children have to walk home and do not have adult supervision.
- My children are being treated in a fair manor and I like the teachers for all my children, I agree with my school district, but I also know that they do everything possible to help our children and give them the best of education for our children. Thank you.
- My children enjoy this school system very much. This is our first year in this school system, but we have had no problems so far.
- Staff is needed more in the classroom. One individual cannot handle 20 something children. To have a better education, you need fewer kids in the classroom. Also they need to come up with another solution with truancy policy. Students don't pay anything. Its parents that pay the price. I believe if a student skips 1,2, or 3rd period the student should make up those hours. Have a staff to work from 3 pm to 7 pm and have those students come out late instead of regular time. Take away valuable time from students instead of them having it their way.
- I feel that the Raymondville ISD should hire administrators that are certified or that have the mid-management certificate to be principals or assistant principals. These certified administrators are the instructional leaders and the staff look up to them for guidance in the classroom. Certified teachers from Raymondville should be hired so that they can teach the students of their community because they know where these students are coming from. Let's see how Raymondville will do on the TAAS testing this school year.
- Having had children in the RISD for the past 30 years, I feel as though many of the recent changes stem from a political nature and not an educational one. We have some wonderful and well qualified teachers and administrators, but the climate of racism has added undue tension to our school and community. Our school board seems to be a body of men who have a thirst for power at the expense of our children.
- One of the things that I would like for you to know that out of two superintendents that we have, not one has had the time to support the Lady Kats in any of their games at all. The girls have tried their best to make the school look good and yet there is not support from



the school district and also the new dress code is terrible; girls are not dressing like girls. They more look like bar ladies. It's terrible.

- I was born and graduated from RISD, 1971; I also served on the school board for 6 years. Never had our district gotten so much bad publicity since I have lived here. It has turned out to be a gang of adults against another gang of adults. Unfortunately, they are all educated but sure do not act, or look like they have any education. I will be glad when my children got out of school, just to get them out of circus. My oldest daughter went to "xxx" because of the districts low morale.
- I feel that the school board members should have a better working relations so that the students can receive more help form the school when needed. The school board should work together in getting the parents more involved in the decision-making process. A parent should be able to tell his son or daughter what is happening at the board meetings and what is being done to improve our school. We shouldn't have listen to disagreements or negative speeches about each other at the board meetings. We need unity.
- There needs to be more computer time for all students to learn to use the keyboard and Internet. More needs to be done about students that do not want to be at school and are not present to learn, so that they do not hinder those who are willing to work and get their education
- I would like the teachers to be more observant of our students and to be more careful with our children. They should really take care of our children and make sure they have a safe environment without any wrong doing.
- Too much school politics. It's not what you know, it's whom you know.
- Regarding textbooks - My daughter's science book is 12 years old.
- One of the officers has no control- the students do not respect him. Often times I go pick up my children and other students are talking back to the officer and he does not demand respect.
- At elementary we have too many purchased programs- Open Court, Sharon Wells, Shirley Spear, Joshua Horton, Gourmet, Saxon Phonics, Saxon Math. Our two elementary use different programs. Not aligned districtwide.
- What we need is better teachers, that would care for the students but they don't care. They don't care if the student learns or not.
- My children state that there is not a working copier on campus. They have brought handouts/science notes etc. that they have had to copy onto their own paper. Teacher does not have access to copier. They go to copy places (Kinko's, Office Max) 25 miles away to make copies for their classes. They pay for these with their own money.

- Recently the reading program at middle school was changed drastically. For several years, the district has been using the Reading Renaissance/Accelerator reader Program as part of their curriculum. It has prompted many reluctant readers to read. Our middle school has been a recognized campus two years in a row. New administration has banned the use of "graded" Accelerated Reader. The children will not be required to read outside the classroom and held responsible. My children need structure, as do all teenagers. Without mandates the children will get by with as little as possible. Why purchase a program that is not going to be implemented?
- Student supply lists at elementary are outrageously ridiculous. Paper, pencils, kleenex, paper towels, ziploc baggies, folders, crayons, etc. and you are not to label them with your child's name. The "haves" give to the "have nots" it is not my responsibility to provide supplies to the school and other students. Where is the funding for school supplies and materials for the classroom teachers?
- Our district uses a lot of purchased programs. We are using the textbooks as supplemental- instead of using the purchased programs as supplemental.
- My children use Saxon Math, Saxon Phonics, Shirley Spear Writing, Accelerated Reader and other programs- At elementary I seldom see a state-adopted textbook come home- always a worksheet. Lots of money goes into these programs and the training that goes with them. The discipline at junior high is terrible. No enforcement of policies. Students are not held responsible for their actions. Dress code is not enforced. Not enough supervision-shortage of staff. Last week - major food fight in cafeteria. Principal was off campus having leisurely lunch- assistant was nowhere to be found. My children complain about rules not being fair to everyone.
- Raymondville, under the current administration has lost many qualified teachers and staff. I feel the students and our community will suffer. The standard of education and preparation for college will hinder the students, as some have already experienced. The system has always had a very weak Math program and now a weak English program. How can we expect to compete when the current school board and administration are only interested in personal gain and not the education of their students?
- The students in high school are being placed in classes with teachers that don't even know what they are teaching. My daughter has a class called the web mastering and her teacher doesn't know anything about the subject. The teacher doesn't even know who is absent or not from her class. The students don't even have enough time to get to the next class especially when you have a class in the

old school building. I've visited the school on several occasions and didn't like what I saw during the passing period between classes or when the bell rings. First of all, I thought the students should conduct themselves in a respectable fashion not hugging or kissing each other during passing period. Second, they throw trash or paper down from the second floor and don't care who's walking down there. The dress code should be enforced more clearly. I also think that some teachers that don't have a class should be walking the halls to see that each student gets to his/her proper class instead of walking off campus.

- I feel that the teachers should take more time to listen to the student carefully before judging them in their wrong doing to ask why it happened and who started instead of just punishing that one student who was caught in wrong doing before finding out the facts. On why it happened and why he or she felt they had to defend themselves for whatever reason, name calling or being teased or whispering bad things. The reason I am writing this is because it's happened to my son here in Myra Green.
- I think that this school would do better if there were people that go to work to care for the children. Also, if the school was to be run by people that really care not people that want to be in little groups and if you are to do what I say you can be in my group. A select group of people runs the school, they are very dictatorial. TEA should come and see, but don't tell them when you coming, so you can see what they are doing.
- I feel that the district has done a fair job. It could be better. The Pittman campus has improved tremendously and I am very pleased with the administration. As for our school board, I feel they have been doing a poor job. Seems that personal issues are more important than education. Personnel changes were done to open new positions etc. We need a more qualified and exceptional leader. With that I think our district could be one of the best.
- Educational performance RISD is very low - teachers never know who will get the ax next- because the administration only look after themselves first and their pocket book. We have two superintendents at our school drawing large salaries. Why? They hold un-called meetings with each other (only 4 members)
- There is a lot of funny business going on in RISD and I hope you can figure out what is going on- because when you have board members that cannot control their business, how can they run a business- hiring a business manager for \$55,000, who again is kin to a teacher then husband and superintendent of both a city commissioner- makes you wonder.
- What about the teacher using the school truck for personal use and school is paying for diesel?

- They purchased a 97 Ford 4x4 pickup for Ag department and then gave it to Maintenance after two years with about 60,000 mile and purchased another pickup for the Ag department. The high principal was then the vice principal and vocational director and the teacher got whatever he desired.
- I strongly believe RISD is a good school district with unlimited potential. In May, there was change in the school board. The district was in bad financial shape, in my opinion (as an outsider) changes had to be made and people had to be accountable. The local newspaper has been on a MEDIA blitz on the new board. I believe the new board should be given a FAIR chance to work together. The board inherited a budget in the red and in 4 to 5 months have made changes to correct this. Unfortunately there will always be some unhappy citizens. I just hope the students of RISD will not be lost in this.
- I would like to let you know that I have a hearing impaired child and at various times I would speak to the board members, superintendents, special education program representatives concerning my child needs and safety concerns and RISD never did or has done anything to help me and my child and other children that are in the same situation. I would want to let you know that these children are having to go to another city to get their education only because RISD never did anything about it. I just pray to God that nothing ever happens to our children on that bus because we did let RISD school board members know that our kids have to travel 1 1/2 hours every day to another city to get their education, and also have to eat breakfast on the bus at 6:20 or earlier. They did nothing about it! That means our children are at risk for an accident to happen every morning and every afternoon every year all year long! 1-1/2 hours to school 1-1/2 hours back home from school! If there is a way or if there's anyone that can help me regarding this situation please let us know what or whom we can talk to about this matter! Thank you.
- Previous administration had a good report with teachers and students alike. Treatment and discipline was fair and firm for students, teachers and staff. This administration does not try to sincerely or genuinely look after the best interest of the students. They are surrounding them with teachers sympathetic to them (administration) regardless if they are truly qualified to meet the student's needs.
- I am very dissatisfied with the RISD administration decisions. Thank you.
- I feel that at the elementary campuses things are in better shape. At the middle school the students almost seem to run the school. Many of us have seen the behavior of the students and the lack of control shown by the assistant (vice) principal. Many concerns

have also been made as to her credentials or lack of. Friends of mine that teach there feel there is not enough discipline and that she is doing away with valuable programs.

- I help both of my sons with homework and I have notices they are given a lot of xerox papers with math problem or reading. Which is good but we as parent don't have a reference book to review and help our kids better understand a problem whenever they need extra tutoring. I feel as a district we are in trouble if our schools are being run like the school board is. Our kids and their education should be 1st priority. The way I see it is that education dollars are being wasted on a "new position"- assistant superintendent. Please help us!
- Unfortunately, politics is more important in our school district than the kids. There are too many personal agendas. Instead of hiring the best qualified, there are family members or good friends being hired that aren't qualified to be dog catcher. RISD is really going down. I sure hope for the sake of this community, something for the better happens.
- As a parent, I don't feel comfortable with the present situation of our district. I used to feel proud of RISD, now we are the laughing stock of the Valley. Many changes have occurred since the new administration took over, I wish they were positive ones but they have been mainly negative. Please send help now and rescue our children. Rules and regulations have changed and student code of conduct is not being enforced by the administration. We have seen an increase of discipline problems especially in the middle school and high school. Dress code is not being enforced. The gangsters are feeling more powerful and more fights daily are occurring. Drugs are being taken into the school and are being used more frequently. If my children are concerned and not wanting to go to school due to fear, then something is definitely wrong. They are noticing special favors that are being carried out for family members of the present administration-superintendents and principals and also school board. And by the way- the obvious they are not there for our children. They have not tact to handle school matters. They are out for revenge. They did away with programs that were essential to our district. They did away with the Parent Resource Centers (parental involvement), which was working wonderfully for parents, students, and staff. What were they thinking about? These programs need to be reinstated. There is so much more to be mentioned. Please come in and do a thorough investigation and make RISD what it used to be for the sake of the future generations.
- I am concerned about the quality of the education being provided at our district. School board members and superintendent have made some bad decisions that have caused serious morale issues at

our elementary campus. My husband and I are currently considering whether to move our child to a private school. Our elementary campus needs to get children up to speed on the computer technologies available as well.

- Although our district is in financial problems I have great confidence in the educators that the children are receiving a good quality education. They are creative educators that despite the problems they are making certain that the students who want to learn are doing just that. They should be commended for that. Now if we can only fix the money problem to make them as secure as they make our children feel.
- **HELP!**
- In my opinion, education now days are so complicated as compare to when I was in school. I have 2nd and 4th grader, and some of the material they bring home I cannot understand. I have to call my sister, a teacher in this school district, and she helps us out. I can only imagine what parents with no educational background do to help their children out. I, myself, have 2 1/2 years of college and can help my children out in whatever I can understand. To my understanding, the state books are being kept aside and if " someone" comes up with a new program or technique of teaching, that is implemented for teachers to teach, even though the teachers don't feel it is efficient. Why can't we teach our children the old fashion way? Sincerely, A Very Concerned Parent!
- Don't know why RISD took the volunteer off it help a lot to be around the children. Districts think they can budget without the help of volunteers, well you're wrong. Sometimes my children complain about the food being raw and cold. What the district has very wrong is that the security guard takes action with children without notifying parents and ask children so many questions and gets children scared just because schools get anonymous call. District should stress anonymous calls to be more specific instead of going on to investigate children without parents being notified first.
- Every district especially elementary school are in the need to have the use of the PRC supplies now without that children have a harder time in learning.
- The new school board doesn't let the public speak in their meeting. The President of the board runs it like a dictatorship. The public is not allowed to speak and if you do speak up and he doesn't like what you are saying then he will threaten to have you arrested for trespassing. Something needs to be done.
- New uncertified teachers, asst. principals and superintendents, are hired and go to take classes during school time hrs to get certification. Why were they hired when we already had qualified and experienced personnel prior to the last school board election?

There are no certified teachers for word processing in the middle school - Why?

- There are no incentives or information given to our children promoting college expectations. I believe these things should be offered as soon as possible in order to prepare our children. Other countries do this at an early stage (age) in their educational life that is why they are more advanced than the United States. Please send help!
- In order to maintain a high degree of educational performance you need to feel as a teacher that you have the highest degree of professional people supporting you. As a student, to maintain the same educational performance you need to feel that you are receiving the knowledge required to make it in our universities. At this time our school district is going through a period of non-compliance and the lack of leadership from our board of trustees and administration. This is mainly at the middle and high school areas.
- All I have to say is that our teachers in the Raymondville ISD need to be more educated and train to work with students that are attention deficit disorder. Those students need to be understood and mostly have patience with them. Our district lacks it and that is why there are a lot of dropouts.
- The children seem to be learning an overwhelming amount, especially the 1st grader. I have talked to a few parents who pulled their kids out and they (their children) were behind the private school kids.
- Educational performance would be better if there was not so much negativity all the time. Who cares about stuff that happened one year ago, 5 years ago, 100 years ago? Not me. The board and superintendent have to go or learn their job and do it responsibly.
- Why are juniors being advised to take the SAT in the spring because everyone else is doing it that way? Juniors could find out early what they need to work on to raise their scores. Why are seniors not helped with filling out scholarship applications and college applications? I would like to see the school's records on the ratio of scholarships per senior students based on the ratio of Anglos, Hispanics, and Blacks in this community. Is our senior counselor helping everyone?
- At RHS they have 30 min. lunch period and 20 to 25 min. wait to get there lunch. At Elementary I don't see why our children have to pay \$2.25 for a second plate of food when the food has been provided from the state for them to eat and not for the workers to take home for free. As for parent volunteers we don't have any I was a volunteer for 6 yrs and we don't have any Parent Resource Centers available in any our schools.

- My complaint is about the food at the cafeteria. Children are being served cold and at times frozen food. The milk and juice are usually always spoiled. When they have refused to get a food tray, they are told that they have to take one, even if it's just to throw away. Reason being that the school needs the funding for the food. The students also mentioned that some food has had mold on it. To better the education of students we need a new school board, "Adults Preferably."
- RISD "had" always been a school to be proud of until the current board and superintendent came into control. There is now no unity. Everyone including campus administrators, teachers, and students are suffering at the hands of this "at-will" board. It seems to me that they only have thoughts of "personal" agendas. We have assistant junior high principal that is the wife of a board member and who has no classroom experience now is certified for her job. We have a superintendent who is not qualified. We have many over qualified educators that have been reassigned due to the "boards" personal agendas. We have lost many long term, qualified educators due to this board. We have attended many board meetings and they are embarrassing. No types of rules are followed. The board president rules with a very "tight" fist. He and his followers ignore any ideas or suggestions from anyone other than their select group. Since we, my wife and myself, are both RISD graduates and have four children who are grown, we know what RISD "used" to stand for. Until now, it was a highly respected school district. Due to a tragedy we have a grandchild in school, and, it is so sad to us to see what is becoming of our once highly respected school. Each day we hope that one of the state agencies will step in and stop this "madness."
- There is a lack of security at the L.C. Smith School, a lot of parents are very upset with that school's administration.
- I think the district needs special classes for special kids. There are some kids that can't hear, but can hear with a hearing aid. They send those kids all the way to Brownsville. The time they spend in the bus every morning and afternoon is too much for them. Why send them all the way over there when they can go here? I would understand sending them to Brownsville if I lived in Brownsville, but I live in Raymondville so they should go here. We have talked about this before but no change, they don't want those kids in Raymondville which I feel that this is very wrong. We pay taxes but yet they don't want to listen or don't seem to care.
- I believe that TEA has made a great decision in appointing a monitor. They should have appointed a Master. Our school board is pure politics and the compadre system, the way the school Board acts really affects the student's morale and also affects the community as a whole. The school Board lays off good teachers



and aides to save money, but yet they create positions for others and some don't even have the certification needed. The superintendent upgraded the positions that are held by his relatives. Maybe its not nepotism because they were already employed there, but had been previously demoted by the previous administration. I'm glad that my daughter is a senior and I won't have be involved anymore with this school district and their trustees. I feel for the rest that have to put up with them.

- Having three children attend Raymondville ISD, graduating myself, and serving three different terms on the school board, I am totally appalled at the poor direction our school system has taken over the last two years. The school board's disregard of the taxpayer's interest cannot be tolerated. Their lack of business skills is highly evident as well as their favoritism of employing their friends in high paying positions. As a taxpayer I feel my tax dollars are poorly managed and our children are not being instructed by the best teachers available. Your assistance in helping us correct our weakness will be definitely appreciated.
- I have no confidence in the present School Board or the Superintendent. My children come home and complain how the child of the assistant principal is allowed to get away with things that other students are punished for. My wife and I feel helpless and without any way out. I would truly appreciate any help you can give us. These are just a few unfair situations that have taken place on one campus. I have heard many others that would take too long to go into. I pray you are able to see that this is more than a personal grudge. My right to choose or support the individual of my choice without retribution has been taken away. I am angrier at the great injustice that was committed against a good, hard working, honest and decent man, our former superintendent.
- It is a very bad school. I feel bad in having to send my kids to this school. I am very disappointed with the school and the district and that because there was another teacher in there and he said that everything he said was the truth. I'll be taking my two kids out and taking them to another school even if I have to pay or move to another town.
- I feel that teachers need to be more professional. Some of the teachers/coaches need to be role models not the student's friends. I feel that when a coach/teacher makes an inappropriate comment to a student the teacher should be reprimanded, accordingly. Thank you for your time and concern.
- Things are bad in our schools.
- I have a very strong complaint when my child that is now in 3rd was in 1st grade she was taught by a new teacher that was hired that year. That did not teach my daughter- she stayed behind in all her riding math, etc. The teacher left the district my child was lost

in 2nd grade. Thank God for her 2nd grade teacher, an angel, that helped my daughter. Thank God for our teachers that stay here to help our children- and just don't leave.

- When the new Raymondville ISD board of Trustees took over the Raymondville ISD, World War III started when school board president abused his power. Freedom of speech is a valued civil right. Unhappy school district.
- Please check out the school board before checking anything else out, then you can clearly see the picture. After weeding out the board then all the people in Raymondville will support whatever you need to do to get the budget fixed, but don't overpopulate our children's classrooms. Thank you, Concerned parent
- Our school board is embarrassing. The school board president is like a dictator everything is just the way he wants it or no way. In Junior High the kids have gotten out of hand because there is not enough discipline they had a food fight in the cafeteria and nothing was done. The teachers are afraid to say anything because if they do they may get fired. From what I understand we have no RN's just LVN's doing assessments I personally think this is wrong. We need an RN to do assessments and to be over the LVN's. Now mind you we do have some very good LVN's and I would trust my children with them but there is one whom I would prefer not touch my children or my grandchildren. The principles and assistant principles, and teachers at Pittman and L.C. Smith are just fine where they are. This is one area that was to the best of the children in both schools. Also included are the nurses, teacher assistants, and other workers. We lost a lot of good teachers and principles with his new administration.
- The current school board appears too more interested in blaming the past school board members with any of their financial, as well as leadership problems. I really feel that they should get past their differences and consider the students, school staff and the community of Raymondville (Willacy County) as their important issues instead of placing themselves on a pedestal.
- These people do not seem to have the knowledge to do the job they are intending to do. They seem to be doing things for themselves (scratching each others backs) without achieving anything for the community. All these individuals are somehow related or very close friends with each other. It has disgusted me to the point that we are considering moving from this town and starting somewhere else.
- I have lived here almost all my life. Schools now and faculty is all about politics. They, the district, have forgotten that our children should come first in education. They should concentrate on educational needs and not who wants who where!!! Important issue in my case is the safety of my child. I myself do plan on

removing my child from this school district due to safety measures.  
The principal will not help in my sons issue with a gang related  
incident. The chief of security is disappointed at our  
administration's security. Safety and Education should come first  
Thank you for your time