LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD

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Mr. Lloyd Graham
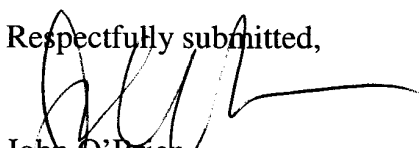Superintendent, Stafford Municipal School District

Dear Mr. Graham:

The attached report reviews the management and performance of the Stafford Municipal School District's (SMSD's) educational, financial, and operational functions.

The report's recommendations will help SMSD improve its overall performance as it provides services to students, staff, and community members. The report also highlights model practices and programs being provided by SMSD.

The staff of the Legislative Budget Board appreciates the cooperation and assistance that your staff and WCL Enterprises, Inc. provided during the preparation of this report.

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

Respectfully submitted,

John O'Brien
Deputy Director
Legislative Budget Board

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      Greg Holsapple
      Michael Cropper
      Mike Guerra
      Hector Acevedo
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
STAFFORD MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Stafford Municipal School District's (SMSD's) school review report noted 22 commendable practices and made 74 recommendations for improvement. The following is an Executive Summary of the significant accomplishments, findings, and recommendations that resulted from the review. A copy of the full report can be found at www.lbb.state.tx.us.

SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- SMSD created an educational foundation to supplement funding for educational programs and activities.

- SMSD is encouraging teachers to further their education by entering into an agreement with the University of Houston-Victoria School of Education that offers a Masters program exclusively for SMSD professional staff.

- SMSD has a School Resource Officer Program that provides visible security presence to deter school crime and increase the safety of students and staff.

- SMSD minimized its recapture liability despite increasing wealth per weighted average daily attendance (WADA) by increasing student enrollment and actively pursuing multiple Chapter 41 district options.

- SMSD's close monitoring of monthly energy bills and energy management controls on equipment reduced its energy costs 23.4 percent from $1.37 per square foot in 2000–01 and 2001–02 to $1.05 per square foot in 2002–03, saving taxpayers more than $181,000.

- SMSD's Maintenance Department implemented a number of procedural changes in 2002–03 and 2003–04 that improved maintenance operations and saved money.

SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

- The district and the City of Stafford have not worked together to bridge differences in opinion and enhance communications between the two entities. This relationship needs to improve since HB 2964 passed during the 78th session of the Texas Legislature in 2003 requires three-fourths agreement of the total voting members present from City Council and the Board of Trustees to approve the district's tax rate and annual budget.

- SMSD does not use staffing formulas based on enrollment to determine the appropriate number of staff for its schools. From 1999–2000 to 2003–

04, staff increased 9.9 percent while student enrollment declined by 1.0 percent.

- In 2003–04 the district did not have scope and sequence documents for subjects in all grade levels to provide a list of curriculum standards or learning objectives for each subject or pacing calendars so that teachers know when to teach specific objectives or do benchmark testing for the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test.

- SMSD's technology organization is understaffed and unable to support the district's administrative and instructional technology requirements.

- SMSD has been operating under board-declared financial exigency since May 2003 and has not taken action to undeclare the district's state of financial exigency, even though the district and the City Council jointly adopted a 2004–05 budget plan with the financial resources necessary to meet the district's needs.

- SMSD offers a local optional homestead exemption of 20 percent of the property value in addition to the state-mandated $15,000 homestead exemption. By providing this exemption the district is losing more than $600,000 annually, funding not available to offset district expenses.

- SMSD purchased goods and services in a manner that did not comply with board policies, district-purchasing procedures, and Texas Education Code competitive bid requirements.

- In 2003–04, SMSD had inefficient bus routes and schedules because these processes were managed manually.

SIGNIFICANT RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation: Increase the interaction of SMSD and the City of Stafford to include meetings, committees, and communications not specifically required by law.** The superintendent, Board of Trustees, mayor, and City Council have not regularly met in the past to discuss issues and should improve communication by holding quarterly meetings between City Council and the Board of Trustees, establishing a joint budget committee to discuss the district's budget prior to the mandated approval meeting, creating a committee of council members and board members to review current services provided to SMSD by the city, and providing joint

communications to the community on a periodic basis.

- **Recommendation: Develop staffing levels based on student enrollment and reduce campus staffing to reflect recommended minimum standards.** The district should develop staffing levels based on student enrollment and reduce campus staffing to reflect recommended minimum standards. Based on the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) standards, SMSD should reduce its staff by 4.6 secretary/clerk positions.

- **Recommendation: Implement scope and sequence documents, pacing calendars, and develop benchmark assessments or tests for all SMSD courses and subject areas.** The district has begun this process by purchasing an online curriculum product during summer 2004 to be implemented in 2004–05. The district should use this instructional software to complete scope and sequence documents with pacing calendars that will allow the district to establish clear consistent guidelines for instructional delivery. The administration of benchmark assessments or tests will allow confirmation of instructional alignment to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) objectives and enable principals to monitor the curriculum to determine if TEKS are being consistently taught.

- **Recommendation: Restructure the district's technology organization.** By hiring a director of Instructional Technology with experience in TEKS Technology Applications requirements; by creating two Instructional Technology specialists to work directly with campus staff in the areas of technology staff development, integration, and planning; and by creating four campus technology support positions to provide front line technical support, staff development, and technology integration support to their peers, the district could eliminate the secretary and computer lab manager positions and build a structure to improve technology.

- **Recommendation: Undeclare the district's state of financial exigency.** The board should vote to undeclare the district's financial emergency status at the earliest opportunity to avoid possible future negative impacts on the district's credit worthiness. The Texas Education Agency informally recommends that districts "undeclare" financial exigency once the financial emergency is remedied.

- **Recommendation: Discontinue the 20 percent optional homestead exemption.** SMSD's maintenance and operations tax rate is capped at the maximum level of $1.50. Eliminating the optional homestead exemption would provide the district with additional operating funds.

- **Recommendation: Establish a purchasing process to monitor and ensure compliance with state and federal procurement laws and board policies.** Establishing processes that comply with state and federal laws and board policies for purchasing will help ensure compliance and avoid future legal and financial purchasing violations. The business manager and the superintendent should develop a written process that includes the development of a bid calendar and the review of budgets to monitor bidding compliance to determine which categories of purchases might exceed the $10,000 or the $25,000 thresholds, and prepare bids according to the law or district policy.

- **Recommendation: Install the computerized bus routing software and monitor the recommended bus routing changes for efficiency.** The district should complete the workstation hardware set up to receive the customized software from the vendor and schedule vendor training for district staff. Implementing the bus routing changes reduces the total number of SMSD bus routes from 24 to 18 routes, and monitoring routes for efficiency would help scheduling to be able to adapt to any construction, road changes, or closures as they occur.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Stafford MSD is the only municipal school district in the state.

- The district is located approximately 20 miles southwest of the City of Houston along portions of Highway 59 and US Highway 90A. The entire district encompasses seven square miles and is partially located in both Fort Bend and Harris Counties.

- During the 78th session of the Texas Legislature in 2003, HB 2964, which called for this review, was passed and contains a key provision that specifies the number of members of the Board of Trustees and City Council that must approve both the budget and the tax rate for SMSD.

- The district's enrollment has remained fairly steady at 2,838 students, with a 1.0 percent decrease over the last five years.

- Out of the total 376 full-time-equivalent staff, 198 are teachers.

- The Texas Education Agency (TEA) rated SMSD as 'Academically Acceptable' in 2003–04.

- Based on the passing criteria identified by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for the 2002-03 statewide assessment, SMSD scored 71.6 percent, compared to the state average of 69.1 percent.

- The district has been in a period of change, having hired the current superintendent in April 2003, declared financial exigency in May 2003 to deal with a $1.8 million budget shortfall for 2003–04, and replaced or had turnover in some key district management positions.

- The legislators in Stafford MSD's district are Senator Ellis (96.0%), Senator Janek (4.0%), Representative Howard (62.3%), Representative Olivo (35.6%), Representative Heflin (1.6%), and Representative Wilson (0.4%).

SCHOOLS

- One primary school (EE-1)

- One elementary school (2-3)

- One intermediate school (4-5)

- One middle school (6-8)

- One high school (9-12)

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- Stafford Alternative Center, a discipline alternative education program (DAEP) that serves grades 6-12, housed in a shopping center.

- Fort Bend County Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program, a JJAEP in conjunction with the Fort Bend County Commissioners Court, Juvenile Board, Juvenile Probation Department, and other school districts in Fort Bend County. In 2003-04, four students were assigned to the JJAEP.

2003–04 STUDENT DATA

- 2,838 students enrolled

- 17.1 percent Anglo

- 33.7 percent Hispanic

- 29.0 percent African American

- 19.9 percent Asian/Pacific Islander

- 0.2 percent Native American

- 36.1 percent economically disadvantaged

2003-04 FINANCIAL DATA

- Total budgeted expenditures: $23 million

- Fund balance: $2.6 million, or 11 percent of 2002-03 total budgeted expenditures

- Tax Rate (2003): $1.72 ($1.50 Maintenance and Operations and $0.22 Interest and Sinking).

2003-04 PERCENT SPENT ON INSTRUCTION

- Out of total budgeted expenditures of $23 million, SMSD spent 50.5 percent on instruction, which is right at the state average of 50.4 percent. Looking only at operating expenditures, SMSD spent 58 percent on instruction, which is above the state average of 56.6 percent.

The chapters that follow contain a summary of the district's accomplishments, findings, and numbered recommendations. Detailed explanations for accomplishments and findings/recommendations follow the summary and include fiscal impacts. Each recommendation also lists the page number that corresponds to its detailed explanation.

At the end of the chapters, a page number reference identifies where additional general information for that chapter's topic is available. Each chapter concludes with a fiscal impact chart listing the chapter's recommendations and associated savings or costs for 2004–05 through 2008–09.

Following the chapters are the appendices that contain general information, comments from the Community Open House and Focus Groups, and the results from the district staff surveys conducted by the review team.

The table on the next page summarizes the fiscal implications of all 74 recommendations contained in the report.

FISCAL IMPACT

	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
Gross Savings	$269,820	$1,025,008	$1,025,008	$1,025,008	$1,025,008	$4,369,852	$3,000
Gross Costs	($79,950)	($64,113)	($52,808)	($51,408)	($506,408)	($754,687)	($48,289)
Total	$189,870	$960,895	$972,200	$973,600	$518,600	$3,615,165	($45,289)

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

The key purpose of any school system is educating children. Efficient use of a district's financial and human resources and an effective instructional program determine the extent to which a district meets this goal. A well designed and managed process for directing instruction, collecting assessment data to evaluate and monitor programs, and providing the resources needed to support educational efforts is essential if a district is to meet the needs of its students.

To achieve its technology-related goals, a school district must have an organizational structure that creates an environment for using and supporting new technologies. A school district is properly organized if it uses and supports existing and new technologies in its curriculum, learning activities, scholarship, research, and district management. This technology implementation requires substantial staff development, emphasizing both technology applications and its integration into the curriculum and classroom instruction.

Stafford Municipal School District (SMSD) serves its students in five schools located on one campus: one primary school, one elementary school, one intermediate school, one middle school, and one high school. SMSD also operates an off-campus disciplinary alternative education program for students who commit certain offenses and provides a community-based juvenile justice alternative school in conjunction with Fort Bend County Commissioners Court, Juvenile Board, Juvenile Probation Department, and other school districts in Fort Bend County.

Exhibit 1-1 shows the schools and students by ethnicity and economically disadvantaged percentages.

The ethnic composition of the students in SMSD is richly diverse, with 34 percent Hispanic, 29 percent African American, 20 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, 17 percent Anglo, and less than 1 percent Native American. From 1999–2000 through 2003–04, SMSD's student population decreased by 1.0 percent from 2,868 to 2,838.

Bandera, Decatur, Fredericksburg, and Sweeny Independent School Districts were selected to serve as peer districts for comparison purposes.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- SMSD holds an end of year Parent Reception and Student Showcase to celebrate the accomplishments of students enrolled in the Gifted and Talented (G/T) Program. The showcase provides parents the opportunity to view displayed projects in the areas of language arts, social studies, science, and the visual arts and interact with teachers regarding the projects and the program in general.

- SMSD increased the number of students qualifying for the G/T Program by using different procedures and instruments to identify students as qualifying for the program. SMSD amended the process to better identify students for the program and increased participation to 116 students qualifying for the G/T Program in 2004–05.

- The district is addressing deficiencies in the Special Education Program by using recommendations from a District Effectiveness and Compliance (DEC) review by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and a Region 4 evaluation of the Special Education Program. The district has employed a new director and an administrative assistant who have developed a plan of action to bring SMSD into compliance and is using the Region 4 evaluation report as a guide to improve the services offered in the Special Education Program.

- SMSD is encouraging teachers to further their education by entering into an agreement with the University of Houston-Victoria School of Education (UHV) that offers a Masters program exclusively for SMSD professional staff. The district, the individual employee, and UHV each pay one-third of the fees for any course taken to complete the Master of Education program, and the university teaches the classes at SMSD facilities

EXHIBIT 1-1
SMSD CAMPUSES, STUDENT ETHNICITY, AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED
2003–04

CAMPUS	GRADE SPAN	ENROLLMENT	AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC	ANGLO	ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	NATIVE AMERICAN	ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED
High School	9-12	759	29%	30%	19%	23%	0%	30%
Middle School	6-8	668	31%	34%	16%	18%	0%	35%
Intermediate School	4-5	449	26%	35%	18%	20%	0%	34%
Elementary School	2-3	457	35%	33%	17%	15%	0%	35%
Primary School	EE-1	501	24%	39%	15%	23%	0%	51%
SMSD Totals		**2,838 ***	**29%**	**34%**	**17%**	**20%**	**0%****	**36%**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 2003–04.
* Includes students in juvenile justice alternative education program.
** Less than 1 percent.

or the Fort Bend campus of the college.

- The district's substitute teacher program is well organized and brings well-trained, informed personnel to the schools. The SMSD substitute teacher placement service recruits, screens, and trains qualified candidates to fill substitute positions, enabling the instructional program for students to continue even though the regular teacher is absent from the classroom.

- SMSD's alternative education campus offers students and their parents a program to reduce time at the campus for good behavior. The program focuses on a family's needs, understanding substance abuse, decreasing family stress, and identifying new goals and coping strategies. The program encourages the involvement of parents, school staff, and students in the process of developing the behavior and skills necessary for productive adult living.

FINDINGS

- In 2003–04 the district did not have scope and sequence documents for subjects in all grade levels to provide a list of curriculum standards or learning objectives for each subject or pacing calendars so that teachers know when to teach specific objectives or do benchmark testing for the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test.

- SMSD does not have a structured, focused process to support consistent improvement in student performance. Although the district did develop strategies that were implemented during 2003–04 designed to improve student performance from 2002–03, TAKS results in 2003–04 showed test scores generally declined in subject areas for most grade levels from 2002–03.

- The district does not have district-adopted guidelines in place to track the amount of time that counselors are actually performing appropriate counseling duties. A significant portion of counselor time is devoted to administrative tasks that hamper their effectiveness and availability to students.

- SMSD does not have a model of instruction for bilingual/English as a Second Language (ESL) that describes the amount of time that instruction should be in Spanish and in English, that provides curriculum documents with scope and sequence of objectives and pacing timelines, or that has sufficient supplemental bilingual instructional materials. As a result, SMSD's Limited English proficient (LEP) student performance on TAKS is below the state average of LEP students in many grade levels.

- SMSD offers limited opportunities for students to earn college credit while in high school. With a high percentage of graduates planning to attend college (88 percent in 2002–03), the district needs to review opportunities to enter into additional articulation agreements to provide more advanced learning opportunities for its college-bound students.

- The SMSD Career and Technology Education (CATE) Advisory Board lacks enough business and community representatives to provide adequate information to the district on current job needs.

- SMSD does not evaluate its CATE Program, resulting in the district not being able to gauge how relevant the courses it is offering are to the needs of the local job marketplace.

- SMSD's campus (CIP) and district (DIP) improvement plans do not include all the components necessary for the State Compensatory Education (SCE) program. TEA's review team for the May 2003 DEC evaluation found that there was insufficient documentation to support a determination of compliance with SCE requirements that the CIP/DIPs include full-time equivalents (FTEs), supplemental resources and funding/dollar amounts, and strategies for serving students in at-risk situations.

- The district's long-range plan for G/T education lacks sufficient detail to provide adequate direction and comprehensive measures to ensure a strong, rigorous G/T Program from kindergarten through grade 12.

- SMSD's staffing level of one nurse to 568 students is less than the one to 750-student ratio recommended by the National Association of School Nurses. As a result, the district may be incurring more costs for nursing services than necessary.

- The district's technology organization is understaffed and unable to support the district's administrative and instructional technology requirements.

- The SMSD Long Range Technology Plan for 1998–2003 does not assign responsibility and activity due dates to specific individuals. While there is a Technology Plan, goals are not being met since there is no accountability in getting activities implemented.

- SMSD does not have a Disaster Recovery Plan for the technology area, which could result in the loss of information processing capabilities. The plans and actions needed to recover from minor losses

or temporary outages to catastrophic losses of information resources have not been developed.

- The district has not developed and documented standard policies and procedures for information technology (IT) functions, such as data backup, disaster recovery, network maintenance, and troubleshooting. Without adequate documentation, SMSD staff may have difficulty in performing various required technology functions, increasing the risk of data loss and other problems.

- SMSD has a paper work order system for technology, which has resulted in delays in service repairs and inadequate service history information being maintained that would help identify and track many basic types of recurring computer problems.

- SMSD has no technology staff development program. The lack of a comprehensive staff development program for teachers and staff results in students not mastering technology skills since they do not have the opportunities to create technology products, such as multimedia presentations and web pages, and the staff not being as productive in the workplace because they do not know how to plan, organize, deliver, and evaluate instruction for all students using technology.

- Stafford High School technology course sequence requirements do not maximize students taking advanced technology courses. Students are required to take Keyboarding before other technology courses, limiting a student's opportunities to take more advanced technology courses. This practice may result in students not obtaining the optimum technology knowledge and skills necessary for postsecondary education or the workplace.

- The district does not maintain appropriate and needed information about their computer equipment inventory, making it difficult for the district to have sufficient information to manage its computer inventory. There is no information maintained on the age or version of the operating system used on each computer, information that is necessary for developing a computer replacement policy, determining if a potential software acquisition can reside on existing computers, or resolving any software licensing issues.

- SMSD does not have a replacement plan for computers and there are no district standards that describe the criteria to be used for replacing computer equipment. Since technology equipment is expensive, lack of a computer replacement plan makes it more difficult to manage the cost of

replacing older computer equipment. Lack of standards can result in staff inefficiency and noncompliance when purchasing any new equipment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 1 (p. 16): Implement scope and sequence documents, pacing calendars, and develop benchmark assessments or tests for all SMSD courses and subject areas.** The district has begun this process by purchasing an online curriculum product during summer 2004 to be implemented in 2004–05. The district should use this instructional software to complete scope and sequence documents with pacing calendars that will allow the district to establish clear consistent guidelines for instructional delivery. The administration of benchmark assessments or tests will allow confirmation of instructional alignment to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) objectives and enable principals to monitor the curriculum to determine if TEKS are being consistently taught.

- **Recommendation 2 (p. 18): Implement a structured, focused process to improve student performance that is based on test score analysis to determine strengths and weaknesses of student performance, supported by instruction based on aligned curriculum, with specific responsibilities and monitoring.** The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction should provide the leadership for developing this process, beginning with test score results and continuing through the ongoing monitoring of the curriculum application process, assigning accountability responsibilities to central office instructional staff and principals with the desired outcomes for each step described so progress can be measured.

- **Recommendation 3 (p. 25): Adopt district guidelines on the appropriate use of counselor time.** SMSD should determine guidelines to ensure that counselors are using the majority of their time helping students in need of counseling. These guidelines also should outline the amount of non-guidance activities appropriate for counselors, such as the counselors' role in the administration of state testing.

- **Recommendation 4 (p. 27): Evaluate other bilingual/English as a Second Language (ESL) models that research shows have increased achievement of Limited English proficient (LEP) students.** In 2002–03, SMSD's LEP students performed below the state average in 11 of the 26 areas (reading, writing, math, science, social studies) and, in 2003–04, SMSD

LEP students scored below the state average in 18 of the areas. SMSD should contact Region 4 for assistance and put together a committee of teachers from each grade level to review a variety of bilingual/ESL models of instruction that have proven to increase student achievement.

- **Recommendation 5 (p. 31): Expand the opportunities for students to earn college credit while in high school by entering into additional articulation agreements for courses offered in the Career and Technology Education Program.** SMSD offers some dual credit courses and Tech Prep programs that provide opportunities for students to fulfill high school graduation requirements and complete college credits simultaneously. SMSD has entered into an agreement with Houston Community College to add two English courses and Economics to their dual credit options beginning in 2004–05, but the district needs to review opportunities to enter into additional articulation agreements to provide more advanced learning opportunities for its college-bound students.

- **Recommendation 6 (p. 32): Increase the number of business representatives on the Career and Technology Education advisory board.** The superintendent, who is a member of the Ft. Bend Chamber of Commerce advisory board and the Fort Bend Economic Development Council, should advise the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction about persons to contact to increase representation on SMSD's Career and Technology Education advisory board to provide additional information on current job needs, the relevance of district programs, and the types of courses that need to be offered by the district to meet current job needs.

- **Recommendation 7 (p. 33): Annually evaluate the Career and Technology Education (CATE) Program.** The high school principal, the CATE department chair, and selected CATE instructors should investigate available evaluation instruments for CATE programs or develop a local evaluation and present them to the CATE advisory board for selection. The advisory board should develop a process and timeline for evaluation, and the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction should monitor the evaluation each year.

- **Recommendation 8 (p. 33): Include state compensatory education strategies, FTEs, and specific dollar amounts from all sources along with timelines and evaluation criteria in the district and campus improvement plans.** SMSD's assistant superintendent of Curriculum

and Instruction should contact other districts and Region 4 for sample district and campus improvement plans. The business manager and the assistant superintendent should work as a team to review state compensatory education requirements and develop procedures that address the requirements and allocate funds to the campuses. Campus principals with their campus improvement committees should use these procedures to designate funds for strategies in the campus improvement plans. The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction should monitor adherence to the procedures.

- **Recommendation 9 (p. 35): Revise the district's Gifted and Talented (G/T) Education Plan to include a comprehensive approach to providing G/T services to students.** The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction should assemble a team of G/T trained and certified teachers, counselors, and administrators to create a strategic G/T Plan that includes specific initiatives for parent involvement, professional development for staff, and differentiation methods for each core subject at each grade.

- **Recommendation 10 (p. 38): Develop nurse staffing ratios.** The district should develop nurse to student ratios similar to the recommendation of the National Association of School Nurses (NASN). Eliminating one licensed vocational nurse position would increase the nurse to student ratio from 1:568 to 1:710, a ratio closer to the NASN recommendation of 1:750.

- **Recommendation 11 (p. 39): Restructure the district's technology organization.** By hiring a director of Instructional Technology with experience in TEKS Technology Applications requirements; by creating two Instructional Technology specialists to work directly with campus staff in the areas of technology staff development, integration, and planning; and by creating four campus technology support positions to provide front line technical support, staff development, and technology integration support to their peers, the district could eliminate the secretary and computer lab manager positions and build a structure to improve technology.

- **Recommendation 12 (p. 41): Revise the Technology Plan to assign activities to individuals with due dates.** The Technology Plan for 2004–07 should be updated to include activity assignments to individuals with due dates and performance measures to hold individuals accountable. The board should receive regular progress reports on the implementation of the

Technology Plan and any major technology projects.

- **Recommendation 13 (p. 43): Develop and test a comprehensive Disaster Recovery Plan that includes all district information processes.** The district's Instructional Technology director should develop the Disaster Recovery Plan with actions needed to recover from minor to catastrophic losses of information resources with protocols for both partial and complete recoveries to ensure that the technology staff is knowledgeable in every aspect of data recovery and restoration. The Instructional Technology director should present the plan to the superintendent and board for approval prior to 2005–06.

- **Recommendation 14 (p. 43): Develop and document district technology policies and procedures that include all information related activities.** Documented policies and procedures maximize computer assets, provide information security, and clearly define management responsibilities. The district should first address items needing immediate documentation such as data backup, disaster recovery, and network maintenance and troubleshooting, with the documentation of data backup procedures a top priority.

- **Recommendation 15 (p. 44): Implement an electronic work order system for technology in order to improve technical support.** Electronic work order systems provide efficiency by allowing requests to be submitted and their status monitored through the computer network. These systems track computer problem history, which enables service technicians to much more easily identify and repair computers with recurring problems.

- **Recommendation 16 (p. 46): Develop a comprehensive staff development program that addresses technology competencies, use of videoconferencing equipment, and integration of technology into the core and enrichment curriculum.** The director of Instructional Technology should research other district's technology staff development programs and develop an action plan to implement a comprehensive staff development program that re-institutes a technology staff development requirement; offers a series of after-school, Saturday, in-service, and summer technology workshops that involve integration of basic applications to advanced topics into class work; rewards a teacher's progress in technology with incentives like additional technology tools for their classroom; and provides staff development on

how to technically support and integrate videoconferencing equipment into course work.

- **Recommendation 17 (p. 47): Eliminate the requirement for taking Keyboarding prior to taking other high school technology courses.** The district should make Keyboarding an elective class and not a prerequisite for other technology classes, encourage ninth grade students to take Business Computer Information Systems or one of the Technology Applications TEKS courses (Web Mastering, Desktop Publishing, Digital Graphics and Animator, Multimedia, Computer Science I and II, Video Technology) to meet the technology one-credit graduation requirement, and encourage high school students to take a minimum of two technology courses in order to better prepare them for the work world or postsecondary education.

- **Recommendation 18 (p. 48): Maintain the appropriate and needed information about the computer equipment inventory**. The district should annually keep a computer inventory with the following data fields completed for each computer: brand name, model name, date purchased, price, serial number, processor speed (mhz), memory, disk capacity, operating system, installed location, and individual responsible for the computer.

- **Recommendation 19 (p. 48): Develop a Technology Replacement Plan.** The director of Instructional Technology should gather information about the age and condition of the district's computer inventory and meet with the superintendent to explore options regarding possible funding sources that could be used to replace district's computers. The director of Instructional Technology should prepare a plan of implementation for the replacement of outdated technology equipment, and this effort should be an ongoing process and not a one-time event.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

SMSD holds an end of year Parent Reception and Student Showcase to celebrate the accomplishments of students enrolled in the G/T program. A subcommittee of the district G/T advisory committee plans the showcase. A counselor from the primary or elementary school coordinates this project, which began in 2001–02. In the first year, SMSD held the showcase at the SMSD Middle/High School cafeteria. In 2002–03, the district partnered with a local bank to host the reception, and the bank hosted the 2003–04 showcase in May 2004.

Student projects represent language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and the visual arts areas. A few of the projects displayed included the following: a straw architecture, a power point presentation on communication and transportation, string art projects, watercolor batiks, a travel brochure, poetry notebooks, toys in space, and space suits.

The showcase provides parents the opportunity to view displayed projects and interact with teachers regarding the projects and the program in general. One hundred and ten participants signed the register at the reception.

GIFTED AND TALENTED IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

SMSD amended the process and identification instruments used for placement in the G/T program to better identify students for the program. Prior to 2003–04, SMSD administered the Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT 7) and the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) to those students who were nominated by teachers, parents, peers, counselors, administrators, the students themselves, or other interested persons. SMSD then completed a matrix of these scores, teacher interview scores, and creativity checklist scores on each nominated student. A committee of at least three professional educators from each campus who received training in gifted education evaluated each student matrix. This committee selected those students that they felt the gifted program placement was the most appropriate educational setting. Not all students who could qualify for the program were nominated and, therefore, were not administered the achievement and abilities tests to validate their qualifications.

Exhibit 1-2 shows 116 students, or 4.1 percent of total enrollment in SMSD, qualified for its G/T program. The 116 students consist of 92 students identified in 2003–04 and the remaining students identified in previous years. This percentage is lower than the state average and less than all of the peer districts. SMSD's

G/T expenditures per G/T student exceeded the G/T expenditures per student of all peer districts and also exceeded the state average.

SMSD changed its process in 2003–04 by administering the CogAT and the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) to all students rather than testing only those students who were nominated for the G/T program. The achievement test used for G/T identification changed from the Mat7 to the ITBS. Beginning in 2003–04, counselors review the test scores of all students and nominate those students who score at or above the 90th percentile on the ITBS in addition to nominations from teachers, parents, students, and other interested individuals. **Exhibit 1-3** shows the criteria and instruments used for G/T screening in prior years and the criteria and instruments used in 2003–04.

By using different procedures and instruments to identify students for the G/T program, SMSD increased both the number of students nominated and the number qualifying in 2003–04 for the G/T program in 2004–05. The percentage of African American and Hispanic students qualifying for the program more than doubled when SMSD amended the procedures (**Exhibit 1-4**).

ADDRESSING DEFICIENCIES IN THE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

The district is addressing deficiencies in the Special Education Program. In May 2003, at the request of SMSD's superintendent, a review team from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) visited SMSD for a District Effectiveness and Compliance (DEC) review. The superintendent said that during his transitional period between March and early April 2003, some concern about federal and state programs began to surface during conversations and interviews with faculty, staff, parents, and the Board of Trustees. His relationship with TEA resulted in his knowing that TEA was looking for districts to pilot "no-notice" DEC visits;

EXHIBIT 1-2
SMSD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE GIFTED/TALENTED BUDGETED EDUCATION EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL BUDGETED INSTRUCTIONAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES
2003-04

ENTITY	TOTAL BUDGETED INSTRUCTIONAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	BUDGETED G/T EXPENDITURES	G/T EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL INSTRUCTIONAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED	NUMBER OF G/T STUDENTS	G/T AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL OF TOTAL ENROLLMENT	G/T EXPENDITURES PER STUDENT
Bandera	$11,925,112	$144,907	1.2%	2,665	299	11.2%	$485
Decatur	$14,004,715	$217,799	1.6%	2,846	247	8.7%	$882
Sweeny	$10,394,614	$60,351	0.6%	2,098	173	8.2%	$349
Fredericksburg	$13,808,933	$10,661	0.1%	2,848	162	5.7%	$66
SMSD	$14,315,832	$270,623	1.9%	2,838	116	4.1%	$2,333
State	$20,388,433,853	$353,316,559	1.7%	4,311,502	335,805	7.8%	$1,052

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 2003-04.

EXHIBIT 1-3
SMSD GIFTED AND TALENTED SELECTION INSTRUMENTS
2002–03 AND 2003–04

GRADE LEVELS AND CRITERIA FOR PLACEMENT	2002–03 INSTRUMENTS	GRADE LEVELS AND CRITERIA FOR PLACEMENT	2003–04 INSTRUMENTS
KINDERGARTEN		**KINDERGARTEN**	
Student achievement composite score, verbal score, language score, and mathematics score, and teacher checklist of characteristics of gifted students	Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT 7) Kingore Observation Inventory (KOI) Ravens Progressive Matrices	Student achievement composite score, vocabulary, word analysis, listening, language, and mathematics scores, cognitive verbal, non-verbal, and quantitative scores, and teacher checklist of characteristics of gifted students	Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) CogAT Renzulli-Smith Early Childhood Checklist
GRADES 1-2		**GRADE 1**	
Student achievement composite score, reading, language, mathematics, science, and social studies scores, and educational ability score (verbal, non-verbal, quantitative), and teacher checklist of characteristics of gifted students	MAT 7 CogAT Renzulli Creativity Checklist	Student achievement composite score, reading, language, mathematics, science, and social studies scores, and educational ability score (verbal, non-verbal, quantitative), teacher checklist of characteristics of gifted students	ITBS CogAT Renzulli-Smith Early Childhood Checklist
GRADES 3-5		**GRADES 2-5**	
Student achievement composite score, reading, language, mathematics, science, and social studies scores, and educational ability score, teacher checklist of characteristics of gifted students or interview(whichever assessment gives the greater point value)	MAT 7 CogAT Renzulli Creativity Checklist or Teacher Interview	Student achievement composite score, reading, language, mathematics, science, and social studies scores, and educational ability score (verbal, non-verbal, quantitative), teacher checklist of characteristics of gifted students, or interview	ITBS CogAT Renzulli-Smith Early Childhood Checklist or Interview
GRADES 6-12		**GRADES 6-11**	
Student achievement composite score, reading, language, mathematics, science, and social studies scores, and educational ability score, interview, visual arts portfolio	MAT 7 CogAT Teacher Interview	Student achievement composite score, reading, language, mathematics, science, and social studies scores, and educational ability score (verbal, non-verbal, quantitative), and interview	ITBS CogAT Interview

SOURCE: SMSD assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction.

EXHIBIT 1-4
NUMBER OF SMSD STUDENTS QUALIFYING FOR G/T PROGRAM
IN 2002–03 AND 2003–04

	2002–03			2003–04		
SCHOOL	**NUMBER NOMINATED**	**NUMBER QUALIFYING**	**PERCENTAGE QUALIFYING**	**NUMBER NOMINATED**	**NUMBER QUALIFYING**	**PERCENTAGE QUALIFYING**
African American	49	5	10.2%	62	15	24.2%
Anglo	39	9	23.1%	56	25	44.6%
Asian	60	13	21.7%	113	40	35.4%
Hispanic	26	*	*	39	12	30.8%

SOURCE: SMSD assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction.
*Less than five students.

therefore, he requested the visit.

TEA's Division of Accountability Evaluations conducts district on-site evaluations and monitoring to determine compliance with state and federal requirements for special programs. The review team conducts roundtable discussions, examines relevant documents, and interviews district staff members. SMSD received the DEC report in July 2003. The review team cited SMSD as being noncompliant on 14 indicators (**Exhibit 1-5**).

Under the quality point area of the DEC evaluation, the DEC review team made six recommendations in four areas (**Exhibit 1-6**) and recommended that SMSD contact Region 4 for assistance.

At the time of the DEC visit the Special Education Program was under the direction of a part-time director. Following the DEC visit, SMSD employed a new director and an administrative assistant who developed a plan of action to bring SMSD into compliance. **Exhibit 1-7** shows the action SMSD took to address the noncompliance citations (**Exhibit 1-5**)

EXHIBIT 1-5
**SMSD SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM NON-COMPLIANCE CITATIONS CITED IN TEA
DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS AND COMPLIANCE VISIT
MAY 2003**

INDICATOR	NON-COMPLIANCE CITATIONS	
	NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
S1: Identification	1.	Lacks a system to identify, locate, and evaluating individuals with disabilities (birth through age 21) residing in the district that need special education and related services.
S2: Services for students in private schools or facilities	2.	Lack of board-approved policies and procedures, no documentation of a district system to determine proportionate share, and no documentation of the private school students residing in the district.
S3: Services for ethnic students	3.	Lack of district evaluation of the district's ethnic groups who receive special education services and no documentation of a plan.
S5: Services for students classified as LEP	4.	No district evaluation of the district's LEP population who receive special education services and there is no documentation of a plan.
S10: Notice of ARD Committee Meetings and notice of Proposal or Refusal	5.	Notices of ARD committee meetings and notices of proposal or refusal did not include appropriate documentation.
S12: ARD committee Meeting/IEP	6.	ARD committee meetings were not held by appropriate personnel, decisions were not made within the timelines of the student's IEP, and placement/service decisions were not documented appropriately.
S14: General state and districtwide assessment	7.	Appropriate documentation for ARD determination of feasibility of a student with a disability with appropriate modifications could be included in state, district or alternative assessment programs.
S15: Individual Transition Plan	8.	Individual transition plans were not developed and updated annually for students with disabilities
S16: ARD Committee determined need for extended school year	9.	ARD committees did not determine individual student needs for extended school year services and did not provide services based on individual needs.
S17: Graduation	10.	ARD committees did not determine the method/option for graduation and document whether additional services would be needed prior to graduation..
S18: Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)	11.	Insufficient evidence to determine if ARD committees selected the least restrictive environment for students.
S21: Implement IEP and provide free appropriate education in LRE	12.	Facilities for students with disabilities were not comparable to facilities for students without disabilities (location of classrooms).
S22: Monitoring IEP	13.	Written progress reports were not sent to parents on the same timely basis as those provide to parents of students in general education. Not all teachers received copies of student's current IEP.
S29: District Participated in training identified by the Office of Special Education Programs	14.	Lack of documentation that the district established an ongoing system to ensure that all staff has been or will be trained in the five areas: least restrictive environment, related services, initial evaluation timelines, revaluation timelines, and transition.

Source: Texas Education Agency, DEC Report, May 2003.

and the quality point recommendations (**Exhibit 1-6**), indicating the date completed or if the process is ongoing.

SMSD contracted with Region 4 in August 2003 to perform an evaluation of the Special Education Program that focused on program effectiveness, systemic operations, and compliance as part of its plan to address the DEC noncompliance citations and improve the program. Region 4 developed an evaluation design that would provide a vision for the future for program quality and effectiveness in accordance with the Utility, Feasibility, Propriety, and Accuracy Standards of The Program Evaluation Standards (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 1994). The program evaluation team studied SMSD's Special Education Department

from nine perspectives. The findings include areas of commendations and areas needing improvement. Region 4 identified SMSD accomplishments in the Special Education Program and made recommendations in each of the nine perspectives.

Three of the nine evaluation perspectives involved areas related to statewide assessment issues. Region 4 found that SMSD special education (SPED) students scored higher than the state average in reading in all grades except grades 5, 6, and 9 and in writing in grades 4 and 7 (grade 11 had no score due to fewer than five students testing). SMSD SPED students scored significantly lower than the state average in math in grades 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8.

EXHIBIT 1-6
SMSD SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM QUALITY POINT RECOMMENDATIONS CITED IN TEA DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS AND COMPLIANCE VISIT
MAY 2003

QUALITY POINT RECOMMENDATIONS		
AREA	*NUMBER*	*DESCRIPTION*
Parent Involvement and Support	QP1	Develop procedures to ensure that parent representatives on the campus planning and decision-making committees have means of communicating with all the parents they represent.
	QP2	Seek assistance from Region 4 to develop a parent survey.
	QP3	Seek assistance from Region 4 to provide support and training to meet the needs of parents.
Staff Development	QP4	Develop a staff development plan for annual training that provides current information in the areas of least restrictive environment, learning strategies, diverse cultural factors that impact student learning and the selection of modifications for the general education program.(Seek assistance of Region 4)
Program Evaluation	QP5	Develop a special education program needs assessment.
Allocation of Resources	QP6	Use Region 4 to assist in the development of a special education program needs assessment that includes an annual evaluation of personnel and resource needs.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, DEC Report, May 2003.

EXHIBIT 1-7
SMSD ACTIONS TO CORRECT NONCOMPLIANCE CITATIONS AND IMPROVE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM WITH REVIEW TEAM'S ASSESSMENT
2003–04

SMSD ACTIONS	*DATE*	*NONCOMPLIANCE CITATION INDICATOR AND/OR QUALITY POINT ADDRESSED*
Purchased a software program, Special Education Automation Software (SEAS), to manage and generate paperwork.	Spring 2003	S1
Director of Federal and State programs collaborated with several districts on best practices and carefully studied pertinent documents ("Region 18 Legal Framework and the District Effectiveness and Compliance Reference Guide for Special Education") and revised or adopted forms.	June 2003	All
Met with Region 4 consultant for special education - received suggestion that Region 4 perform a program evaluation.	June 2003	All
Special education staff added, created, and edited all ARD and transition paperwork prior to entering information into SEAS.	June 2003	S10
Created a new modifications form and amended the SMSD Accommodations and Modifications Guide to match the new form.	June 2003	S12; S21;S22
Began updating the operational guidelines for Special Education.	June 2003	All
Created a transition pamphlet to be distributed to parents of special education students grades 6 through grade 12.	June 2003	S15 and S16 QP 2
Created a transition informational booklet containing information on agencies and community resources for parents and students grades 6 through 12.	June 2003	S 12, S15, and S16 QP2
Edited and reprinted the parent "Autism Handbook." Handbook is distributed to parents during parent training sessions.	June 2003	QP2
Contracted with Region 4 to train three special education personnel to conduct in-district assistive technology evaluations.	June 2003	QP4
Checked every high school folder in files for accuracy in paperwork, services offered, timelines, and schedule of services.	June 2003	S10, S12, S14, S15, S16, S17, S18 QP2
Assigned each diagnostician and speech pathologist specific campuses to assist administrators with tracing timelines, paperwork, and services offered.	July 2003	S10, S12, S14, S17, S18
Obtained SEAS training for administrators, diagnosticians, and speech pathologist.	July 2003	S1 QP4
Federal and State programs director and assistant received broad training at Texas Council of Administrators Summer Conference and requested principals to schedule times for all stakeholders to be trained.	July 2003	All
Delivered Accommodations and Modification Guides to each campus with a signature sheet for each teacher to indicate receipt.	August 2003 and ongoing	S12, S21, S22
The director and administrative assistant check each student's schedule of services on a six-week basis through SEAS.	August 2003	S10, S12, S14, S17, S18
Worked with principals to ensure at least one parent of a student served in special education was included on each CIP committee and that other parents could receive a report following each meeting.	August 2003 – September 2003	QP2 and QP6

EXHIBIT 1-7 (CONTINUED)
SMSD ACTIONS TO CORRECT NONCOMPLIANCE CITATIONS AND IMPROVE SPECIAL
EDUCATION PROGRAM WITH REVIEW TEAM'S ASSESSMENT
2003–04

SMSD ACTIONS	DATE	NONCOMPLIANCE CITATION INDICATOR AND/OR QUALITY POINT ADDRESSED
Worked with principals to correct the CIPs associated with special education and to include resources needed for implantation	August 2003 – September 2003	QP2 and QP6
Scheduled special education classes in classrooms distributed throughout the buildings rather than having them clustered.	August 2003	S21
Expanded high school inclusion classes to include science and social studies.	August 2003	S18
Contracted with Region 4 for a complete Special Education Program Evaluation and technical assistance.	August 2003	All
Provided data collection packets to teachers of potential Extended Year students and requested they collect data throughout the year in anticipation of annual ARD.	September 2003	S16
Scheduled representatives of Texas Rehabilitation Commission to meet with all students collectively and with students and parents individually to inform them of services available for students after high school.	September 2003 through April 2004	S15 QP2
Updated Early Childhood list.	September 2003	S2 and QP2
Held eighteen hours of campus-based special education staff development on each campus for all staff–above and beyond district-based training.	September 2003	S29 QP4
Created and distributed an ARD plan to be used at each ARD to ensure that appropriate personnel were present and that all necessary areas of discussion were covered.	November 2003	S12, S14, and S17
Distributed Child Find posters to all school offices, pediatricians, and day-care centers; placed child-find notices on the local cable channel; and included child-find notices with parent training/presentation notices.	November 2003 through April 2004	S1 QP2
Held training/presentations for parents on topics requested during DEC visit.	November 2003 through April 2004	QP2
Completed Performance Analysis System/Data Analysis System (PAS/DAS) Ethnicity and LEP study.	December 2003	S3 QP6
Employed counselor to conduct transition interviews with students and parents prior to ARDs and encourage students to participate in conducting all or a portion of their ARD when appropriate.	January 2004	S15 QP2
Completed review of all audit files.	January 2004	S10, S12, S14, S15, S16, S17, S18 QP2
Trained eight district staff members to be trainers in the Texas Behavior Support Initiative that includes seven modules of training. The district trainers in turn trained SMSD staff–73 trained in Module 1-6 and 20 in Module 7.	January 2004	S12, S18, S29 QP4
Received Preschool Least Restrictive Environment Grant in the amount of $37,000 from Region 4 based upon an action plan for 2004–05 prepared by SMSD.	January 2004	S18 and S21
Developed and distributed Program Evaluation Surveys for parents, staff, and post-graduates	February 2004	All citations QP6
Presented report of Region 4 evaluation of SMSD Special Education Program to SMSD school board.	March 2004	All
Held Transition Fair for high school students including all special education students.	March 2004	S15

SOURCE: SMSD director of Federal and State Programs.

Recommendations in the area of assessment included involving SPED teachers in the item analysis of TAKS scores, reviewing curriculum for correlations with Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), training SPED teachers in academic data management, and training all personnel who serve on Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committees on the state decision-making model for assessment selection. In addition to involving and training personnel, Region 4 recommended monitoring the procedures used to determine that each student participates in the appropriate assessment [TAKS, state developed alternative assessment (SDAA), or local developed alternative assessment (LDAA)], monitoring for consistent procedures for all schools to determine TEKS level of instruction, monitoring pull-out programs for alignment of independent educational plan (IEP) goals with TEKS objectives, and reviewing test selection decisions made by ARD committees.

The next three areas involved teaching-learning environments and least restrictive learning placements. The Region 4 evaluation found that SMSD had no system-wide behavior intervention program. SMSD exceeded the state ratio for two consecutive years on the self-contained to least restrictive environment (SC/LRE) ratios, and SPED students were over represented in disciplinary settings. Recommendations in these areas focused on training in several areas: differentiated instruction, student centered creative methodologies, discipline, multiculturalism, and inclusion of SPED students and regular education students (role responsibilities, co-teaching, differentiated instruction and modifications). Additional recommendations in these areas included integrating self-determination instruction in the curriculum for SPED students, using a Character Education Program as an intervention tool, involving teachers and administrators in reviewing problems and developing solutions in the teaching-learning environment, and creating a task force to review SC/LRE placement issues with guidance for ARD committees.

The final three areas of investigation reviewed transition, parent involvement, and data management. Region 4 made the following recommendations to address the DEC visit citations involving transition: contact Mental Health and Mental Rehabilitation Agency regarding partnerships with SMSD for transition planning; train all secondary teachers and administrators on transition planning; train ARD committees to include transition plans in IEPs; train elementary teachers on the impact of state assessment decisions on future transition planning and student goals; train parents on the purpose of transition plans, parent roles and responsibilities, and student self-determination; and train students to lead all or part of

their ARD meeting. In the area of parent involvement, Region 4 recommended parent training and the establishment of on-going communication with parents. The report stated that SMSD's SPED department made great strides in improving data management subsequent to the DEC visit and recommended the district train SMSD staff on the SC/LRE data management process, SPED child restraint and data analysis system, implement a districtwide process to analyze SC/LRE progress, and calculate a maintenance of effort data report.

SMSD provided the recommended training during 2003–04 and is using the Region 4 evaluation report as a guide to improve the services offered and implement the most effective practices for promoting student achievement and performance.

TEACHERS FURTHERING THEIR EDUCATION

SMSD entered into an agreement with the University of Houston-Victoria School of Education (UHV) to offer a Masters program exclusively for SMSD professional staff that began in summer 2003. SMSD identified needs in the district and requested the program include courses with emphasis in gifted and talented areas, analysis of the implications for schooling in changing/shifting population demographics, bilingual/ESL elements, and best practices for teaching reading, writing, and vocabulary development at all grade levels.

Eligible courses include any course leading to a Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction with emphasis in Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Master Reading Teacher, or Generic Special Education. UHV offered the two following courses in summer 2003: *Principles of Curriculum and Instruction* and *Education in a Multicultural Society.*

SMSD, the individual employee, and UHV each pay one-third of the fees for any course taken to complete the Master of Education program that is specific to the identified needs of SMSD. The university teaches the classes at SMSD facilities or the Fort Bend campus of the university.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER PLACEMENT PROCESS

The SMSD substitute teacher placement service screens and trains qualified candidates. All candidates must complete a personal interview with one of the district's assistant principals. After receiving a positive referral from an assistant principal and completing all required paperwork, the candidate must then attend an orientation session prior to beginning substitute duties.

The substitute is provided with a substitute handbook, which is updated annually. The handbook includes

information substitutes can refer to daily including the following:

- Substitute responsibilities;

- Classroom instruction and management information;

- Pay schedules;

- Legal considerations;

- Dress code requirement;

- Reports to be completed;

- School maps and specific information; and

- District phone numbers.

Screening and training substitutes helps the instructional program for students to continue even though the regular teacher is absent from the classroom.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION GOOD BEHAVIOR PROGRAM

SMSD's alternative campus offers a good behavior program that enables students to buy time while also encouraging parental involvement and the development of behavior and skills necessary for productive adult living.

The Stafford Alternative Campus is located away from the main campus in a small store front location and has separate rooms for high school and middle school, housing a maximum of 20 students for both rooms. Students must provide their own transportation to the center, wear recommended uniform attire, and bring lunch. Probation officers visit their students on occasion. There are three full-time teacher equivalents on staff, and two counselors who alternate days. The Fort Bend Regional Council on Family and Community Development provides one of the counselors for two days of the week. At the initial entrance conference the parent or guardian signs a permission form for the student to participate in individual counseling sessions with each counselor that include effective communication skills, defense mechanisms, interpersonal relationships, decision-making skills, and other topics relating to appropriate behavioral skills and drug education. Participation is on a voluntary basis.

The counselors hold group sessions at least once per week to identify problem-solving techniques for the following: stress management, preventing conflicts and violence, making decisions and choices, drug abuse, anger management, and dealing with mood swings. Topics are selected to address the offenses that caused the students to be placed at the alternative center.

There have been a number of drug issues at the district. The recidivism rate is of concern to the campus

director because there are several repeat visitors to the center. The director of the center, previously the elementary school principal, knows the students and their families well, and states he has established a level of trust with both. Teachers at this location said that under the leadership of the director, they felt both safe in the environment and supported in their efforts. The canine drug detection service makes periodic visits to the center and to its parking area.

Principals call to alert the director that a student will arrive. Teachers of these students prepare daily work. Upon initial arrival, both student and parent meet with the director to understand and commit to the requirements. Students leave all books at the center.

The Adolescent Intensive Intervention Program, given by the Fort Bend Council on Family and Community Development, provides 24 hours of education over a six-week period. The program encourages the involvement of parents, school staff, county staff, and students in the process of developing behavior and skills necessary for productive adult living.

After 30 days at the campus, the student who has gone through this program with good behavior is entitled to buy back one day for each day thereafter. So a student who is targeted to stay at the center for 60 days could leave up to 15 days early.

According to one parent who attended sessions with his child, "By SMSD making available this intervention program, the students and families gain a skill set and tools to recognize behaviors and actions that may have an influence on poor choices and possibly circumvent future abuses of drugs and alcohol."

DETAILED FINDINGS

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE, PACING CALENDARS, AND BENCHMARK TESTS (REC. 1)

In 2003–04 the district did not have scope and sequence documents for subjects in all grade levels to provide a list of curriculum standards or learning objectives for each subject or pacing calendars so that teachers know when to teach specific objectives or do benchmark testing for the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test.

School districts create scope and sequence documents in order to provide a list of curriculum standards or learning objectives for each subject arranged by six or nine week grade reporting periods. Districts then prepare pacing calendars so that teachers know when to teach specific objectives. Teachers can create the lessons they plan to teach each week in the order or "sequence" that is spelled out in each document. Finally, districts develop and administer periodic tests,

or benchmark assessments, to determine student mastery of the objectives for each defined period.

As a result of not having these documents and instruments, the district cannot confirm that instruction is aligned to the state standards, and it is impossible for principals to monitor every teacher to determine if the TEKS are being taught consistently.

The newly created Office of Statewide Initiatives, developed through a collaborative effort with TEA and Region 13, published a document in August 2002 entitled *Superintendent's Brief with Planning Guides for Meeting the Higher Learning Standards.* This document outlines the new higher stakes challenges that superintendents and district administrators will face. The instructional facilitator's planning guide of this document offers a plan for preparing curriculum and staff for the higher learning standards that will be measured by the TAKS.

The Cycle to Raise Learning Expectations 2002 and Beyond recommends "insuring alignment of the district curriculum with the TEKS, monitoring the teaching of the TEKS and assessing each student's performance by each TAKS objective." The basic message communicated in this document is that superintendents should have some process in place whereby administrators can ensure that all teachers are teaching all of the TEKS written for the subject in which they are assigned. Without a scope and sequence, however, this is not possible.

The SMSD curriculum development process focused on K-12 English Language Arts and Reading curriculum. **Exhibit 1-8** is a replicated copy of a page from the K-5 English Language Arts and Reading document. The document has a consistent format for all grade levels. It is hard to understand, provides little

direction for instruction, and does not include scope and sequence or specificity of content. There are no timelines to establish pacing for the delivery of instruction.

Specific objectives by grade level are included in the document. However, objectives are not listed in a specific sequence, and teachers are not expected to deliver instruction according to any type of pacing calendar or timeline.

According to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction and information obtained in interviews with the principals, teachers have met for the purpose of developing math curriculum guides, but there has never been a completed document printed and distributed. There has been no alignment or scope and sequence work done in the areas of science and social studies.

Some school districts, like Rockwall ISD (RISD), use small teams of vertically aligned teachers (teachers assigned to consecutive grade levels, i.e. 3, 4, 5) to create complete sets of TEKS aligned scope and sequence documents for their districts. In Rockwall, teachers worked after school and in the summer for extra-duty pay to complete the sequences. RISD spread the work project over several years so that the burden of completing the project did not impact the district's budget during one school year. Using small groups of vertically aligned teachers ensures that objectives are not re-taught year after year and that students are receiving instruction in the objectives in sequences that are meaningful. For example, to complete a third grade science scope and sequence, a group of three to five teachers from different elementary schools across the district assigned to grades 2 through 4 would work on the scope and sequence. Once the scope and sequence documents were completed, the district gave each

EXHIBIT 1-8
SMSD FRAMEWORK FOR K-5 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND READING CURRICULUM
TOPIC SCOPE AND SEQUENCE CURRICULUM DOCUMENT

GRADE LEVEL					
K	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Task Definition	Task Definition	Task Definition	Task Definition	Task Definition	Task Definition
Information Seeking Strategies	Information Seeking Strategies	Information Seeking Strategies	Information Seeking Strategies	Information Seeking Strategies	Information Seeking Strategies
Location and Access	Location and Access	Location and Access	Location and Access	Location and Access	Location and Access
Use of Information	Use of Information	Use of Information	Use of Information	Use of Information	Use of Information
Synthesis	Synthesis	Synthesis	Synthesis	Synthesis	Synthesis
Evaluation	Evaluation	Evaluation	Evaluation	Evaluation	Evaluation

SOURCE: 1999 SMSD Framework for K-5 English Language Arts and Reading Curriculum.

teacher in the district the document for their grade level, the one above that grade level, and the one below that grade level. Work continues to include suggestions for classroom activities and materials to use with those activities. There are also recommended time frames or pacing calendars to establish when to teach the activities during specified grade-reporting periods. RISD has experienced success in ensuring that all students receive instruction in a vertically aligned curriculum.

Brazosport ISD devised an instructional model referred to as the *PDCA Instructional Cycle (Plan, Do, Check, Act)*. This model calls for the development of a pacing calendar based on the scope and sequence of the district curriculum. Teachers plan for the delivery of instruction by grade level or subject area teams. The curriculum is then taught. Benchmark assessments or tests (mini-assessments) are given to students to determine objective mastery. Students who have not mastered the content receive additional instruction.

For 2004–05, SMSD purchased an online instructional planning tool, CLEAR (Clarifying Learning to Enhance Achievement Results), which clarifies what is to be taught and assessed and encompasses state curriculum requirements. The district received training during summer 2004 and has begun to monitor the implementation of this curriculum through informal classroom observations and walk-throughs.

SMSD should implement scope and sequence documents, pacing calendars, and benchmark assessments or tests for all courses and subject areas. The district should use the CLEAR instructional software to complete scope and sequence documents with pacing calendars which will allow the district to establish clear consistent guidelines for instructional delivery. The administration of benchmark assessments or tests will allow confirmation of instructional alignment to the TEKS objectives and enable principals to monitor the curriculum to determine if TEKS are being consistently taught.

STRUCTURED, FOCUSED PROCESS TO IMPROVE STUDENT PERFORMANCE (REC. 2)

SMSD does not have a focused instructional strategy to support consistent improvement in student performance. Without such a focused strategy, student performance will be inconsistent.

Based upon the TAKS results for SMSD in 2002-03 and 2003-04, the review team noted the following inconsistent patterns of student performance at each tested grade level.

- At the third grade level, SMSD student performance increased from 2002-03 to 2003-04 in reading but declined in math. While reading scores

were above the state average, math scores were below state average. Compared to the peer districts, reading and math scores were both the lowest in 2003-04.

- At the fourth grade level, SMSD student performance increased in 2003-04 over 2002-03 in reading and writing but declined in math. Scores were above the state average in reading and writing but below state average in math. Compared to its peers, SMSD student performance was the highest in writing and second lowest in math and reading.

- At the fifth grade level, SMSD student performance declined from 2002-03 to 2003-04 in all three subjects tested: reading, math, and science. Scores in 2003-04 were below the state average in all three areas and were the lowest in comparison to the peer districts in all three areas.

- At the sixth grade level, SMSD student performance declined from 2002-03 to 2003-04 in both subjects tested (reading and math), was below the state average in both subjects, and was the lowest among the peer districts in both subjects.

- At the seventh grade level, SMSD student performance declined from 2002-03 to 2003-04 in all three subjects tested (reading, math, and writing), was below the state average in all three subjects, and was the lowest among the peer districts in all three subjects.

- At the eighth grade level, SMSD student performance declined from 2002-03 to 2003-04 in all three subjects tested (reading, math, and social studies), was below the state average in all three subjects, and was the lowest among the peer districts in all three subjects.

- At the ninth grade level, SMSD student performance declined from 2002-03 to 2003-04 in both subjects tested (reading and math), was at the state average in both subjects, but was the lowest among the peer districts in both subjects.

- At the tenth grade level, in the four subjects tested (language arts, math, social studies, and science), SMSD student performance declined from 2002-03 to 2003-04 in all subjects tested but was above the state average in all four subjects, and among the peer districts, was either the lowest (science), second lowest (social studies and math), or in the middle (language arts).

- At the eleventh grade level, in the four subjects tested (language arts, math, social studies, and science), SMSD student performance increased from 2002-03 to 2003-04 in all subjects tested but was below the state average in all four subjects, and among the peer districts, was either the lowest

(math, social studies, and science) or second lowest (language arts).

Exhibits 1-9 through **1-26** provide the detailed student performance at each level by district, the state, and student subgroup.

Exhibit 1-9 shows the reading and math scores for SMSD students in grade 3 compared to the state and peer districts. SMSD's 2004 administration of the grade 3 reading TAKS assessment produced scores that were above the state average in reading but 10 percentage points below the state in math. Both reading and math scores were lower than all of the peer districts for 2003-04.

Exhibit 1-10 shows that SMSD's third grade reading scores remained constant or improved in all categories, with a 22 percentage point increase in special education

performance. In grade 3 math, the special education performance increased by approximately 35 points. Anglo, Hispanic, and Asian/Pacific Islander performance decreased in math, while the other subgroups showed improvement.

Exhibit 1-11 shows grade 4 reading, math, and writing scores as compared to the state and peer districts. Reading and writing scores increased several percentage points from the previous year's administration and were above the state average in 2003–04. Math scores declined and were six points below the state average. As compared to peer districts, math scores were lower than all but Fredericksburg. Writing scores were higher than all peer districts. Reading scores were in the mid range when compared to peer districts.

Exhibit 1-12 shows grade 4 reading, math, and writing scores by subgroup for SMSD students. Reading scores

EXHIBIT 1-9
TAKS FOR 3RD GRADE READING AND MATH
PERCENTAGE MEETING STANDARD-ENGLISH VERSION SMSD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE
2002–03 AND 2003–04

	READING		MATH	
ENTITY	**2002–03**	**2003–04**	**2002–03**	**2003–04**
SMSD	90.1%	94.0%	81.4%	80.0%
Bandera	88.1%	97.0%	87.5%	94.0%
Decatur	93.3%	98.0%	86.3%	94.0%
Fredericksburg	89.7%	95.0%	93.1%	85.0%
Sweeny	89.0%	97.0%	97.8%	96.0%
State	89.6%	91.0%	90.8%	90.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) 2002–03 and respective district personnel 2003–04.

EXHIBIT 1-10
TAKS FOR 3RD GRADE READING AND MATH
PERCENTAGE MEETING STANDARD-ENGLISH VERSION SMSD BY ETHNICITY AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED
2002–03 AND 2003–04

	READING		MATH	
CATEGORY	**2002–03**	**2003–04**	**2002–03**	**2003–04**
Anglo	92.1%	100.0%	90.0%	85.0%
African American	91.8%	94.0%	71.4%	78.0%
Hispanic	83.3%	89.0%	76.1%	75.0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	97.4%	97.0%	94.7%	89.0%
Economically disadvantaged	81.4%	91.0%	70.0%	79.0%
Special education	66.7%	89.0%	44.4%	80.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03 and respective district personnel 2003–04.

EXHIBIT 1-11
TAKS FOR 4TH GRADE READING, MATH, AND WRITING
PERCENTAGE MEETING STANDARD-ENGLISH VERSION SMSD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE
2002–03 AND 2003–04

	READING		MATH		WRITING	
ENTITY	**2002–03**	**2003–04**	**2002–03**	**2003–04**	**2002–03**	**2003–04**
SMSD	85.9%	88.0%	90.3%	80.0%	87.6%	93.0%
Bandera	87.1%	87.0%	84.8%	90.0%	91.4%	88.0%
Decatur	92.4%	90.0%	95.0%	86.0%	93.1%	91.0%
Fredericksburg	91.3%	89.0%	90.6%	79.0%	95.3%	92.0%
Sweeny	89.8%	92.0%	93.3%	93.0%	83.4%	89.0%
State	85.9%	85.0%	88.0%	86.0%	86.8%	90.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03 and respective district personnel 2003–04.

improved for all groups except African American and special education. Math scores dropped for every group, with the most significant drop of 54 percentage points for special education students. Writing scores improved for Anglo, Hispanic, and economically disadvantaged students.

Exhibit 1-13 shows how SMSD students performed on the grade 5 TAKS for reading, math, and science in comparison to the peer districts and the state. Compared to the state, SMSD scores were lower in all three areas than the state average, with science scores 14 points below the state.

Exhibit 1-14 shows grade 5 scores in reading, math, and science by subgroups. Anglo and special education showed an increase in performance in reading and math for 2003–04, while the performance of all other

groups declined. Economically disadvantaged students showed a decrease of approximately 24 points in reading and a decrease of approximately 20 points in math. Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, and economically disadvantaged scores in science dropped approximately 30 points. Special education and African American student scores dropped significantly in science also.

Exhibit 1-15 shows how SMSD students performed on the grade 6 TAKS for reading and math in comparison to the peer districts and the state. In 2003–04, reading scores were below the state average and math scores were 12 points below the state average.

Exhibit 1-16 shows how SMSD students performed in grade 6 reading and math. Scores in reading declined for every group, with the most significant drop in

EXHIBIT 1-12
TAKS FOR 4TH GRADE READING, MATH, AND WRITING
PERCENTAGE MEETING STANDARD-ENGLISH VERSION SMSD BY ETHNICITY AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED
2002–03 AND 2003–04

	READING		MATH		WRITING	
CATEGORY	**2002–03**	**2003–04**	**2002–03**	**2003–04**	**2002–03**	**2003–04**
Anglo	90.0%	97.0%	95.0%	84.0%	86.8%	91.0%
African American	90.9%	80.0%	92.7%	73.0%	96.5%	94.0%
Hispanic	76.9%	85.0%	80.6%	76.0%	75.4%	94.0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	88.9%	95.0%	97.8%	92.0%	93.3%	93.0%
Economically disadvantaged	78.9%	81.0%	82.1%	69.0%	79.5%	92.0%
Special education	87.5%	75.0%	100.0%	46.0%	85.7%	83.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03 and respective district personnel 2003–04.

EXHIBIT 1-13
TAKS FOR 5TH GRADE READING, MATH, AND SCIENCE
PERCENTAGE MEETING STANDARD-ENGLISH VERSION SMSD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE
2002–03 AND 2003–04

	READING		MATH		SCIENCE	
ENTITY	**2002–03**	**2003–04**	**2002–03**	**2003–04**	**2002–03**	**2003–04**
SMSD	**84.3%**	**72.0%**	**80.9%**	**74.0%**	**75.0%**	**55.0%**
Bandera	74.5%	90.0%	80.3%	85.0%	70.4%	82.0%
Decatur	81.0%	84.0%	87.9%	87.0%	69.1%	81.0%
Fredericksburg	84.4%	86.0%	90.4%	81.0%	81.0%	76.0%
Sweeny	84.1%	84.0%	93.6%	81.0%	84.2%	65.0%
State	**80.0%**	**79.0%**	**86.3%**	**82.0%**	**74.5%**	**69.0%**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03 and respective district personnel 2003–04.

EXHIBIT 1-14
TAKS FOR 5TH GRADE READING, MATH, AND SCIENCE
PERCENTAGE MEETING STANDARD-ENGLISH VERSION SMSD BY ETHNICITY AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED
2002–03 AND 2003–04

	READING		MATH		SCIENCE	
CATEGORY	**2002–03**	**2003–04**	**2002–03**	**2003–04**	**2002–03**	**2003–04**
Anglo	88.0%	92.0%	82.1%	84.0%	70.4%	74.0%
African American	84.1%	72.0%	77.3%	72.0%	70.5%	60.0%
Hispanic	78.1%	57.0%	74.2%	61.0%	68.2%	38.0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	92.1%	81.0%	94.9%	88.0%	94.7%	65.0%
Economically disadvantaged	86.2%	62.0%	83.3%	63.0%	67.8%	40.0%
Special education	55.6%	71.0%	46.7%	70.0%	53.8%	37.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03 and respective district personnel 2003–04.

EXHIBIT 1-15
TAKS FOR 6TH GRADE READING AND MATH
PERCENTAGE MEETING STANDARD-ENGLISH VERSION SMSD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE
2002–2003 AND 2003–04

ENTITY	READING		MATH	
	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04
SMSD	89.4%	82.0%	82.9%	65.0%
Bandera	90.8%	91.0%	89.8%	82.0%
Decatur	90.2%	91.0%	83.0%	80.0%
Fredericksburg	90.2%	87.0%	82.1%	81.0%
Sweeny	94.4%	93.0%	89.6%	82.0%
State	86.2%	86.0%	79.3%	77.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03 and respective district personnel 2003–04.

EXHIBIT 1-16
TAKS FOR 6TH GRADE READING AND MATH
PERCENTAGE MEETING STANDARD-ENGLISH VERSION SMSD BY ETHNICITY AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED
2002–03 AND 2003–04

CATEGORY	READING		MATH	
	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04
Anglo	94.1%	93.0%	84.8%	68.0%
African American	90.6%	82.0%	75.0%	59.0%
Hispanic	80.7%	71.0%	81.4%	57.0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	95.2%	92.0%	95.2%	87.0%
Economically disadvantaged	81.3%	80.0%	77.3%	63.0%
Special education	71.4%	43.0%	71.4%	33.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03 and respective district personnel 2003–04.

scores being for special education students, who performed approximately 28 points lower than in 2002–03. Math scores also declined for all groups, with the range of decline being from eight points for Asian/Pacific Islander scores to 38 points for special education scores.

Exhibit 1-17 shows how SMSD students performed on the grade 7 TAKS for reading, math, and writing in comparison to the peer districts and the state. Scores in all three areas in 2003–04 are below the state average.

Exhibit 1-18 shows how SMSD students performed in grade 7 reading, math, and writing. The only significant improvement in scores from 2002–03 was an approximate four-percentage point increase in special education math and a 10 percentage gain in special education writing. Other scores mostly declined from 2002–03 performance levels, with the most significant drop of 55 points in the reading scores of special education students.

Exhibit 1-19 shows how SMSD students performed on the grade 8 TAKS for reading, math, and social studies in comparison to the peer districts and the state. Scores in all three areas for 2003–04 are below the state average.

Exhibit 1-20 shows how SMSD students performed in grade 8 reading, math, and social studies. Anglo and Asian/Pacific Islander scores remained the same in social studies. Other scores in reading, math, and social studies generally dropped in 2003–04, with the most

significant decrease in performance being in Anglo math.

Exhibit 1-21 shows how SMSD students performed on the grade 9 TAKS for reading and math in comparison to the peer districts and the state. SMSD performance was at the state average in 2003–04.

Exhibit 1-22 shows how SMSD students performed in grade 9 reading and math. Performance declined for every group in both reading and math, with the exception of a 9-point increase in reading performance for Asian/Pacific Islander students.

Exhibit 1-23 shows how SMSD students performed on the grade 10 TAKS for language arts, math, social studies, and science in comparison to the peer districts and the state. SMSD performance was slightly above the state average in all four areas that were tested. As compared to peer districts in 2003–04, SMSD scored above Decatur and Fredericksburg in language arts, above Fredericksburg in math, above Decatur in social studies, and lower than Bandera, Fredericksburg, and Sweeny in science.

Exhibit 1-24 shows how SMSD students performed in grade 10 language arts, math, social studies, and science. Language arts scores improved for Asian/Pacific Islander, African American, and economically disadvantaged student groups.

EXHIBIT 1-17
TAKS FOR 7TH GRADE READING, MATH, AND WRITING
PERCENTAGE MEETING STANDARD-ENGLISH VERSION SMSD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE
2002–03 AND 2003–04

ENTITY	READING		MATH		WRITING	
	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04
SMSD	89.1%	77.0%	68.8%	65.0%	89.3%	87.0%
Bandera	93.0%	88.0%	75.2%	82.0%	89.7%	92.0%
Decatur	88.9%	79.0%	74.2%	71.0%	85.6%	91.0%
Fredericksburg	95.5%	91.0%	74.3%	71.0%	93.7%	95.0%
Sweeny	89.3%	89.0%	79.4%	84.0%	91.8%	98.0%
State	88.0%	83.0%	73.4%	70.0%	85.8%	91.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03 and respective district personnel 2003–04.

EXHIBIT 1-18
TAKS FOR 7TH GRADE READING, MATH, AND WRITING
PERCENTAGE MEETING STANDARD-ENGLISH VERSION SMSD BY ETHNICITY AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED
2002–03 AND 2003–04

CATEGORY	READING		MATH		WRITING	
	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04
Anglo	93.3%	70.0%	74.2%	56.0%	96.7%	79.0%
African American	91.2%	70.0%	58.6%	56.0%	86.0%	87.0%
Hispanic	81.1%	70.0%	59.6%	56.0%	82.1%	79.0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	92.9%	91.0%	90.5%	86.0%	97.7%	98.0%
Economically disadvantaged	78.7%	66.0%	67.3%	57.0%	84.0%	82.0%
Special education	88.9%	33.0%	35.7%	40.0%	72.7%	83.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03 and respective district personnel 2003–04.

EXHIBIT 1-19
TAKS FOR 8TH GRADE READING, MATH, AND SOCIAL STUDIES
PERCENTAGE MEETING STANDARD-ENGLISH VERSION SMSD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE
2002–03 AND 2003–04

ENTITY	READING		MATH		SOCIAL STUDIES	
	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04
SMSD	94.4%	87.0%	77.2%	52.0%	95.6%	83.0%
Bandera	90.9%	98.0%	77.8%	73.0%	87.5%	93.0%
Decatur	89.2%	91.0%	82.1%	74.0%	94.7%	91.0%
Fredericksburg	90.5%	93.0%	61.3%	60.0%	91.0%	84.0%
Sweeny	98.0%	94.0%	85.6%	82.0%	98.0%	95.0%
State	88.7%	89.0%	73.2%	66.0%	93.1%	88.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03 and respective district personnel 2003–04.

EXHIBIT 1-20
TAKS FOR 8TH GRADE READING, MATH, AND SOCIAL STUDIES
PERCENTAGE MEETING STANDARD-ENGLISH VERSION SMSD BY ETHNICITY AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED
2002–03 AND 2003–04

CATEGORY	READING		MATH		SOCIAL STUDIES	
	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04
Anglo	100.0%	91.0%	86.1%	40.0%	94.1%	94.0%
African American	91.5%	91.0%	66.7%	37.0%	97.15	74.0%
Hispanic	92.6%	75.0%	69.1%	40.0%	90.9%	72.0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	95.5%	100.0%	90.9%	87.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Economically disadvantaged	86.5%	78.0%	65.4%	43%	92.2%	76.0%
Special education	*	63.0%	33.3%	31.0%	*	50.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03 and respective district personnel 2003–04.
*Less than one percent.

EXHIBIT 1-21
TAKS FOR 9TH GRADE READING AND MATH PERCENTAGE MEETING STANDARD-ENGLISH VERSION SMSD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE
2002–03 AND 2003–04

ENTITY	READING		MATH	
	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04
SMSD	90.1%	84.0%	76.1%	59.0%
Bandera	86.5%	92.0%	82.5%	78.0%
Decatur	82.2%	85.0%	65.8%	75.0%
Fredericksburg	87.7%	89.0%	67.9%	68.0%
Sweeny	86.9%	93.0%	78.7%	75.0%
State	82.4%	84.0%	65.1%	59.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03 and respective district personnel 2003–04.

EXHIBIT 1-22
TAKS FOR 9TH GRADE READING AND MATH PERCENTAGE MEETING STANDARD-ENGLISH VERSION SMSD BY ETHNICITY AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED SMSD
2002–03 AND 2003–04

CATEGORY	READING		MATH	
	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04
Anglo	96.0%	89.0%	80.0%	65.0%
African American	89.7%	79.0%	67.8%	51.0%
Hispanic	88.6%	77.0%	75.5%	49.0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	88.9%	98.0%	85.1%	81.0%
Economically disadvantaged	84.3%	77.0%	57.4%	48.0%
Special education	*	*	77.8%	*

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03 and respective district personnel 2003–04.
*Less than one percent.

EXHIBIT 1-23
TAKS FOR 10TH GRADE LANGUAGE ARTS, MATH, SOCIAL STUDIES, SCIENCE PERCENTAGE MEETING STANDARD-ENGLISH VERSION SMSD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE
2002–03 AND 2003–04

ENTITY	LANGUAGE ARTS		MATH		SOCIAL STUDIES		SCIENCE	
	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04
SMSD	79.3%	78.0%	80.0%	69.0%	91.5%	89.0%	73.4%	65.0%
Bandera	83.1%	83.0%	94.5%	82.0%	84.4%	91.0%	93.1%	83.0%
Decatur	66.5%	72.0%	76.5%	71.0%	70.6%	88.0%	84.0%	65.0%
Fredericksburg	79.7%	77.0%	75.8%	65.0%	76.7%	89.0%	91.8%	74.0%
Sweeny	84.8%	91.0%	85.7%	79.0%	81.2%	93.0%	94.7%	75.0%
State	72.8%	75.0%	74.2%	63.0%	86.8%	87.0%	69.6%	64.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03 and respective district personnel 2003–04.

EXHIBIT 1-24
TAKS FOR 10TH GRADE LANGUAGE ARTS, MATH, SOCIAL STUDIES, SCIENCE PERCENTAGE MEETING STANDARD-ENGLISH VERSION SMSD BY ETHNICITY AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED
2002–03 AND 2003–04

CATEGORY	LANGUAGE ARTS		MATH		SOCIAL STUDIES		SCIENCE	
	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04
Anglo	92.0%	87.0%	85.2%	71.0%	96.3%	79.0%	88.9%	80.0%
African American	74.5%	77.0%	76.5%	58.0%	92.2%	92.0%	74.5%	55.0%
Hispanic	75.5%	66.0%	67.3%	60.0%	84.0%	86.0%	60.0%	55.0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	81.8%	84.0%	93.8%	89.0%	95.9%	93.0%	77.6%	84.0%
Economically disadvantaged	61.4%	68.0%	77.1%	56.0%	81.3%	89.0%	52.1%	46.0%
Special education	*	11.0%	55.6%	17.0%	77.8%	63.0%	33.3%	29.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03 and respective district personnel 2003–04.
*Less than one percent.

Math scores declined for all groups, while only Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students showed improvement in social studies and Asian/Pacific Islander students improved in science.

Exhibit 1-25 shows how SMSD students performed on the grade 11 TAKS for language arts, math, social studies, and science in comparison to the peer districts and the state. For 2003–04, all scores were below the state average, and SMSD scored lower than all peer districts in math, social studies, and science.

Exhibit 1-26 shows how SMSD students performed in grade 11 language arts, math, social studies, and science. Language arts scores improved for all groups with the exception of Asian/Pacific Islander and economically disadvantaged. Math and social studies scores improved for all groups but Asian/Pacific Islander and special education. Science scores dropped slightly for Asian/Pacific Islander and eight points for special education.

The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction told the review team that several strategies designed to increase student performance were implemented during the 2003–04 school year to improve performance over 2002–03:

▪ Third grade students were provided with enrichment in reading through a summer program, and students participated in an in-school tutorial.

▪ Fourth grade students were given examples of a correctly written paper and taught to critique papers and conduct peer editing. To increase reading scores, a grade 4 game was implemented which allowed students to develop questions and provide answers. The purpose of this game was to increase vocabulary and reinforce knowledge of figurative language.

▪ Grade 5 students were provided time in a science lab staffed by a certified teacher to increase their performance. The lab provided students with the opportunity to participate in collaborative and cooperative groups with hands-on experiments. Students also conducted experiments in an outdoor learning environment. In addition, a summer enrichment program was held for the 55 fifth graders who did not meet standards on 2004 TAKS.

▪ Sixth and seventh grade students participated in an Academic Assistance computer lab in order to enhance performance in reading. This lab was equipped with computers that provide an opportunity to increase vocabulary and comprehension. Opportunities for academic enrichment were also provided.

▪ During May 2004, representatives from SMSD attended a presentation of the Houston ISD's curriculum. This curriculum will be implemented

EXHIBIT 1-25
TAKS FOR 11TH GRADE LANGUAGE ARTS, MATH, SOCIAL STUDIES, AND SCIENCE PERCENTAGE MEETING STANDARD-ENGLISH VERSION SMSD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE
2002–03 AND 2003–04

	LANGUAGE ARTS		MATH		SOCIAL STUDIES		SCIENCE	
ENTITY	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04
SMSD	82.3%	84.0%	75.7%	80.0%	94.1%	95.0%	70.3%	81.0%
Bandera	89.5%	89.0%	87.6%	89.0%	87.2%	96.0%	96.2%	93.0%
Decatur	54.3%	92.0%	56.5%	90.0%	57.4%	97.0%	83.4%	83.0%
Fredericksburg	61.2%	81.0%	60.9%	84.0%	66.3%	96.0%	87.5%	86.0%
Sweeny	87.0%	99.0%	79.0%	96.0%	70.3%	100.0%	96.2%	97.0%
State	69.8%	87.0%	68.5%	85.0%	90.2%	97.0%	67.9%	85.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03 and respective district personnel 2003–04.

EXHIBIT 1-26
TAKS FOR 11TH GRADE LANGUAGE ARTS, MATH, SOCIAL STUDIES, AND SCIENCE PERCENTAGE MEETING STANDARD-ENGLISH VERSION SMSD BY ETHNICITY AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED
2002–03 AND 2003–04

	LANGUAGE ARTS		MATH		SOCIAL STUDIES		SCIENCE	
CATEGORY	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04
Anglo	84.4%	89.0%	78.4%	92.0%	94.3%	100.0%	70.3%	81.0%
African American	82.6%	86.0%	76.1%	80.0%	97.7%	98.0%	66.0%	88.0%
Hispanic	73.5%	83.0%	60.0%	62.0%	85.4%	88.0%	61.0%	69.0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	89.3%	81.0%	92.9%	90.0%	100.0%	95.0%	89.7%	88.0%
Economically disadvantaged	81.5%	78.0%	64.5%	72.0%	84.4%	89.0%	54.5%	70.0%
Special education	*	13.0%	45.5%	38.0%	90.0%	67.0%	30.0%	22.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03 and respective district personnel 2003–04.
*Less than one percent.

in fall 2004.

- Personal Graduation Plans were developed for students beginning in February 2004.

No information was provided by SMSD as to what positions in the district had responsibilities for ensuring the efforts were conducted, how these efforts were monitored, and what information was generated to monitor the progress of students.

The Curriculum and Instruction Department of Galveston ISD developed a multi-step process (**Exhibit 1-27**) to achieve consistent application of its curriculum across all schools and grade levels and monitor the application.

For each step in the process, beginning with test score results and continuing through the ongoing monitoring of the curriculum application process, discrete responsibilities are described by whom is responsible/accountable, either the central office instructional staff or campus staff. A desired outcome

for each step is described so that progress can be measured.

The district should implement a structured, focused process to improve student performance that is based on test score analysis to determine strengths and weaknesses of student performance, supported by instruction based on aligned curriculum, with specific responsibilities and monitoring. The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction should provide the leadership for this process. Central office program staff and principals should have assigned responsibilities and periodic progress reports should be reviewed by the assistant superintendent and superintendent.

USE OF COUNSELOR TIME (REC. 3)

SMSD does not have district-adopted guidelines in place to track the amount of time that counselors are actually performing appropriate counseling duties. As a result of not having such guidelines in place, the district cannot ensure parents that guidance counselors are

EXHIBIT 1-27
GALVESTON ISD CURRICULUM MONITORING PROCESS

STRATEGY	CENTRAL OFFICE ACCOUNTABLE FOR:	PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABLE FOR:	SHARED RESPONSIBILITY	DESIRED OUTCOME
Test scores	Provide disaggregated test data to campuses	Review district and campus data, provide reports to campus departments and teachers, and review objectives ranking from weakest to strongest	Use test data in formulating district and campus plans, communicate these plans to parents and students, and align curriculum vertically and horizontally	Data drives decisions and district and campus plans focus on each sub-group with specific objectives
Instructional timeline	Develop district benchmark timelines, which correspond to district curriculum	Develop grade-level calendars in reading, math, and writing at the beginning of each grading period which identify weak/strong objectives	Provide staff development and necessary support materials	Instruction aligned with district assessment, benchmark objectives calendars, and school wide low-to high objectives
Instructional focus	Develop district plan that reflects goals for instructional effectiveness	Teachers document test objective and target and collaborative grade level planning occurs	Monitor implementation of campus instructional focus	Daily focus on TEKS integrated in all content areas
Assessment	Prepare and disseminate benchmark tests and provide test results to campuses	Administer benchmark tests, use tests for planning for instruction, and conduct conferences with students based upon previous year results	Review benchmark results with teachers	Benchmark results discussed and plans and strategies revisited for effectiveness
Tutorials for non-mastery students and enrichment for mastery students	Allocate funds for tutorials	Design tutorials for non-mastery students, design enrichment for master students, and communicate plan to parents	Monitor implementation of tutorials and enrichment	Increase passing rate of non-mastery students and expand curriculum for mastery students
Maintenance and reteaching	Assist with gathering instructional resources	Document maintenance and reteaching lessons in lesson plans	Monitor implementation of maintenance and teaching instruction and activities	Improved performance on specific objectives
Monitoring	Visit classrooms and conduct benchmark conferences with principals	Visit classrooms and conduct focused meeting with teachers, teams, and departments	Monitor the implementation of the campus initiative	Discuss problems and successes in administrative workshops

SOURCE: Galveston ISD TSPR report.

available to students in need of counseling for any specific percentage of time.

A significant portion of counselor time is devoted to administrative tasks. Counselors acknowledged that they did not expect to be relieved entirely of administrative tasks, since all school staff must be responsible for such duties. Most claimed, however, that excessive administrative duties hamper their effectiveness and availability to students.

One particular area of concern noted by participants in a focus group in SMSD was the counselors' role in administering state-required tests. Many counselors believe that coordinating the tests takes too much time away from their counseling activities, and that some of these duties should be placed with other staff. One counselor participating in the focus group said that opportunities to actually work in the classrooms with students to implement a guidance curriculum was difficult because of the focus on preparing students for the TAKS.

Counselors that participated in a focus group reported that they review report cards and stuff, fold, and mail them. They also indicated that their duties included the construction of schedules at the secondary level and collaboration with teachers and administrators regarding class assignment at the elementary level. The middle school counselors organize an annual Career Fair, and high school counselors are responsible for a Transition Fair that presents post-secondary and college opportunities to all students. Additional time was consumed by tasks related to test administration, letters of recommendation for students, public relation activities, supervision duties, and clerical tasks. One counselor reported that she sometimes was left in charge of the building when the principal had to be out.

In 1998, TEA published "A Model Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program for Texas Public Schools." The guide addresses achieving program balance by allocating resources to the following four components of developmental guidance and counseling.

1. Guidance Curriculum - planned lessons covering seven areas including self-confidence development, motivation to achieve, decision-making and problem-solving skills, and responsible behavior. School counselors can teach all or some of the curriculum through direct instruction or consult with teachers who integrate the curriculum into the classroom.

2. Responsive Services - interventions on behalf of students whose immediate personal concerns or problems put their continued personal-social, career, and/or educational development at risk. Counselors can meet with individuals or groups of students as indicated in the particular setting.

3. Individual Planning - guidance for students as they plan, monitor, and manage their own educational, career, and personal-social development. Counselors can perform activities such as conducting group guidance sessions, interpreting standardized test results, and consulting with individual students and their parents regarding colleges and financial aid.

4. System Support - services and management activities that indirectly benefit students. Counselors can consult with teachers, participate in developing campus-based school improvement plans, and support parent and community relations efforts.

The guide recommends that school counselors divide their time between these four components depending on the developmental and special needs of the students served. Each district or school will determine the amount of counselor time devoted to each component. Allocations will vary, but **Exhibit 1-28** shows TEA's suggested allocations.

In addition, the counselor shall do the following:

1. Participate in the planning, implementing, and evaluating a comprehensive developmental guidance program to serve all students and address the special needs of students falling into the following categories:

   ▪ At risk of dropping out of school or becoming substance abusers,

   ▪ Participate in gang activity or attempt to commit suicide;

EXHIBIT 1-28
TEA'S RECOMMENDED PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF COUNSELOR SERVICES BY LEVEL

SERVICE TYPE	ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	MIDDLE SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL
Guidance Curriculum	35–45%	35–40%	15–25%
Responsive Services	30–40%	30–40%	25–35%
Individual Planning	5–10%	15–25%	25–35%
System Support	10–15%	10–15%	15–20%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, A Model Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program for Texas Public Schools, 1998.

- ▪ Need modified instructional strategies; and

- ▪ Gifted and talented, with emphasis on identifying and serving gifted and talented students who are economically disadvantaged.

2. Consult with a student's parent or guardian and make referrals, as appropriate, in consultation with the student's parent or guardian;

3. Consult with school staff, parents, and other community members to help them increase the effectiveness of student education and promote student success;

4. Coordinate people and resources in the school, home, and community;

5. Interpret standardized test results and other assessment data, with the assistance of school staff, that help a student make educational and career plans; and

6. Deliver classroom guidance activities or serve as a consultant to teachers conducting lessons based on the school's guidance curriculum.

The Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts determined student-counselor ratios on Texas elementary, middle, and high school campuses; conducted a statewide survey of how school counselors spend their time; and developed recommendations for improvements. More than 4,000 counselors in the state responded to a survey on counseling time in January 2002. The survey results indicated that most school counselors spend only about 60 percent of their time on counseling activities.

The Harris County Department of Education (HCDE) administered a two week daily counseling log from September 29 through October 10, 2003. All counselors were asked to maintain a log of their activities, recorded at 15-minute intervals. Counselors identified whether their duties were in the area of the guidance curriculum response services, individual planning, system support, or a non-guidance function. Follow-up interviews were conducted by HCDE to confirm findings. **Exhibit 1-29** shows how counselor time was spent during that time period. According to Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts guidelines, system support was the only area where counselors spent the recommended amount of time. The guidelines recommended that no time be spent in non-guidance activities, but that is the area where SMSD counselors spent the most time.

The guide, *A Model Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program for Texas Public Schools: A Guide for Program Development Pre-K - 12th Grade* (Third Edition), is available from TEA and contains information on recommended guidelines for discharging counselor duties by type of counseling activity, depending on grade level. The state has not, however, established guidelines determining the amount of non-guidance activities appropriate for counselors.

SMSD should adopt district guidelines on the appropriate use of counselor time. The district should determine how to use their counselors and ensure that counselors are using the majority of their time helping students in need of counseling. These local guidelines also should outline district counselors' roles in the administration of state testing, as this was shown to be a significant area of concern.

OTHER BILINGUAL/ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE MODELS (REC. 4)

SMSD does not have a model of instruction for bilingual/English as a Second Language (ESL) that describes the amount of time that instruction should be in Spanish and in English, that provides curriculum documents with scope and sequence of objectives and pacing timelines, or that has sufficient supplemental bilingual instructional materials. As a result, SMSD's Limited English proficient (LEP) student performance on TAKS is below the state average of LEP students in many grade levels.

Texas administered the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) for the first time in spring 2003 in reading or English language arts and math in grades 3 through 11; in writing in grades 4 and

EXHIBIT 1-29
SUMMARY RESULTS OF THE TWO-WEEK LOGS CONDUCTED BY DISTRICT SCHOOL COUNSELORS
SEPT.-OCT. 2003

LEVEL	GUIDANCE CURRICULUM	RESPONSE SERVICES	INDIVIDUAL PLANNING	SYSTEM SUPPORT	NON-GUIDANCE
High School	0.0%	30.0%	1.9%	9.6%	58.6%
Middle School	0.0%	25.5%	0.3%	18.0%	53.9%
Intermediate School	0.0%	36.4%	0.0%	9.5%	54.1%
Primary/Elementary	1.1%	63.9%	0.0%	3.5%	31.4%
Average	**0.3%**	**38.9%**	**0.6%**	**10.2%**	**49.5%**
Recommended	15.0-25.0%	25.0-30.0%	25.0-35.0%	10.0-15.0%	0.0%

SOURCE: HCDE Review of Stafford MSD Guidance and Counseling Programs, November 2003.
NOTE: Percentages are rounded off.

7; in social studies in grades 8, 10, and 11; and in science in grades 5, 10, and 11, for a total of 26 areas.

In 2002–03, SMSD LEP students performed below the state average in 11 of the 26 areas, with two areas having no scores due to less than five students testing, and in 2003–04, SMSD LEP students scored below the state average in 18 of the areas, with three areas having no scores reported (**Exhibit 1-30 through Exhibit 1-38**).

The Language Proficiency Assessment Committees at each school determines whether students test in Spanish or English, dependent upon the student's proficiency in English. Fewer than five SMSD students in any grade tested in Spanish; therefore, no scores are reported for Spanish TAKS.

SMSD LEP students in grade 3 scored below the state average in reading and mathematics both in 2002–03 and 2003–04. SMSD performance in reading increased from 2002–03 to 2003–04, while performance in

mathematics decreased (**Exhibit 1-30**).

Exhibit 1-31 shows that SMSD LEP students in grade 4 scored below the state average in reading, math, and writing in 2002–03. In 2003–04, SMSD LEP students scored below the state average in reading and mathematics but reduced the gap between the performances. In writing, SMSD LEP students scored above the state average.

SMSD grade 5 LEP students scored above the state average in reading, mathematics, and science in 2002–03 and below the state average in all three areas in 2003–04 (**Exhibit 1-32**). Performance of SMSD students declined significantly in all three areas.

In grade 6, SMSD LEP students scored higher than the state average in 2002–03 in reading and mathematics. In 2003–04, less than five LEP students tested resulting in no scores being reported (**Exhibit 1-33**).

Exhibit 1-34 shows that SMSD LEP students in grade 7 scored below the state average in writing, the only

EXHIBIT 1-30
SMSD AND STATE LEP STUDENTS MEETING TAKS STANDARD (ENGLISH VERSION)
GRADE 3

	READING		MATH	
	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
SMSD	65%	74%	54%	48%
State	77%	82%	85%	85%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03; TEA, Spring 2004 Results; and SMSD assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction.

EXHIBIT 1-31
SMSD AND STATE LEP STUDENTS MEETING TAKS STANDARD (ENGLISH VERSION)
GRADE 4

	READING		MATH		WRITING	
	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
SMSD	14%	44%	40%	55%	36%	88%
State	65%	68%	74%	76%	69%	79%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03; TEA, Spring 2004 Results; and SMSD assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction.

EXHIBIT 1-32
SMSD AND STATE LEP STUDENTS MEETING TAKS STANDARD (ENGLISH VERSION)
GRADE 5

	READING		MATH		SCIENCE	
	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
SMSD	64%	27%	77%	40%	50%	6%
State	49%	42%	68%	60%	41%	36%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03; TEA, Spring 2004 Results; and SMSD assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction.

EXHIBIT 1-33
SMSD AND STATE LEP STUDENTS MEETING TAKS STANDARD (ENGLISH VERSION)
GRADE 6

	READING		MATH	
	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
SMSD	50%	*	64%	*
State	49%	50%	49%	47%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03; TEA, Spring 2004 Results; and SMSD assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction.
*Less than five students tested.

EXHIBIT 1-34
SMSD AND STATE LEP STUDENTS MEETING TAKS STANDARD (ENGLISH VERSION)
GRADE 7

	READING		MATH		WRITING	
	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04
SMSD	*	17%	17%	*	33%	33 %
State	47%	39%	35%	33%	43%	60%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03; TEA, Spring 2004 Results; and SMSD assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction.
*Less than five students tested.

subject for which a sufficient number of students were tested to have scores reported in both 2002–03 and 2003–04. The performance gap in writing between SMSD students and the state average widened during this period.

In 2002–03, grade 8 SMSD LEP students scored above the state average in all subjects tested and, in 2003–04, below the state average of LEP students (**Exhibit 1-35**). During this period, SMSD student performance declined in all three subjects.

SMSD LEP student performance in grade 9 reading and math TAKS was higher than the state average of all LEP students in both 2002–03 and 2003–04 (**Exhibit 1-36**). SMSD student performance increased in reading in 2003–04 but declined in math.

In grade 10, SMSD LEP students scored above the state average in English/language arts and mathematics in 2002–03 and below the state average in 2003–04. In science and social studies, grade 10 SMSD LEP students scored below the state average in 2002–03 and above the state average in 2003–04 (**Exhibit 1-37**). SMSD student performance decreased in English/language arts and math and increased in science and social studies from 2002–03 to 2003–04.

SMSD LEP students in grade 11 scored below the state average in all subjects both in 2002–03 and 2003–04 (**Exhibit 1-38**). SMSD student performance increased in math and science and decreased in social studies during this period. An insufficient number of SMSD LEP students took the English/language arts test in 2002–03 to have test scores reported, so no

EXHIBIT 1-35
SMSD AND STATE LEP STUDENTS MEETING TAKS STANDARD (ENGLISH VERSION)
GRADE 8

	READING		MATH		SOCIAL STUDIES	
	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04
SMSD	50%	17%	40%	13%	80%	25%
State	45%	48%	32%	28%	68%	56%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03; TEA, Spring 2004 Results; and SMSD assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction.

EXHIBIT 1-36
SMSD AND STATE LEP STUDENTS MEETING TAKS STANDARD (ENGLISH VERSION)
GRADE 9

	READING		MATH	
	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04
SMSD	33%	43%	40%	31%
State	31%	38%	26%	21%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03; TEA, Spring 2004 Results; and SMSD assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction.

EXHIBIT 1-37
SMSD AND STATE LEP STUDENTS MEETING TAKS STANDARD (ENGLISH VERSION)
GRADE 10

	ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS		MATH		SCIENCE		SOCIAL STUDIES	
	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04
SMSD	38%	13%	62%	25%	8%	29%	54%	63%
State	23%	24%	43%	27%	27%	19%	55%	49%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03; TEA, Spring 2004 Results; and SMSD assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction.

EXHIBIT 1-38
SMSD AND STATE LEP STUDENTS MEETING TAKS STANDARD (ENGLISH VERSION)
GRADE 11

	ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS		MATH		SCIENCE		SOCIAL STUDIES	
	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04	2002–03	2003–04
SMSD	*	40%	20%	50%	0%	20%	33%	60%
State	33%	42%	37%	59%	29%	47%	61%	81%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03; TEA, Spring 2004 Results; and SMSD assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. *Less than five students tested.

comparison can be made to 2003–04.

Texas Administrative Code (TAC) 89.1201 states "the goal of bilingual education programs shall be to enable limited English proficient students to become competent in the comprehension, speaking, reading, and composition of the English language through the development of literacy and academic skills in the primary language and English. Such programs shall emphasize the mastery of English language skills, as well as mathematics, science, and social studies as integral parts of the academic goals for all students to enable limited English proficient students to participate equitably in school and the goal of ESL programs shall be to enable LEP students to become competent in the comprehension, speaking, reading, and composition of the English language through the integrated use of second language methods."

SMSD uses the early-exit bilingual/English as a second language (ESL) model of instruction. The early-exit program provides some initial instruction in a student's first language, primarily for the introduction of reading, but also for clarification. Instruction in the first language is phased out rapidly. Teachers said principals told them to use English the majority of the time in bilingual classes because that is the request of most parents.

In Thomas and Collier's, "*A National Study of School Effectiveness for Language Minority Students' Long-term Academic Achievement*" (2002), the study determined that LEP students who have at least four years of primary-language instruction require at least four years to reach grade level performance in a second language. Researcher J. David Ramirez of R. T. International conducted a study of more than 2,000 students for four years and asserts in his executive summary, published in the *Bilingual Research Journal* Winter/Spring 1992, that data lends support to the notion that the more instruction children get in their first language, the better they perform in their second language. In Robert Linquanti's "Foster Academic Success for English Learners: What Do We Know?" he lists the following statement as particular concern of the "early-exit" transitional program: "Jim Cummins (1998) maintains quick-exit transitional bilingual education is an inferior model based on an inadequate theoretical assumption; this model aspires to monolingualism and does little to address the causes of bilingual student's underachievement."

Additional factors affecting LEP student performance include vague strategies in the campus improvement plans (CIP) that address bilingual/ESL performance, a lack of curriculum documents, and sufficient supplemental bilingual instructional materials.

SMSD's 2003–04 District Improvement Plan (DIP) includes an objective to increase the percentage of LEP students passing each area of the TAKS at each grade level. Each of the CIPs includes an objective to increase the passing rate of LEP students on TAKS by at least 10 percent. Of the 20 strategies that address the objective, at least 10 strategies are not specific enough for teachers to implement in order to improve LEP student performance (**Exhibit 1-39)**.

Additionally, in a focus group held with primary/elementary and intermediate teachers, bilingual teachers said there was a lack of instructional materials for their classes.

Some districts use a model that provides that instruction in the early grades be predominately in the native language and then transition to a majority of English by grade 5 or 6. Due to a lack of a sufficient number of bilingual certified teachers, Mount Pleasant ISD (MPISD) implemented a variation of a dual language model in 1994. The model pairs a bilingual teacher certified as fluent in both English and Spanish with an ESL teacher certified in teaching techniques that assist students in gaining proficiency in English. The bilingual teacher provides instruction in Spanish language arts, and the ESL teacher teaches math and oral English. Each teacher instructs up to 22 students in their respective subjects and, at a designated time, the teachers trade groups. This approach is designed to ensure that children have an academic foundation in their native language combined with the development of English vocabulary and comprehension essential for transition to a second language. According to the director of Special Programs, MPISD's bilingual/ESL program follows the same curriculum documents as regular education. The curriculum guides for bilingual/ESL provide specific vocabulary for bilingual students rather than the entire list required for English speaking students. MPISD provides all books required for supplemental reading in both English and Spanish. SMSD does not have these types of instructional materials for LEP students.

Northwest Regional Education Laboratory published a research review, "The Hispanic Child," that discussed various models of bilingual instruction and stated in that review that "there is a growing body of evidence to support the view that bilingual education models--particularly the "late-exit transitional," "bilingual-bicultural maintenance," and "developmental bilingual models–hold the most promise for teaching English while letting language-minority kids catch up to their native-English peers."

SMSD should evaluate other bilingual/English as a second language models that research shows have increased achievement of limited English proficient students. SMSD should contact Region 4 for assistance

EXHIBIT 1-39
REVIEW TEAM ASSESSMENT OF STRATEGIES IN SMSD CAMPUS IMPROVEMENT
PLANS ADDRESSING SMSD LEP STUDENT PERFORMANCE
2003–04

STRATEGY	REVIEW TEAM ASSESSMENT OF STRATEGY
STAFFORD ELEMENTARY/PRIMARY SCHOOL	
Disaggregate 2003 TAKS data.	Disaggregating TAKS data is part of the needs assessment and strategy does not state how staff should use the data.
Implement new instructional methods that will support LEP student's academic progress.	Methods are not described so how would teacher know what methods to use.
Implement math benchmarks from Region 4.	Does not describe how to use benchmark.
Provide staff development for teacher/administrator in: guided reading, literacy centers, reading recovery, bilingual/ESL instructional strategies, and hands-on science.	Strategy provides sufficient detail for implementation.
Continue use of Region 4 video conferencing project.	This would not have meaning for any new staff member.
Continue and increase opportunity for inclusion of bilingual/ESL children in mainstream classes.	Strategy provides sufficient detail for implementation.
Provide opportunities for attendance at state conferences for Texas Association of Bilingual Educators (TABE) and Texas English Speakers of Other Languages.	How will information gained be used? Will attendees share information with other staff members?
STAFFORD INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL	
Track all students for continued mastery of objectives.	Strategy provides sufficient detail for implementation.
Conduct monthly meetings to discuss and share ideas learned from trainings to meet the needs of students participating in multiple special programs such as dyslexia, special education, bilingual and ESL.	Strategy provides sufficient detail for implementation.
Enhance ESL pull-out program by way of research driven best practices.	How and what will be done? This provides no direction to teachers.
Increase learning opportunities for LEP students by implementing strategies learned at TABE and Region 4 conferences/seminars.	Does not indicate the type of strategy to implement nor the classes in which to implement.
Encourage exited LEP students to read to primary/elementary LEP students (serve as role models); utilize manipulatives, software, and literature to make learning more comprehensible and to enhance bilingual/ESL program.	Strategy provides sufficient detail for implementation.
STAFFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL	
Students will continue to utilize environmental media to enhance the reading skills and actively engage students in their learning to provide diverse opportunities for ESL students.	Strategy does not describe what the teacher will do.
Provide enrichment activities to assist students in the area of reading and writing via the AIS computer lab.	Strategy provides sufficient detail for implementation.
ESL students will be provided assistance in math, science and social studies classes via an inclusion setting.	Strategy does not describe what the teacher will do.
ESL teachers will continue to communicate with bilingual coordinator and home-school liaison regarding ESL students performing below expectations.	Strategy provides sufficient detail for implementation.
STAFFORD HIGH SCHOOL	
Increase the percentage of LEP students who participate in TAKS.	Strategy provides sufficient detail for implementation
Administer benchmark assessments.	What will happen with the assessments?
Increase vocabulary through discussion/defining, matching, using dictionaries, using in sentences, reading in context.	Strategy provides sufficient detail for implementation.
Increase reading stamina, time spent reading, enjoyment of reading;	Strategy does not give direction for implementation.

SOURCE: SMSD Campus Improvement Plans 2003–04 and WCL Enteprises evaluation.

and put together a committee of teachers from each grade level to review a variety of models of instruction that have proven to increase student achievement.

ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS (REC. 5)
SMSD offers limited opportunities for students to earn college credit while in high school. With a high percentage of graduates planning to attend college (88 percent in 2002–03), the availability of dual credit

courses can decrease the cost of college education and provide additional advanced learning opportunities for college-bound students.

Dual credit courses and Tech Prep programs provide opportunities for students to fulfill high school graduation requirements and complete college credits simultaneously. Dual credit courses are college-level academic or technical courses taken by high school

students at the high school campus or a college campus for which the student receives high school credit and college credit at the same time. School districts enter into articulation agreements with colleges for specific courses offered in high school that align with additional courses in college in course areas such as hospitality, culinary arts, criminal justice, computer science technology, accounting, office administration, health occupations, and emergency medical services. Students receive high school credit upon course completion and college credit upon enrollment at the college.

TechPrep is a program that leads students toward associate or baccalaureate degree programs and helps students prepare for high skill, high wage jobs. Tech Prep offers two kinds of programs: local and statewide. Local articulation is for credit to a specifically listed community college, and statewide articulation is a program that provides college credit for technical courses taken in high school to students who continue technical programs at any community college. Students who successfully complete courses listed for statewide articulation at any public secondary school in Texas may present their transcripts to any public two-year associate degree-granting institution in the state that offers the corresponding college course(s).

In 2003–04, SMSD offered one TechPrep program in the business education area and offered Keyboarding and Spanish as dual credit courses. Courses in the SMSD business area TechPrep program with Houston Community College include Keyboarding, Accounting, and Business Computer Instruction Systems (BCIS). SMSD entered into an agreement with Houston Community College to add two English courses and Economics to their dual credit options beginning in 2004–05.

Many districts have a variety of articulation agreements. Friendswood ISD offers 21 career and technology courses that are articulated with three community colleges: College of the Mainland, Alvin Community College, and San Jacinto College. Fifteen of these courses qualify under the statewide articulation program. Pearland ISD participates in TechPrep articulation options with Alvin Community College and San Jacinto College for courses in the areas of health science, business education, family and consumer education, trade and industrial education, criminal justice, marketing and graphics/drafting.

SMSD should expand the opportunities for students to earn college credit while in high school by entering into additional articulation agreements for courses offered in the Career and Technology Education program. The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction and the high school principal should contact an area TechPrep Consortium to review courses offered and

formulate plans to enter into additional articulation agreements.

CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD (REC. 6)

The SMSD Career and Technology Education (CATE) Advisory Board, with only three members, lacks enough business and community representatives to provide adequate information to the district on current job needs. The lack of numerous business representatives restricts information for identifying courses that lead to employment in the area.

SMSD's current advisory council includes one local business member, one community member, two parents, the high school principal, CATE program teachers, the Houston Community College dean of Work Force Development, and the SMSD assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction.

Local CATE advisory boards provide information to school districts on current job needs, the relevance of district programs, and the types of courses offered by the district to meet current job needs. Lack of representatives from a wide variety of businesses limits the information about current job needs and the type of training needed to be qualified for these jobs. The City of Stafford web site indicates that over 2,000 businesses are located in Stafford.

The instruction guide for completing the Standard Application System for Career and Technology Education funding recommends that the advisory council be composed of representatives of the general public, business, industry, and labor; one member knowledgeable about students who are in at-risk situations; parents of program participants (including at least one parent of a student who is a member of a special populations group); and at least one representative from each career and technology education program area offered in the school district.

Smithville ISD includes representatives of area businesses that employ many of their graduates, such as the following: Time Warner Cable Company, Southwestern Bell Telephone, the lower Colorado River Authority, and several small business representatives. The committee provides information on types of jobs available and the education and training needed for employment.

SMSD should increase the number of business representatives on the Career and Technology Education Advisory Board. SMSD's superintendent, who is a member of the Ft. Bend Chamber of Commerce advisory board and the Fort Bend Economic Development Council, should advise the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction about persons to contact to serve on SMSD's CATE Advisory Board.

CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION PROGRAM (REC. 7)

SMSD does not evaluate its Career and Technology Education (CATE) Program. As a result, the district may not be offering courses that are relevant to the needs of the local job marketplace.

The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction managed the CATE program prior to May 2004. The Course Selection Guide for Stafford High School lists 47 different CATE course offerings in areas such as family and consumer science, business and marketing, trade and industrial, and agricultural science. Students enrolled in 32 of the 47 courses offered in 2003–04. In May 2004, SMSD employed a director of Federal Programs and assigned the responsibility of the CATE program to this position.

The Texas State Plan for Career and Technology Education 2003–05, required under Texas Education Code 29.182, was developed as a guide to assist school districts in their efforts to offer effective career and technology education programs.

Objective six of the State Plan for Career and Technology Education speaks to evaluation in the following manner: "Evaluate career and technology education programs in terms of (a) the program's effectiveness in enabling each public school student to master the basic skills and knowledge necessary for managing the dual roles of family member and wage earner; (b) the program's effectiveness in enabling each public school student to master the basic skills and knowledge necessary for gaining entry-level employment or continuing the student's education at the postsecondary level; and (c) if the district receives supplemental federal funding for career and technology education, whether the program meets requirements for receiving supplemental federal funding." Further recommendations include the following:

- Evaluate Career and Technology Education Program facilities, equipment, and instructional resources.

- Utilize business and industry partnerships in Career and Technology Education Program evaluations.

- Assess each Career and Technology Education Program and its individual components to determine strengths and weaknesses.

- Integrate the examination and analysis of data to support sound decision-making focused on student success.

- Encourage district and campus use of available data of graduates' participation in postsecondary education, the workforce, military, or other post

high school opportunities as a tool for evaluating the local education system's success.

- Develop and implement a plan to improve or enhance career and technology programs based on evaluation results.

Kerrville ISD uses a comprehensive system to evaluate its CATE program. The district uses its 35 member CATE Advisory Board to evaluate every CATE course with an instrument that examines nine aspects of the course: (1) facilities and equipment; (2) instructional objectives, occupational competencies, and TAKS scores; (3) instructional and resource materials; (4) methods of instruction; (5) opportunities for employment; (6) enrollment in course; (7) local advisory committee; (8) budget; and (9) summary. The advisory board divides its members into two-member teams based on their expertise to rate statements in each area ranging from one–Poor or Non-existent–to five–Superior Quality. The evaluation instrument includes statements in each of the nine areas. In the summary section, the evaluators identify the major strengths and weaknesses of the course, develop recommendations if needed, and record any other remarks. In addition to this evaluation, KISD tracks students and determines their preparedness for post-secondary employment or education. In the May prior to graduation and in the May following graduation, the CATE program administers a survey of 22 questions covering their student plans after graduation, the amount of education they plan to achieve by the age of 25, and the value of the academic and career and technology course they took while in high school.

SMSD should annually evaluate the Career and Technology Education Program. The high school principal, the CATE department chair, and selected CATE instructors should investigate available evaluation instruments or develop a local evaluation and present them to the CATE advisory board for selection. The advisory board should develop a process and timeline for evaluation. The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction should monitor the evaluation each year.

CAMPUS AND DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLANS (REC. 8)

SMSD's district and campus improvement plans do not include all the components required by Texas Education Code (TEC) 11.253. TEA's "Financial Accountability System Resource Guide," Section 9.2.3 addresses district and campus improvement plan requirements for state compensatory education (SCE) programs and states that the SCE program must be described in the campus improvement plan (CIP) if the program is implemented at the campus level or described in the district improvement plan (DIP) if the program is implemented districtwide. District and

campus plans serve as the primary record supporting expenditures attributed to the SCE program. CIPs must include the following:

- Total amount of SCE funds allocated for resources and staff.

- 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 full-time equivalent (FTE) for SCE.

- Measurable performance objectives.

- Timelines for monitoring strategies.

- Formative and summative evaluation criteria.

None of the campus improvement plans include the amount of SCE funds allocated by the campus for resources and staff to implement strategies designed to improve student performance for students at risk of dropping out of school. Not indicating the funds needed for each strategy limits SMSD's ability to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy against the cost of implementing the strategy.

PEIMS data shows that SMSD budgeted compensatory funds in the amounts of $203,865 for the high school, $93,745 for the middle school, $75,615 for the intermediate school, $66,880 for the elementary, and $52,950 for the primary school. The high school and middle school plans include no dollar amounts from any sources. The high school plan lists one strategy, "Implement Tune Up for TAKS Saturday Morning Workshops," and lists SCE funds 865 Activity and Title V as the resources for this strategy. The Stafford Middle School plan includes two strategies with the resource of SCE (TFTE: 2). The primary/elementary and intermediate plans allocate resources from varied funds for strategies listed but not a separate amount for each strategy. The primary/elementary plan references the same amount of SCE funds, $17,664.98, for each of fourteen different strategies. The intermediate plan references $957.45 for each of six different strategies and $51,702.39 for the strategy, "provide hands-on science lab for each 4th/5th grade class within special schedule rotation."

TEA's review team for the May 2003 District Effectiveness and Compliance (DEC) evaluation found there was insufficient documentation to support a determination of compliance with SCE requirements that the DIP/CIPs include FTEs, supplemental resources and funding/dollar amounts, and strategies for serving students in at-risk situations, nor do the

plans incorporate the following eight components of a Targeted Assistance Program under Title I:

- Program resources are used to help participating children meet state academic achievement standards.

- Planning for identified students is incorporated into existing school planning.

- Effective methods and instructional strategies are based on scientifically based research that strengthens the core academic program.

- Each Targeted Assistance Program is coordinated with and supports regular education.

- Instruction is provided by certified teachers.

- Opportunities for professional development are provided.

- Strategies to increase parental involvement are used.

- Federal, state, and local services and programs are coordinated and integrated with the Targeted Assistance Program.

SMSD's corrective action plan for the DEC citation on campus improvement plans stated that "district and campus improvements plans will include FTEs, supplemental resources and funding/dollar amount, and strategies for serving students in at-risk situations as well as timelines and formative evaluation criteria."

Alief ISD's format for campus plans include campus goals that are correlated to district, state, and national goals, Title I goals, and effective school practices; current performance data by all students and all demographic subgroups; long term desired performance; and an annual desired performance increase. Each goal is supported by strategies with a list of the resources required, the FTE's required, the source for funding, and the dollar amount of funding for each resource. For each strategy, the plan includes a timeline of months for the activity, persons performing the activity, and formative evaluation tools to be used (**Exhibit 1-40**).

Included are specific strategies under each goal with a description of who will implement the strategy and how; a listing of the supplemental FTEs needed for the strategy and the amount and source of the funds needed to fund the strategy, make the plan clear for staff to implement, and provide a basis for evaluation of strategies for future plans. As stated in TEA's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide*, state compensatory education 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.

EXHIBIT 1-40
ITEMS AND DESCRIPTIONS INCLUDED IN ALIEF CAMPUS PLANS

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	SPECIFICS
Goal 1	States goal	List district goals, state goals, national goals, Title I goals, and Effective School Correlates that correlate to this campus goal
Goal 1 - Performance Data Indicator	Lists the subject–TAKS Reading	Shows Current Performance, Desired Long Term Performance and an Annual objective; all broken down by demographics
Goal 1 - Strategy 1 – Literacy Leaders: LA Specialists, Title I teachers, Literacy Team Leader Progress Report Dates- January and May	Teachers will implement components of balanced literacy reading program including: shared reading, guided reading, independent reading, partner reading, phonemic awareness… Students will be formally benchmarked three times. Emphasis given to modifications for students who are below level, special education, bilingual/ESL, and enrichment.	Lists summative evaluation (75% of K students at text level 3–80% of 5th graders at text level 6th Grade Spring)
Resources Required – Specific Staff, guest speakers, school library, supplies, teaching aids, time and effort of district staff	FTE's Required and Source of Funds	Lists specific amounts from General budget, Technology budget, Title I funds, SCE funds, G/T funds, Library budget, Special Grant, Immigrant Funds and Total cost (does not include salaries of district staff)
Timeline Lists activities	Persons Involved (Example: Teachers, campus, district, or national presenter,….) and lists months of activity	Lists formative evaluation tools (Examples: observation, sign-in sheets, lesson plans, student progress log)
Goal 2 - Strategy 2 - Reading Comprehension Leaders: LA Specialist and Teachers	Teachers will gain and apply knowledge of strategies to improve student comprehension skills of summarization and inferences. Use of nonfiction text related to social studies and science emphasized.	Summative Evaluation: all demographic groups will improve to 80% on TAKS reading
Resources Required – Outside consultant, specific staff, guest speakers, school library, supplies, teaching aids, time and effort of district staff	FTE's Required and Source of Funds	Lists Specific amounts from General budget, Technology budget, Title I funds, SCE funds, G/T funds, Library budget, Special Grant, Immigrant Funds and Total cost (does not include salaries of district staff)

SOURCE: Alief ISD campus plans.

The district should include state compensatory education strategies, FTEs, and specific dollar amounts from all sources, along with timelines and evaluation criteria, in the district and campus improvement plans. SMSD's assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction should contact other districts and Region 4 for sample district and campus improvement plans. The business manager and the assistant superintendent should work as a team to review the SCE requirements and develop procedures that address the requirements and allocate funds to the campuses. Campus principals with their campus improvement committees should use these procedures to designate funds for strategies in the CIPs. The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction should monitor adherence to the procedures.

GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION PLAN (REC. 9)

SMSD's long-range plan for gifted and talented education (G/T) lacks sufficient detail to provide adequate direction and comprehensive measures to ensure a strong, rigorous G/T Program from kindergarten through grade 12.

The plan, developed for 2001 through 2004, addresses the five components included in the state plan for the education of gifted students: assessment, program design, curriculum and instruction, professional development, and family/community involvement. The plan includes each of the performance measures listed in the *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students* and indicates whether the measure is a district or campus responsibility. Each of the five schools has areas to indicate if the measure is already in place, in the planning stage, implantation stage, or evaluated in each of five years. The plan does not provide the names or titles of individuals responsible for each measure, show any costs associated with the activities, describe the program design or the curriculum, state any expected outcomes, or have an evaluation process. The district does not have any information on the status of the items that were marked "planning."

Participants at the Community Open House and in the focus groups held by the review team made the following comments:

- "The district does not really have a gifted and talented program. Children are identified, but the instruction is the same as the other kids."

- "Our curriculum has been watered down. Our children are being taught strictly TEKS."

- "The district needs to be teaching at a much higher level than TAKS. If the curriculum is geared more to the SAT or ACT, the TAKS will take care of itself."

- "What curriculum do we follow: Who is the curriculum specialist? Curriculum is not challenging."

- "The curriculum has been good. More emphasis needed to help students prepare for TAKS."

- "No real G/T program. Work is not differentiated."

- "Would like to see more critical thinking."

- "Independent thinking and analytical analysis is lacking. Not being given tools to research."

- "Child is junior in high school, was identified G/T in grade 10, and I cannot see that anything different has occurred."

- "There is no curriculum to have follow-through."

- "High school curriculum not at correct level. When seniors take the ACT/SAT, students who have been in National Honor Society do not score at the national average."

- "I am concerned that my student will not be prepared for college even though she has taken advanced courses."

- "G/T at high school is AP course. No differentiation for G/T student in AP."

- "Some kids feel it is not a reward to be in G/T, just a cost."

- "There are no G/T parent classes."

On a survey administered to SMSD students in the junior and senior classes, only 29.2 percent of the respondents felt that programs were meeting the needs of the college bound student, and the students surveyed were equally divided on whether they felt that the district has an effective honors/G/T program (**Exhibit 1-41**).

The *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students* requires districts to present evidence that it offers gifted and talented students a curriculum that moves faster and is more complex than the regular curriculum. The plan refers to this as differentiation and challenges districts to address the curriculum offered to G/T students and "assure an array of learning opportunities that are commensurate with the abilities of gifted and talented students and that emphasize content in the four core academic subjects."

SMSD does not have curriculum documents for all four required core areas: English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. SMSD's framework for K-12 English Language Arts and Reading Curriculum does not include G/T objectives. SMSD includes a general description of acceptable practices, guiding principles of a differentiated curriculum, and Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive behaviors. The remaining three content areas have no documents to guide curriculum and instruction. Districts that have no curriculum documents with differentiation activities built-in cannot ensure that the needs of gifted students are being met in the classroom.

According to Section 29.123 of the Texas Education Code, the *Texas State Plan for the Educationof Gifted/Talented Students*, revised in May 2000, forms the basis of program accountability for state mandated services for gifted/talented students. The plan was revised to be compatible with the former accountability system. "Acceptable" performance measures are included for five areas of program performance. This level reflects those actions that are included in either state law or rules. However, some districts, in collaboration with the communities they serve, provide more comprehensive services. To offer some guidance to those districts or campuses, examples of "recognized" and "exemplary" performance are included in the plan. While these actions are not mandated by the state, they provide viable targets that local district educators seeking excellence, both for

EXHIBIT 1-41
STUDENT RESPONSES TO REVIEW TEAM SURVEY
2003–04

SURVEY QUESTION	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	0.0%	29.2%	25.0%	29.2%	16.7%
The district has effective special programs for the Honors/Gifted and Talented Education.	12.5%	12.5%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%

SOURCE: Review Team Student Survey, March 2004.
NOTE: Percentages are rounded off.

their district and for their students, may strive to attain. **Exhibit 1-42** provides examples of all three levels of performance.

Some districts use G/T staff and parents to develop a plan that not only includes identification criteria but

also includes program goals, descriptions of programs offered, and differentiated curriculum or enrichment packets for developing higher-level thinking skills. Both Friendswood and Conroe ISDs develop and publish goals for the Gifted and Talented programs. In

EXHIBIT 1-42
TEXAS STATE PLAN FOR THE EDUCATION OF GIFTED/TALENTED STUDENTS
EXAMPLES OF PERFORMANCE

SECTION	ACCEPTABLE	RECOGNIZED	EXEMPLARY
Student Assessment	Written policies on student identification for gifted/talented programs are approved by the district board of trustees and disseminated to all parents.	Nomination procedures and forms for assessment of gifted/talented students are communicated to families in a language and form that the families understand or a translator or interpreter is provided.	The district and/or campus offers an awareness session prior to the nomination period for families to receive an overview of the assessment procedures and services for gifted/talented students.
	Data and procedures assure that all populations of the district have access to assessment and, if identified, services offered as part of the program for gifted students.	Gains have been made over the last two years toward having the population of the gifted program reflect the population of the district.	The population of the gifted/talented program reflects the population of the total district or has for two of the past three years.
Program Design	School districts assure an array of learning opportunities that are commensurate with the abilities of g/t students, and that emphasize content in the four core academic areas.	Information concerning special opportunities (contests, academic recognition, summer camps, community programs, volunteer opportunities) is available and disseminated to parents and community members	Services for gifted/talented students are comprehensive, structured, sequenced and appropriately challenging, including options in the four core academic areas, arts, leadership, and creativity.
	Local board policies are developed that are consistent with State Board of Education rules on credit by examination (19 TAC 74.24) and Early high school graduation. (TEC 56.203)	Flexile pacing is employed, allowing students to learn at the pace and level appropriate for their abilities and skills.	District administrators, counselors, and teachers actively facilitate accelerated options.
Curriculum and Instruction	School districts assure an array of appropriately challenging learning experiences for g/t students in grades 1-12 that emphasize content from the four core academic areas and shall inform parents of the opportunities	A comprehensive manual or program guide is provided describing all programs and services for g/t students in grades K-12. Opportunities are provided for career and leadership assessment and training in areas of student strength.	Curriculum for gifted/talented students provides options in intellectual, creative, or artistic areas; leadership; and specific academic fields.
	DIP and CIPs include provisions to improve/modify services to g/t students.	Curriculum is modified based on annual evaluations. District guidelines for evaluation of resources for g/t students are established and used in selecting materials that are appropriate for differentiated learning.	Administrators monitor the development and delivery of curriculum for g/t students.
		Student progress/performance in programs for the gifted is periodically assessed and this information is communicated to parents or guardians.	Student performance is periodically assessed by standards developed by experts in the areas served in the district's program for g/t students.
Professional Development	Evaluation of professional development activities for g/t education is ongoing, and the results of the evaluation are used in making decisions regarding future staff development plans.	Opportunities for professional development in the area of gifted education are provided on a regular basis and information on them is disseminated to professionals in the district.	A long-range plan for professional development culminates in endorsement in g/t education and/or advanced degrees for a majority of the teachers who provide advanced level studies. Staff of the program for g/t students are involved in planning and conducting the training.

EXHIBIT 1-42 (CONTINUED)
TEXAS STATE PLAN FOR THE EDUCATION OF GIFTED/TALENTED STUDENTS
EXAMPLES OF PERFORMANCE

SECTION	ACCEPTABLE	RECOGNIZED	EXEMPLARY
Family-Community Involvement	School districts shall develop written policies on student identification that are approved by the local board of trustees and disseminated to parents.	Input from family and community representatives on the assessment procedures is invited prior to submission to the local board of trustees. The district or campus holds annual meetings or provides information requesting parent and community nominations for program services.	Parents have the opportunity to participate in a parent association for the gifted and talented.
	School districts shall provide an array of learning opportunities for g/t students in kindergarten through grade 12 and shall inform parents of the opportunities.	The district or campus provides orientation and periodic updates for parents of students identified and served in options tat are part of the gifted program. A parent/community advisory committee offers support and assistance to the district in program planning and improvement. A data bank of community resources is compiled for use by students, teachers, and parents.	Community volunteers are organized and given special orientation in working with gifted students. Liaisons with business and community organizations are established and the use of community resources (retired community, foundations, universities, etc.) is evident. The parent/community advisory group solicits support for mentorship and independent study programs in the district.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students, revised May 2000.

addition to the overall program goals, Friendswood ISD publishes a description of their programs at the various grade levels. Friendswood ISD also provides an opportunity for parents to evaluate their program by providing a survey on their web site. Regularly providing information to parents and requesting input from them helps in developing confidence in the program.

The district should revise the Gifted and Talented Education Plan to include a comprehensive approach to providing G/T services to students. The plan should include specific initiatives for parent involvement, professional development for staff, and differentiation methods for each core subject at each grade level.

The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction should assemble a team of G/T trained and certified teachers, counselors, and administrators to create a strategic G/T plan. Upon completion of the plan, SMSD should provide a stipend to a team of teachers at each grade level, kindergarten through grade 8, to create differentiation methods for each of the four core academic subjects at each grade level and submit them to the assistant superintendent to be integrated into district scope and sequence curriculum documents.

The high school teachers of courses where clusters of G/T students are enrolled should determine the specific differentiations for these courses. The district should plan for two years to complete this project.

SMSD should pay a team of two teachers per grade level for kindergarten through grade 8 to develop the differentiation methods for curriculum documents during the summers for each of the four core subjects.

The review team suggests stipends of $400 per teacher each year for two years to complete the four courses for a grade level, or $800 per grade level each year for two years. The cost to the district for each of the two years for kindergarten through grade 8 would total $7,200 (9 grade levels x $800 = $7,200). The number of high school AP and Pre-AP courses total 22 full year courses and 2 half-year courses. The district should pay a stipend of $200 each year for two years for each full year course or equivalent to complete the differentiation methods for each course, for a total of $4,600 ($200 per course x 23 = $4,600). The total cost per year would be $11,800 ($7,200 + $4,600 = $11,800).

NURSE STAFFING LEVEL (REC. 10)

SMSD's staffing level of one nurse to 568 students is less than the one to 750-student ratio recommended by the National Association of School Nurses (NASN). As a result, SMSD may be incurring more costs for nursing services than necessary.

According to NASN, caseload assignments for school nurses vary greatly and are influenced by multiple factors, such as geographic location and number of school buildings; social, economic, and cultural status of the community; special health problems; the mobility of the people in the community; and licensed or unlicensed assistant personnel.

SMSD employs two registered nurses (RNs), who are assigned to the high school and the middle school. Licensed vocational nurses (LVNs) serve the primary school, elementary school, and the intermediate school (**Exhibit 1-43**). The services provided by the program

EXHIBIT 1-43
SMSD NURSE/STUDENT RATIO
2003–04

CAMPUS	STUDENT ENROLLMENT	NURSE/STUDENT RATIO
Primary	501	1:501
Elementary School	457	1:457
Intermediate School	449	1:449
Middle School	668	1:668
High School	759	1:759
Total	2,838 *	1:568

SOURCE: SMSD PEIMS specialist.
* Includes students in the juvenile justice alternative education program.

are as follows: vision and hearing screening in grades pre-K, K, 1, and 3; acanthosis nigricans (AN) screenings (a test signaling high insulin levels indicative of insulin resistance) in grades 3, 5, and 7; spinal screenings at grades 6 and 9; first aid; maintenance of all students' medical and immunization records; dispensation of daily medications; and distribution of health problem information to teachers on a "need to know" basis.

Dripping Springs ISD uses two RNs and two nurse assistants to serve a student population of 3, 311 students on four campuses. One nurse serves as the lead nurse for the district and is responsible for the middle school and high school. The nurse assistant who works with her is assigned to the middle school. The second RN and nurse assistant are assigned to the primary and intermediate schools. The RN spends her day at the primary school until 2 p.m., when she switches schools with her assigned nurse assistant and goes to the intermediate school until the end of the school day.

SMSD should develop nurse staffing ratios. Based on NASN standards, eliminating one LVN position would increase the nurse to student ratio from 1:568 to 1:710, a ratio closer to but still below the NASN recommendation of 1:750. The remaining vocational nurses could cover the primary, elementary, and intermediate schools. Annual savings would be $25,728 beginning in 2005–06, resulting from SMSD's base salary for a LVN of $22,200 plus benefits (7 percent of salary) plus $1,974 for a total of $25,728 ($22,200 + $1,554 +$1,974 = $25,728).

TECHNOLOGY ORGANIZATION (REC. 11)

The SMSD Technology organization is understaffed and unable to support the district's administrative and instructional technology requirements. As a result, the SMSD Technology organization has significant gaps in service delivery when compared to performance expectations.

There were comments from the Community Open House and focus groups on the understaffing of Instructional Technology support personnel. These remarks included:

- "Each campus should have a technology support person."

- "The children should be taught more about computers and programs than they are now. Most computer courses seem to be self taught by students."

- "Technology misguided dollars into distance learning labs that are never used."

- "We have two labs but one person must work both labs."

The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction oversees the following central office technology staff: director of Instructional Technology (vacant during review), one network administrator, two computer technicians, and a secretary. There are two computer lab managers (the primary and elementary campus and the middle school campus). The assistant superintendent of Operations oversees the PEIMS coordinator's activities. There is one PEIMS/attendance clerk at the primary and elementary school, one PEIMS/attendance clerk at the intermediate school, two PEIMS/attendance clerks at the middle school, and three PEIMS/attendance clerks at the high school.

The director of Instructional Technology is responsible for staff development, curriculum development, technical support, technology and information management, budget and inventory, policy, reports and laws, and personnel management. One network administrator and two computer technicians are providing technical support. According to the network administrator, these three staff members provide computer maintenance and support for the district's 1,100 computers (including 50 administrative computers and around 933 computers that are out-of-warranty), WAN/LAN configuration of 34 switches, 12 networked servers and their applications, PBX telephone system, coordination with outside technology vendors, and other duties. The primary role of the secretary has been to collect and process paper-

based work orders by retrieving them daily from each campus/central office location and entering them onto a spreadsheet.

The present campus base technology support structure has two computer lab managers. One computer lab manager is assigned to the primary and elementary campus, which has two Compass labs. A second computer lab manager is assigned to the middle school, which has one Sleek Lab and two Internet research and technology applications labs. There is no computer lab manager for the one Compass and one Internet research and technology applications lab at the intermediate campus. There are no computer lab managers at the high school.

The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction described the greatest need as providing the proper Instructional Technology staffing at the central office and campus levels in order to provide the teachers the professional development needed to integrate the existing technology into their curriculum and instructional practices.

The superintendent described the status of technology as "fragmented, disarrayed, disconnected, and with little substance." The superintendent laid out five goals in June 2003: web site improvement; new and relevant technology plan; compilation of hardware and software inventory; security on the network, including unauthorized access protection, disaster recovery, and routine off-site backup; and integration of technology based on vision and leadership.

A review of the SMSD organizational structure indicates the need to provide additional Instructional Technology staffing. According to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, an Instructional Technology specialist is needed at each campus for staff development and technology integration. While the technology infrastructure of networks and computers has been in place for five years, there has not been enough emphasis placed on the staff development and integration of technology. As the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction indicated on the Texas Star Chart, SMSD is still at the entry level for the Teaching and Learning and Educator Preparation and Development.

Deer Park ISD has a central office Technology Department that has an executive director of Technology overseeing two district level Instructional Technology specialists, two campus based Instructional Technology specialists, and 12 campus Technology Support leaders that are full-time teachers who receive a stipend to provide technology staff development and integration support. This organization structure results in the proper planning, coordination, and support needed to assist teachers with the integration of

technology. As a result, Deer Park ISD is presently at the developing level for Teaching and Learning and at the advanced level for Educator Preparation and Development.

SMSD should restructure the district's technology organization with the following changes:

- Hire a director of Instructional Technology and modify the job description to include documented experience with TEKS Technology Applications requirements; professional development initiatives that include teaching basic technology applications, such as word processing and spreadsheets, to advanced technology applications, such as web design and video editing; teaching integration of these technology applications with the respective core and enrichment subjects, such as social studies and art; and showing teachers how to utilize three computers with 25 students in their classrooms.

- Create two Instructional Technology specialists (one specialist at the primary level and one specialist at the secondary level) reporting to the director of Instructional Technology for purposes of working directly with campus staff in the areas of technology staff development, integration, and planning. The director of Instructional Technology and principals should work closely together with the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction in the development of the job description and selection process for these positions. They will develop and implement a district and campus technology staff development and integration plan. The director of Instructional Technology will be responsible for the evaluation of these positions but will receive input from the campus principals.

- Create four campus technology support leaders to provide front line technical support, staff development, and technology integration support. Principals will select the campus support leaders with input from the director of Instructional Technology. Selection to these positions should be based on their technology expertise, curriculum background and teaching experience, and the ability to relate well with peers. They will provide training after school, on Saturdays, during in-service days, and in the summer to district and campus staff.

- Eliminate the secretary position; primary functional responsibility is eliminated by faxing work orders to the Technology department or using an online work order system.

- Eliminate the computer lab manager positions; primary functional responsibility is eliminated by

hiring campus-based Instructional Technology specialists.

The annual net fiscal impact of the reorganization would be a cost increase of $43,904 beginning in 2005–06. Benefits are calculated at 7 percent of salary plus $1,974.

Added Positions	Salary	Benefits	Total
Two instructional technology specialists (Teacher salary at 187 days plus 15 extra days)	($90,884)	($10,310)	($101,194)
Four campus technology support leaders (Existing teacher with a $3,000 stipend added)	($12,000)	($840)	($12,840)
Eliminated Positions			
Secretary	$20,371	$3,400	$23,771
Two Computer Lab Managers	$39,636	$6,723	$46,359
Total			($43,904)

Since the report was released after 2004–05 began, SMSD will require time to develop job descriptions for the new positions, post the positions, and interview candidates. As a result, the fiscal impact assumes that the new hires will not start until January 2005, or one-third of the way through the 2004–05 fiscal year. The secretary position is an at-will employee and will be eliminated by January 2005. The computer lab managers are contract positions and will not be eliminated until September 1, 2005. So, the 2004–05 fiscal impact will be a cost of $60,476 [$101,194 for the instructional technology specialists + $12,840 for stipends for the campus technology support positions = $114,034 x two-thirds (.67) of one year = $76,403 - $15,927 for the secretary ($23,771 x two-thirds of one year = $15,927), for a total of $60,476].

TECHNOLOGY PLAN (REC. 12)

The SMSD Long Range Technology Plan 1998–2003 does not assign responsibility or activity due dates to specific individuals. While there is a technology plan, goals are not being met because there is no accountability in getting activities implemented.

SMSD Long Range Technology Plan 1998–2003 consisted of five goals, 16 objectives, and 90 activities. The five goals involved maximizing student performance through innovative teaching techniques; enhancing information management through the use of technological applications; implementing technology staff development programs in order to meet the needs of staff; establishing guidelines to efficiently implement technology; and furnishing the technology resources that will enhance instruction and expedite management functions. The objectives and activities are aligned with

these five goals. **Exhibit 1-44** lists the goals, objectives, and the number of activities associated with each goal.

Exhibit 1-45 provides the planned activities for one objective that called for the integration of technology competencies into the curriculum that had three associated activities: 1) develop a continuum of technology competencies for students beginning in kindergarten through grade 12; 2) establish a technology application strand in all curriculum documents whereby students are expected to utilize technology tools in all subjects; and 3) establish or expand opportunities for students to receive advanced instruction in the use of technology.

The activities for integrating technology competencies into the curriculum were not assigned to specific individuals. There were no specific due dates for completion of activities. Without this accountability, the activities were not implemented.

The SMSD Long Range Technology Plan 1998–2003 described progress made toward objectives for 1992–1997, but there is no documented evidence of any progress made toward meeting plan objectives for 1998–2003.

There was no Technology Plan for 2003–04. The district completed a Technology Plan for 2004–07 in March 2004. The plan was developed in order for the district to qualify for the E-rate Program (Schools and Libraries Universal Service Support Mechanism). For the plan's assessment process, the campus star chart was used to determine the district's technology needs. In using the Texas School Technology and Readiness (STaR) Chart, a "1" represents "Early Tech," a "2" represents "Developing Tech," a "3" represents "Advanced Tech," and a "4" represents "Target Tech."

Based on a review by area of the Texas STaR chart for 2003–04 by the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, SMSD is at the following proficiency levels:

- Teaching and Learning: Rated "1" - Early tech level; technology used by students is primarily with software tutorials; very few technology applications supporting Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for students being addressed; teachers using technology primarily to reinforce their lectures and for productivity purposes.

- Educator Preparation and Development: Rated "1" - Early tech level; very little professional development being provided to staff; very little funding for staff development being allocated; very few teachers able to meet State Board of Education Certification (SBEC) technology proficiencies standard.

EXHIBIT 1-44
SMSD LONG RANGE TECHNOLOGY PLAN
1998–2003

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITY EXAMPLES
I. Maximize student innovative performance by employing innovative teaching techniques	I.1 Provide dynamic instructional environments through which all students can learn. I.2 Integrate technology competencies into the curriculum. I.3 Expand home-based learning opportunities for students and parents during non-traditional public school hours. I.4 Provide access to continuing education opportunities	Develop a continuum of technology competencies for students beginning in Kindergarten through 12th grade. Establish a technology application strand in all curriculum documents whereby students are expected to utilize technology tools in all subjects. Establish or expand opportunities for students to receive advanced instruction in the use of technology.
II. Enhance information management through the use of technological applications.	II.1 Employ effective and time efficient communication strategies among staff and with parents. II.2 Improve the method of input, transfer, and maintenance of student and staff information and records. II.3 Increase staff productivity.	Increase the use of the on-line evening school-to-parent communications network. Encourage more parent-teacher communications through additional telephone access and voice mail capabilities.
III. Implement a technology staff development program.	III.1 Establish a system to determine and support training needs. III.2 Provide traditional and non-traditional opportunities to receive technology training.	Emphasize campus based training using district trainers. Provide technology training that is curriculum area specific.
IV. Establish guidelines that will assist in the efficient implementation of technology.	IV.1 Develop procedures that will provide direction and focus during project implementation. IV.2 Publish standards that will provide consistency and quality support of technology projects.	Establish minimum standards for new hardware. Determine an appropriate computer- to-student ratio for elementary and secondary campuses.
V. Furnish technology resources that will enhance instruction and expedite management functions.	V.1 Provide appropriate technological equipment and materials based on program needs. V.2 Maximize the efficiency of hardware repair. V.3 Provide necessary staffing to support technology. V.4 Provide appropriate facilities equipped with the infrastructure necessary to use technology effectively. V.5 Pursue and coordinate funding opportunities.	Consider the employment of an instructional software support specialist. Include technology competencies as a consideration when hiring teachers, administrators, and other support staff.

SOURCE: SMSD Long Range Technology Plan 1998–2003.

EXHIBIT 1-45
LONG-RANGE TECHNOLOGY PLAN: 1998–2003
ACTIVITIES FOR INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY COMPETENCIES INTO THE CURRICULUM

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	OUTCOME/EVALUATION
Develop a continuum of technology competencies for students beginning in Kindergarten through 12th grade.	Shared (1)	Phase I (3)	Completed document; enhanced instruction in the classroom.
Establish a technology application strand in all curriculum documents whereby students are expected to utilize technology tools in all subjects.	Shared	Phase I	Completed documents; enhanced instruction in the classroom.
Establish or expand opportunities for students to receive advanced instruction in the use of technology.	Campus (2)	Phase I	New course offerings; better preparation of students for the workplace.

SOURCE: Long Range Technology Plan 1998–2003, page 14.
(1) Refers to districtwide committees.
(2) Refers to principal and staff.
(3) Phase I = 1998–99, Phase II = 2000–01, Phase III = 2002–03.

- Administration and Support Services: Rated "2" - Developing tech level; past technology plans have not been monitored; many of the technology efforts are focused on administrative tasks; an ineffective district level Technology director.

- Infrastructure for Technology: Rated "3" - Advanced tech level; widespread Internet access

and distance learning capabilities; effective local area and wide area networks; good student-and teacher-to-computer ratios, with majority of computers five years old and having no replacement cycle.

The most effective technology plans contain clear goals, objectives, and action plans for technology projects. They assign individual responsibility for implementation steps and set deadlines.

Veribest ISD (VISD) has a thorough Technology Plan. The plan contains specific strategies for achieving each objective. Each strategy has a person assigned to it, a timeline, a cost estimate, and an evaluation component that includes references to source documents supporting the conclusion.

The Texas Center for Educational Technology (www.tcet.unt.edu) published *A Guide to Technology Planning for Texas Public School Districts*. This guide focuses on the content of a technology plan, the vision and goals that should precede and drive the plan, and practical guidelines for developing the plan.

The district should revise the Technology Plan to assign activities to individuals with due dates. The Technology Plan for 2004–07 should be updated to include activity assignments to individuals with due dates, and performance measures should be used to hold individuals accountable. The board should receive regular progress reports on the implementation of the Technology Plan and any major technology projects.

DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN (REC. 13)

SMSD does not have a Disaster Recovery Plan for the technology area, which could result in the loss of information processing capabilities. The plans and actions needed to recover from minor losses or temporary outages to catastrophic losses of information resources have not been developed.

The district does back up data files on a daily basis. Each week data files are stored at the Harris County Department of Education. However, the district has not done a risk assessment to determine what information should be backed up and stored off-site. The following is a list of important business continuity items the district does not adequately consider:

- Critical activities performed within the system.

- Space and equipment necessary for restoring essential operations.

- Inventory of all computer technology assets, including data, software, hardware, documentation, and supplies.

- Reciprocal agreement with comparable organizations to share each other's equipment or

lease backup equipment to allow the system to operate critical functions in the event of a disaster.

- Plans to procure hardware, software, and other equipment as necessary to ensure that critical operations are resumed as soon as possible.

- Procedures for obtaining off-site backup records.

- Arrangements with vendors to provide priority delivery for emergency orders.

- Assigning business continuity roles and responsibilities by name and job title so that everyone knows exactly what needs to be done.

- Actions to be taken to restore critical functions.

A district needs to be able to answer the question, "Where are our systems vulnerable, and what do we do if there is a major crash or office destruction?" At a minimum, effective districts perform a risk assessment to determine vulnerable areas. Countermeasures should then be developed for each risk possibility. **Exhibit 1-46** lists examples of key elements of a disaster recovery plan.

Glen Rose ISD's Disaster Recovery Plan is a good model to follow. It includes emergency contacts for the Technology department staff, the district, and software and hardware vendors. The plan is complete with protocols for both partial and complete recoveries to ensure that the technology staff is knowledgeable in every aspect of recovery and restoration. The plan also outlines designated alternate sites dependent upon the type of outage that occurs.

SMSD should develop and test a comprehensive Disaster Recovery Plan that includes all district information processes. The director of Instructional Technology should develop the Disaster Recovery Plan. The director of Instructional Technology should present the plan to the superintendent and board for approval prior to the 2005–06 school year.

TECHNOLOGY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (REC. 14)

SMSD has not developed and documented standard policies and procedures for information technology-related functions. According to the network administrator, the only documented technology policy and procedure is the Internet Use Policy. If the network administrator and computer technicians are not available for any reason, anyone attempting to perform required technology functions would find it extremely difficult because of the lack of documented procedures. For example, the data files are backed up and stored off-site. Without adequate documentation, SMSD staff may carry out the backup function in error and increase the risk of data loss.

EXHIBIT 1-46
EXAMPLE OF KEY ELEMENTS OF A DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN

STEP	DETAILS
Build the disaster recovery team.	Identify a disaster recovery team that includes key policy makers, building management, end-users, key outside contractors, and technical staff.
Obtain and/or approximate key information.	Develop an exhaustive list of critical activities performed within the system.
	Develop an estimate of the minimum space and equipment necessary for restoring essential operations.
	Develop a timeframe for starting initial operations after a security incident.
	Develop a list of key personnel and their responsibilities.
Perform and/or delegate key duties.	Develop an inventory of all computer technology assets, including data, software, hardware, documentation and supplies.
	Set up a reciprocal agreement with comparable organizations to share each other's equipment or lease backup equipment to allow the system to operate critical functions in the event of a disaster.
	Make plans to procure hardware, software, and other equipment as necessary to ensure that critical operations are resumed as soon as possible.
	Establish procedures for obtaining off-site backup records.
	Locate support resources that might be needed, such as equipment repair, trucking, and cleaning companies.
	Arrange with vendors to provide priority delivery for emergency orders.
	Identify data recovery specialists and establish emergency agreements.
Specify details within the plan.	Identify individual roles and responsibilities by name and job title so that everyone knows exactly what needs to be done.
	Define actions to be taken in advance of an occurrence or undesirable event.
	Define actions to be taken at the onset of an undesirable event to limit damage, loss, and compromised data integrity.
	Identify actions to be taken to restore critical functions.
	Define actions to be taken to re-establish normal operations.
Test the plan.	Test the plan frequently and completely.
	Analyze the results to improve the plan and identify further needs.
Deal with damage appropriately.	If a disaster actually occurs, document all costs and videotape the damage.
	Be prepared to overcome downtime on your own; insurance settlements can take time to resolve.
Give consideration to other significant issues.	Don't make a plan unnecessarily complicated.
	Make one individual responsible for maintaining the plan, but have it structured so that others are authorized and prepared to implement if it is needed.
	Update the plan regularly and whenever changes are made to your system.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, "Safeguarding Your Technology" (http://nces.ed.gov/pubs98/safetech/), April 2003.

Exhibit 1-47 lists the SMSD technology-related policies and procedures that are not documented.

Effective organizations develop information technology policies that include personal computer technology, computer accounts and passwords, computer viruses, data protection, use of technology resources, networks and electronic mail, electronic signatures, and Internet use.

Exhibit 1-48 lists examples of information technology policies.

Documented information technology policies and procedures support a district's business continuity activities, including data backup, disaster recovery, network maintenance, and troubleshooting. Documented policies and procedures also maximize computer assets, provide information security, and clearly define management responsibilities.

The district should develop and document district technology policies and procedures that include all information related activities. The district should use the procedures not documented in the list in **Exhibit**

1-47 as a first phase of documentation activity. The most immediate items needing documentation are business continuity activities (data backup, disaster recovery, network maintenance/troubleshooting), with the documentation of data backup procedures a top priority.

WORK ORDER SYSTEM (REC. 15)

SMSD has a paper work order system for technology, which results in service delays and inadequate service history information. If there is a computer related problem, a teacher completes a work order form, which is forwarded to the principal's office for review and approval. The Instructional Technology Department secretary comes to their office and picks up the work order or receives the work order by fax. Each work order is entered onto a spreadsheet. At a meeting with the assistant principals, an assistant principal said that it may take up to two weeks for a computer technician to respond to a service problem.

EXHIBIT 1-47
SMSD TECHNOLOGY-RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURES NOT DOCUMENTED
APRIL 2004

POLICY/PROCEDURE	ISSUES
SMSD Disaster Recovery Plan	No documented plan.
SMSD data backup	Not documented.
SMSD network maintenance/troubleshooting	SMSD staff and/or outside vendor should have procedure documentation.
SMSD Computer Replacement Plan	Not documented.
SMSD technology inventory	Not documented.
SMSD e-mail accounts	Not documented.

SOURCE: SMSD network administrator interview, April 2004.

EXHIBIT 1-48
EXAMPLES OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICIES
APRIL 2004

POLICY	SCOPE	RESPONSIBILITIES
Use of Technology Resources	The use of district technology resources for data processing, communication and electronic office systems.	Use of information and information systems is prohibited without written approval. Violations will subject employees to disciplinary action. Contractors will be subject to the terms of the Non-Disclosure and Confidentiality Agreement.
Networks and Electronic Mail	All information traveling over the SMSD computer networks not specifically identified as the property of other parties is treated as a SMSD asset.	No responsibility is assumed for the disclosure of information sent over SMSD systems and no assurances are made about the privacy of information handled by SMSD internal networks.
Electronic Signatures	Approvals or authorizations are typically given in the form of a signature on a paper document. However, documents that require approval may be transmitted electronically. In these cases, a name, or some other unique and recognizable identification code can be considered if certain conditions are met.	The issuer, approver and recipient(s) of a document are aware that this action constitutes an approval or authorization. Sufficient security controls exist to prevent a person from initiating a document or transmitting an approval under a name other that his/her own. The system on which the electronic document is "signed" records that date and time of the transmittal. The electronic document is maintained on file to provide evidence of approval.
Internet Policy	SMSD use of the Internet requires guidelines to provide uniformity among the school information users.	To communicate with district and non-district personnel, an employee must receive authorization to deal directly with personnel in the normal course of the workday and must have authorization for access to e-mail or the Internet.
Computer Accounts and Passwords	Computer accounts and passwords identify computer users and verify their authorization to perform specific computer tasks.	Computer accounts and the passwords to those accounts must be kept private and confidential. Employees are responsible for the use of and actions performed by their computer accounts. Maintain passwords in accordance with the password guidelines.
Computer Viruses	A computer virus is an unauthorized program that replicates itself, attaches itself to other programs and spreads onto various data storage media and/or across a network.	To assure continued uninterrupted service for computers and networks, all computer users must keep district-approved virus screening software enabled on their computers. Users may not bypass scanning processes.
Personal Computer Technology	This policy governs the acquisition, use, maintenance security and data integrity of the district's personal computer technology.	The Technology department of SMSD is solely responsible for the acquisition of all personal computer hardware and software that is used by SMSD. Ownership of personal computer hardware and software is vested in the Technology department. No other department is authorized to purchase hardware or software.
Data/Program Backup and Retention Periods	Any SMSD information that is stored on the network and computers.	Technology department must perform automatic daily backups of all information stored on these systems. Information must be retained for as long as necessary, both on-site and off-site.
Data Encryption	When SMSD "critical" or "confidential" information, source code or information entrusted to SMSD by a business partner is transmitted over any public communication network, it must be sent in encrypted form.	Any SMSD information user must report the following situation immediately to the Technology department: If sensitive SMSD information is lost, disclosed to unauthorized parties, or suspected of being lost or disclosed to unauthorized parties.

Source: WCL ENTERPRISES, April 2004.

The SMSD Technology Department does not have a history on the type of work orders that are received and serviced. Without capturing and recording the specific types of technical problems, the Technology Department has no record of computers that have performance problems. If data on the type of work orders serviced were tracked, many basic types of problems could be identified and potentially serviced by campus personnel.

Deer Park ISD uses an electronic work order software application that is a web-based help desk. At any time, the originator of a work request can log back in and check the status of or update their request. They can also work one-on-one with the technician that is assigned to the request. The system is designed for the Internet or Intranet (log in and continue working from different locations), allows one to hire remote technicians, has automatic notification to the technicians by email or pager, provides an efficient point and click interface, and has a fully searchable database including customer history and equipment performance statistics.

Electronic work order systems provide efficiency by allowing requests to be submitted through the computer network and the status of the work request to be monitored. These systems track computer problem history, which enables service technicians to identify and repair computers with recurring problems much easier.

SMSD should implement an electronic work order system in order to improve technical support. The assistant superintendent should discuss and consider the best method to handle service requests. The new request reporting procedure should be introduced to all school principals. In house training (at no cost) for all staff in this new process should be held during designated training periods at the start of the next school year. Relatively inexpensive online work order systems like the one Deer Park ISD uses can be purchased for a one-time software cost of around $499, with an annual maintenance cost of $35 beginning in 2005–06.

TECHNOLOGY STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (REC. 16)

SMSD has no technology staff development program. The lack of a comprehensive staff development program for teachers and staff results in students not being able to master technology skills and the staff not being as productive in the work place.

The State Board of Education Certification (SBEC) has approved technology standards for teachers. These teacher technology standards are based on the Technology Applications TEKS for eighth grade students. Teachers will also need to know how to plan,

organize, deliver, and evaluate instruction for all students using technology. For example, teachers need to know how to provide students opportunities to create technology products, such as multimedia presentations and web pages, that support their learning of the subject matter in both computer labs and classroom settings.

School districts are faced with the challenge of providing technology professional development that meets SBEC's teacher technology standards and integrates Technology Applications TEKS into the core and enrichment areas. The Technology Applications TEKS provides benchmarks for grades K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and high school that emphasize foundation, information acquisition, communication, and problem solving skills. Teachers are required to integrate the required Technology Applications TEKS involving foundation, information acquisition, problem solving, and communication skill through the use of a variety of technology tools (e.g., word processing, desktop publishing, presentation, database, spreadsheet, internet) into their respective core and enrichment TEKS. Students are expected to create, access, manipulate, utilize, communicate, and publish information using technology that supports their learning process in the core and enrichment TEKS.

In order to facilitate the Technology Applications TEKS integration into the core and enrichment TEKS, SMSD needs to develop a comprehensive staff development program and ensure that there is as much technology access for students as possible. Students need access to technology in order to meet the technology requirements. This access can be addressed through both classroom computers and computer labs. Teachers will need staff development on the content of the Technology Applications TEKS and how to incorporate these TEKS into their respective core and enrichment subject TEKS with their classroom set of three computers. The present technology access in SMSD of 13 computer labs, four distance learning/video conferencing labs, library computers, and two carts with 31 laptops is sufficient student access for the integration of Technology Applications TEKS to occur.

In May 1999, SMSD provided each teacher a technology self-assessment and professional development record. It was the intent of this document to assess and track a teacher's use of technology in these areas: terminology, equipment operations, operating system, and application software such as word processing, multimedia presentation, desktop publishing, library research resources, electronic mail, Internet, web pages, databases, grade book, troubleshooting, copyright and ethical issues, distance learning, voice messaging, and integration. A 12-hour

staff development requirement in technology outside contract hours was also put into place.

This technology professional development record, consistent with the State Board of Education Certification's teacher technology competencies and the Technology Applications TEKS for students, was never fully implemented. At the start of the 2003–04 school year, the only training required was a 1.5 hour overview of computer basics and the Acceptable Use Policy. While teachers know how to use their electronic mail, report grades and attendance electronically, and submit their lessons electronically in a Word template, it is clear that they are not integrating applications into their teaching.

There are two other areas where technology has not been used effectively. One area involves the four distance learning/videoconferencing labs that have been deployed over the last two years. In May 2003 Region 4 was paid $21,000 to provide training on these systems, but according to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, they have not been used because they lack the onsite technical and curriculum support. A second area involves the three computers in each classroom. The assistant principals and high school principal described teachers using the computer for productivity purposes, and a teacher occasionally created a multimedia presentation or teacher-selected web site that reinforces their lesson. Students were not actively using computers to create technology products to support their learning of the lesson content.

Effective districts implement a comprehensive staff development program that addresses technology integration. Some districts accomplish this task through sending teachers to programs like the Intel Teach to the Future initiative. This free training program provides a robust 40-hour curriculum where teachers are required to develop a minimum of three technology integration lessons incorporating Microsoft Office suite. This training helps teachers use the computers in their classrooms as well as in their computer labs, and these teachers then provide staff development on how to incorporate their videoconferencing systems into curriculum.

The district should develop a comprehensive staff development program that addresses technology competencies, use of videoconferencing equipment, and integration of technology into the core and enrichment curriculum. The director of Instructional Technology should prepare an action plan covering the following items and present it to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction for consideration prior to 2005–06:

- Develop and implement an online technology professional development system that will post classes, provide for registration, and track all technology-related staff development.

- Develop and offer a series of after-school, Saturday, in-service, and summer technology workshops that involve basic applications to advanced topics with an integration focus.

- Reinstitute the 12 hour off-contract technology staff development requirement.

- Send director of Instructional Technology, two Instructional Technology specialists, and four campus based support leaders to the free Intel Teach to the Future training program.

- Research other district's technology staff development and integration programs (such as New Braunfels, Hays, La Porte, and Deer Park ISD).

- Have teachers use the classroom set of three computers to address Technology Applications TEKS (use teacher and student computers).

- Consider a Technology Incentives Program that rewards a teacher's progress in their technology knowledge and skills with additional technology tools such as a scanner, digital camera, laptop, or additional computers for their classroom.

- Provide staff development on how to technically support and integrate videoconferencing equipment.

KEYBOARDING CLASS REQUIREMENT (REC. 17)

Stafford High School technology course sequence requirements do not maximize students taking advanced technology courses. Students are required to take Keyboarding before other technology courses. As a result, this course scheduling sequence limits students' opportunities to take advanced high school technology courses, which results in students not obtaining the optimum technology knowledge and skills necessary for postsecondary education or the workplace.

According to the Stafford High School Career and Technology Department chairperson at the time of the review, the high school scheduled all 217 ninth graders in Keyboarding, 115 students were enrolled in Business Computer Information Systems, and only 100 students were enrolled in Web Mastering, Digital Graphics and Animation, Computer Science I, Computer Science II, and the CISCO Academy.

The present course sequence has too many students taking Keyboarding before other technology courses as

part of their graduation plan, and not enough students taking the more advanced courses. The present course sequence does not challenge students.

Hays CISD and Richardson ISD have offered a wide range of advanced high school technology applications courses. During 2003–04, La Porte ISD no longer required Keyboarding and Business Computer Information Systems as a prerequisite for more advanced technology courses. As a result, nearly 600 students were enrolled in Web Mastering, Desktop Publishing, Video Technology, and Multimedia classes.

SMSD should eliminate the requirement for taking Keyboarding prior to taking more advanced high school technology courses. The district should make Keyboarding an elective class not a prerequisite for other technology classes, encourage ninth grade students to take Business Computer Information Systems or one of the Technology Applications TEKS courses (Web Mastering, Desktop Publishing, Digital Graphics and Animator, Multimedia, Computer Science I and II, or Video Technology) to meet the technology graduation one-credit requirement, and encourage high school students to take a minimum of two technology courses in order to better prepare them for the work world or post secondary education.

COMPUTER EQUIPMENT INVENTORY (REC. 18)

SMSD does not maintain appropriate and needed information about their computer equipment inventory, making it difficult for the district to have sufficient information to manage its computer inventory. There is no information maintained on the age of computers or the version of the operating system used on each computer, information that is necessary for developing a computer replacement plan, determining if a potential software acquisition can reside on existing computers, or resolving any software licensing issues.

The district provided the review team with a total inventory report of 205 pages, dated July 29, 2002, that provided a listing of all equipment, including musical instruments and coffee makers, with the following information fields: barcode, old ID, description, manufacturer, model, serial number, quantity, unit cost, AER (actual, estimated actual, replacement) cost, total cost, campus/department, and room. The report did not have any information on the age of the computers.

The district provided a more recent inventory report containing 61 pages, dated January 22, 2004, that listed the following information fields: campus location, barcode, description, manufacturer, and model. The report also contained three pages of "missing computers-SMSD" and 14 pages of "equipment out of service" that included computers, monitors, and printers. The report listed the following information fields: description, barcode, campus number, and campus room number.

The computer inventory information that is missing includes the following: date purchased, processor speed (mhz – mega hertz), and memory size/disk capacity. This information is necessary in planning for computer replacement and determining if potential software is capable of being processed by a computer.

Lyford Consolidated ISD has a program to annually inventory computers and verify their use. The Technology facilitator maintains a detailed inventory of computer equipment. This inventory tracks selected information for each piece of computer equipment, including campus number, room number, equipment type, manufacturer, model, serial number, barcode number, and replacement cost.

SMSD should maintain the appropriate and needed information about the computer equipment inventory. The district should annually keep a computer inventory with the following data fields completed for each computer: brand name, model name, date purchased, price, serial number, processor speed (mhz), memory, disk capacity, operating system, installed location, and individual responsible for the computer.

TECHNOLOGY REPLACEMENT PLAN (REC. 19)

SMSD does not have a replacement plan for computers and there are no district standards that describe the criteria to be used for replacing computer equipment. Since technology equipment is expensive, lack of a computer replacement plan makes it more difficult to manage the cost of replacing older computer equipment. Standards improve staff efficiency, ensure compliance on requests for any new equipment, and offer the potential for significant savings in the purchase of technology related equipment, software, and supplies.

The network administrator said the district has not acted on replacing their five-year old computers. Approximately 800 of their 1,050 student computers now need to be replaced because these computers cannot run the latest instructional software needed to meet the Technology Applications TEKS. The network administrator said the majority of the district's computers are out of warranty, and parts had to be taken from other computers for computer maintenance.

According to the high school principal, there is a need for new computers in order to support up-to-date software. During a meeting with all the district assistant principals, the need for new computers was expressed. The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction said that new computers have been

purchased for two labs at the primary and elementary schools for $60,000.

Galveston ISD (GISD) is using innovative ways to replace older computers and has found a way to put the older computers to good use. As computers are being replaced at their middle school, the older models are being distributed to students for use in homes where families cannot afford to buy a computer.

SMSD should develop a Technology Replacement Plan. The director of Instructional Technology should gather information about the age and condition of the district's computer inventory.

The director should meet with the superintendent to explore options regarding possible funding sources that could be used to replace district computers. The director should prepare a plan of implementation for future replacement of outdated technology equipment, and this effort should be an ongoing process and not a one-time event.

For more background on Chapter 1, Educational Service Delivery, see page 149 in the General Information section of the Appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION	2004–05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 1: EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY							
1. Implement scope and sequence documents, pacing calendars, and develop benchmark assessments or tests for all SMSD courses and subject areas.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
2. Implement a structured, focused process to improve student performance that is based on test score analysis to determine strengths and weaknesses of student performance, supported by instruction based on aligned curriculum, with specific responsibilities and monitoring.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
3. Adopt district guidelines on the appropriate use of counselor time.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
4. Evaluate other bilingual/English as a Second Language (ESL) models that research shows have increased achievement of Limited English proficient (LEP) students.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
5. Expand the opportunities for students to earn college credit while in high school by entering into additional articulation agreements for courses offered in the Career and Technology Education Program.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
6. Increase the number of business representatives on the Career and Technology Education advisory board.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
7. Annually evaluate the Career and Technology Education (CATE) Program.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
8. Include state compensatory education strategies, FTEs, and specific dollar amounts from all sources along with timelines and evaluation criteria in the district and campus improvement plans.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
9. Revise the district's Gifted and Talented (G/T) Education Plan to include a comprehensive approach to providing G/T services to students.	($11,800)	($11,800)	$0	$0	$0	($23,600)	$0

FISCAL IMPACT (CONTINUED)

RECOMMENDATION	2004–05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 1: EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY							
10. Develop nurse staffing ratios.	$0	$25,728	$25,728	$25,728	$25,728	$102,912	$0
11. Restructure the district's technology organization.	($60,476)	($43,904)	($43,904)	($43,904)	($43,904)	($236,092)	$0
12. Revise the Technology Plan to assign activities to individuals with due dates.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
13. Develop and test a comprehensive Disaster Recovery Plan that includes all district information processes.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
14. Develop and document district technology policies and procedures that include all information related activities.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
15. Implement an electronic work order system for technology in order to improve technical support.	$0	($35)	($35)	($35)	($35)	($140)	($499)
16. Develop a comprehensive staff development program that addresses technology competencies, use of videoconferencing equipment, and integration of technology into the core and enrichment curriculum.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
17. Eliminate the requirement for taking Keyboarding prior to taking other high school technology courses.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
18. Maintain the appropriate and needed information about the computer equipment inventory.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
19. Develop a Technology Replacement Plan.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Totals-Chapter 1	($72,276)	($30,011)	($18,211)	($18,211)	($18,211)	($156,920)	($499)

CHAPTER 2
DISTRICT MANAGEMENT

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

A critical function for any school district is appropriately managing personnel. Elementary and secondary education is a labor-intensive undertaking. Labor costs consume approximately 80 percent of the average school district budget. Community relations are another essential component of school administration. School districts and schools have a responsibility to tell parents and taxpayers how the district is spending its money and enlist their help in delivering high quality, effective, and efficient programs.

The Stafford Municipal School District (SMSD) is the only municipal school district in the state.

SMSD is partially located in both Fort Bend and Harris Counties. The district lies approximately 20 miles southwest of the City of Houston, along portions of Highway 59 and US Highway 90A. SMSD not only includes the seven square miles consistent with the City of Stafford but also 17 acres contiguous to the City of Stafford but within the boundaries of neighboring Missouri City. The district is part of Regional Education Service Center IV (Region 4) located in Houston.

The City of Stafford provides the following services to the district: maintenance of school grounds, equipment, buses, athletic facilities, and police officers who provide security during school hours and extracurricular activities. With the exception of the police officers used as school security personnel during the regular school day, the district pays the city for these services.

During the Seventy-eighth session of the Texas Legislature in 2003, House Bill 2964 was passed with a key provision that specified the number of members of the Board of Trustees and City Council that must approve both the budget and the tax rate for SMSD.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS
- SMSD has enhanced the educational process by developing a shared decision-making framework that it monitors and changes to meet district needs. By developing this shared decision-making process, the district is improving communication, encouraging active participation, sharing responsibility and accountability, and cultivating a climate conducive to innovation to improve student performance.

- Stafford Middle School is developing an innovative approach to address the short- and long- term needs of its students. Stafford Middle School is trying to increase student performance for the near- and long-term by involving teachers, parents, community members, and business leaders in a process to develop a plan that will provide structure for continuous student improvement over the next five years.

- District applicants have easy web access to employment information and availability of current employment opportunities. SMSD provides prospective candidates for positions in the district easy access to employment opportunities through the district's web site employment link.

- The district's superintendent and staff actively promote positive community relations. SMSD uses various methods such as newsletters, announcement flyers, town hall meetings, and local newspaper articles to communicate with parents, area groups, and individuals in the community.

- SMSD provides information to parents in Spanish. The district translates legal and immunization notices and a variety of forms, notices, and flyers into Spanish to ensure that information is available to more families.

- The district creates goodwill and positive relations in the community by allowing area groups to use SMSD facilities. The district permits the use of school facilities by organizations or groups within the district to promote positive community relations with the City of Stafford, youth support organizations, and community members.

- SMSD created an educational foundation to supplement funding for educational programs and activities. The district has developed a tax-exempt education foundation to secure financial support and other resources for district programs.

FINDINGS
- The district and the City of Stafford have not worked together to bridge differences in opinion and enhance communications between the two entities. This relationship needs to improve since House Bill 2964 passed during the Seventy-eighth session of the Texas Legislature in 2003 requires three-fourths agreement of the total voting members present from City Council and the Board of Trustees to approve the district's tax rate and annual budget.

- SMSD's organization has two assistant superintendent positions, which results in additional administrative costs. Although the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel has served the district well, approximately 80 percent of his time is spent on human resource matters, which fall under the responsibility of the director of Personnel.

- SMSD does not use staffing formulas based on enrollment to determine the appropriate number of staff for its schools. From 1999–2000 to 2003–04, staff increased 9.9 percent while student enrollment declined by 1.0 percent.

- SMSD does not provide a district staff handbook for all employees. Handbooks formally outline performance expectations for employees and ensure that each employee has access to and is made aware of district goals, policies, regulations, and benefits. It also provides new employees a valuable resource to locate district information and procedures.

- The district does not designate positions as exempt or non-exempt and does not require all non-exempt positions to maintain time reports for each pay period, as required by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Failure to accurately designate the exemption status of a position has resulted in noncompliance with the overtime requirements of FLSA.

- SMSD departments and campuses have different standards for recording hours worked by non-exempt employees. Not having standardized procedures puts the district at risk of noncompliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act, which requires that the hours worked each workday and the total hours worked each week must be documented.

- The district does not have an automated process to contact substitute teachers after working hours to ensure that positions are covered at the beginning of the next school day. This situation could result in the absent teacher's position being unfilled at the beginning of the instructional day and students that are in the class of the absent teacher not receiving a full day of instruction.

- Payroll information is maintained by the Human Resource Department in an individual employee folder and not in a separate file in the payroll department. The availability to other departments of an employee's personnel information, which is considered to be private under the law, violates an employee's privacy.

- SMSD has a high number of teachers with temporary or emergency permits. Uncertified teachers may not be sufficiently trained in the field in which they are teaching. As a result, they may not be able to provide an adequate foundation in these subjects to students.

- The district does not have job descriptions for all positions in the district. The effectiveness of employees is reduced when there are no job descriptions or out-of-date job descriptions. Accurate job descriptions also reduce the risk of lawsuits by clearly stating the essential duties of each position.

- SMSD does not maximize the use of the district web site to improve communication with parents. The web site does not provide sufficient parent access to information or effective communication with the community.

- The district does not have a plan for developing community/business partnerships. Each school is responsible for its community/business relationships, which has resulted in a fragmented effort to build community partnerships that would strengthen and enhance the quality of education in the district.

- SMSD does not have a volunteer involvement program to encourage parents and other citizens to volunteer in the district or at the school level. SMSD schools do not track volunteer information consistently or have a system for sharing volunteer information, and there is no standard for the types of volunteer information kept at each school.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 20 (p. 59): Increase the interaction of SMSD and the City of Stafford to include meetings, committees, and communications not specifically required by law.** The superintendent, Board of Trustees, mayor, and City Council have not regularly met in the past to discuss issues and should improve communication by holding quarterly meetings between City Council and the Board of Trustees, establishing a joint budget committee to discuss the district's budget prior to the mandated approval meeting, creating a committee of council members and board members to review current services provided to SMSD by the city, and providing joint communications to the community on a periodic basis.

- **Recommendation 21 (p. 60): Eliminate the position of assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel.** By assigning the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel's human resource responsibilities to the

director of Personnel and placing the remaining departments that the assistant superintendent is responsible for under the superintendent, the district could eliminate this position and reduce administrative costs.

- **Recommendation 22 (p. 65): Develop staffing levels based on student enrollment and reduce campus staffing to reflect recommended minimum standards.** The district should develop staffing levels based on student enrollment and reduce campus staffing to reflect recommended minimum standards. Based on the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) standards, SMSD should reduce its staff by 4.6 secretary/clerk positions.

- **Recommendation 23 (p. 67): Develop one handbook that covers all district employees and establish procedures to update and distribute it to employees annually.** The district should develop a process to create an employee handbook and establish procedures to ensure the information is updated annually. SMSD has started this effort by using the Texas Association of School Boards model employee handbook as a starting point in preparing a customized handbook for the district. The handbook should be ready for 2005–06 and available on the district's web site.

- **Recommendation 24 (p. 67): Comply with the designation, overtime, and pay period reporting requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act.** Job descriptions in the district should designate the exemption status of all positions. The district should also develop strategies and forms to be used to assure compliance with overtime requirements.

- **Recommendation 25 (p. 69): Automate the time and attendance function using standardized procedures for all non-exempt employees.** The timekeeping requirements for all areas of the district should be reviewed to ensure compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The business manager should review the existing manual systems during 2004–05 and make any changes necessary to the manual processes to ensure compliance with the record keeping requirements of the FLSA. The business manager should then review available automated systems for implementation in 2005–06.

- **Recommendation 26 (p. 70): Implement an automated substitute calling system to ensure continuity of instruction in the classroom and improve the efficiency of payroll processing.** An automated substitute calling system should be implemented to ensure that the district always has

quality instruction available during the school day. These systems should be thoroughly evaluated prior to April 2005 so that a solution can be tested and implemented prior to the start of 2005–06.

- **Recommendation 27 (p. 71): Require the Payroll Department to maintain employee payroll information in a file located in the Payroll Department.** Payroll information should be maintained in a separate file in the Payroll Department. The payroll clerk and other finance employees should not have access to an employee's individual personnel file. The director of Personnel and the superintendent should be the only ones able to view information contained in that file.

- **Recommendation 28 (p. 71): Develop strategies to increase the percentage of teachers with proper certification.** The district should review current hiring policies, evaluate recruitment efforts, and conduct interviews with teachers who left the district to identify strategies to reduce the number of teachers being hired without proper certification. The district could also gather information on teacher morale and school climate through a survey or some other type of assessment tool to help in this effort.

- **Recommendation 29 (p. 74): Update all job descriptions and establish a system to ensure they are kept current.** The district should customize job descriptions, distribute them to employees, and continue to review and update those descriptions. Job descriptions should include job title, supervisor, pay grade, wage/hour status, primary purpose, qualifications, major responsibilities and duties, supervisory responsibilities, and working conditions.

- **Recommendation 30 (p. 75): Develop and implement a plan to upgrade the district's web site.** The district Webmaster should develop a prioritized plan for improving the district web site that is reviewed by the superintendent and implemented during 2004–05. The district has started this task by holding meetings with the SMSD Information Technology staff and an outside vendor to discuss the design of a new web site.

- **Recommendation 31 (p. 75): Develop a plan that assigns responsibilities for developing community/business partnerships.** By using the business contacts of the high school facilitator, the Stafford City Council, the Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce, the president of the school board, and the principals from each school, the superintendent should prepare a community/

business partnership development plan to develop community/business relationships during 2004–05.

- **Recommendation 32 (p. 76): Develop a volunteer involvement program.** The superintendent should direct the primary and elementary school principal to chair a committee of teachers and parents from all schools to develop a volunteer program that encourages parents and other citizens to contribute their time at schools to enrich the educational program, assist staff members in the performance of their duties, and enhance the relationship between the school district and the community.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

SHARED DECISION-MAKING FRAMEWORK

SMSD began implementing site-based decision-making in spring 1993 with the implementation of the district's *Framework for Site-Based Decision Making*. Since that time, campus-level professional staff such as teachers, librarians, counselors and assistant principals have completed four evaluations of the process. The evaluation form (**Exhibit 2-1**) provides information that helps the board and administrators determine if the decision-making process is being implemented and if the outcomes identified in the plan are being achieved.

In 1997, a five-year comprehensive review was conducted that included a look at training needs, an assessment of the effectiveness in reaching expected outcomes, and redefinition of responsibilities within the areas covered by site-based decision-making. From this review emerged the current process, or *Shared Decision Making Framework*. This framework further supported the decentralization of decisions and

activities. The *Shared Decision Making Framework* was reviewed again in 2001 by a subcommittee of the District Wide Education Improvement Committee (DWEIC), which made recommendations to the DWEIC that were approved in May 2001.

The *Shared Decision Making Framework* states that the purpose of shared decision-making is as follows:

"…to establish an environment where the educational process is enhanced through collaborative planning and leadership. By implementing shared decision making, the District is committed to improving communication, encouraging active participation, sharing responsibility and accountability, and cultivating a climate conducive to innovation which will result in improved student performance."

In each district, an administrative procedure must be provided to clearly define the respective roles and responsibilities of the superintendent, central office staff, principals, teachers, district-level committee members, and campus-level committee members in six areas: planning, budgeting, curriculum, staffing patterns, staff development, and school organization.

The *Shared Decision Making Framework* identifies who in SMSD has primary responsibility for each area or parameter within the scope of site-based decision-making: planning and evaluation, curriculum and instruction, budgeting, staffing patterns, school organization, and professional development. **Exhibit 2-2** includes examples of the activities and primary responsibility within each of the six parameters. By specifying responsibilities for discrete activities, SMSD avoids confusion and conflict between groups at different

EXHIBIT 2-1
SMSD CAMPUS BASED PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING EVALUATION FORM

DESCRIPTORS	AGREE	DISAGREE	I DON'T KNOW
Specific educational objectives have been set and are included in the campus action plan.			
The campus action plan contains objectives that address the performance of special needs students.			
The campus action plan establishes objectives for each academic excellence indicator.			
Campus staff, community, and parents are integral members of the CPOC, which develop, review, and revise the campus action plan.			
On your campus, site-based decision making has resulted in:			
improved student performance			
active participation of parents, students, and staff			
a climate conducive to innovation			
collaborative planning			
shared leadership			
improved communication			
What changes do you suggest for improving the shared decision making process for your campus?			

SOURCE: SMSD Shared Decision Making, District Framework, 2003.

levels in the organization.

As a result of this framework, the district is enhancing the educational process through improved communication, active participation, and shared responsibilities and accountability in an effort to improve student performance.

INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO STUDENT NEEDS AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Stafford Middle School is developing a plan for making the campus action plan a "living, viable document," according to the principal. Teachers, parents, community members, and business leaders are involved in the process to develop a plan that will provide structure for continuous improvement over the next five years.

The process begins with a needs assessment, which is a required part of the district and campus improvement

plans, Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) data, and analysis of data on student performance gaps for Stafford Middle School students. The principal and teachers are developing the first year of the plan to address the most critical needs on the campus for 2004–05. The remainder of the five-year plan will focus on strategic change and improvement.

The middle school is using information developed by the Dana Center at the University of Texas at Austin on high poverty/high performing middle schools and combining it with the middle school model developed by the Carnegie Corporation called Turning Points 2000, which targets specific areas that must be addressed to ensure success for every middle school student, including the following:

- Involving parents and communities in supporting student learning and healthy development;

EXHIBIT 2-2
SMSD SHARED DECISION MAKING PARAMETERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

DESCRIPTOR	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY						
	BOARD OF TRUSTEES	ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM (*)	DWEIC	DISTRICT COMMITTEES	PRINCIPALS	CIT	CAMPUS COMMITTEES
PLANNING AND EVALUATION							
Establish committee structures		X			X		X
Identify student performance problems					X		
Monitor the implementation of improvement plans		X			X		
CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION							
Determine curriculum development process		X			X		
Clarify skills and knowledge that students are to master							X
Suggest curriculum changes							X
Budgeting							
Establish the budget process		X					
Approve the budget	X						
STAFFING PATTERNS							
Recruit personnel		X			X		
Approve personnel contracts	X						
Maintain personnel records		X			X		
SCHOOL ORGANIZATION							
Recommend the district calendar		X	X		X		
Approve student code of conduct	X						
Encourage parent, business, and community involvement	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT							
Establish professional development calendar		X			X		
Approve campus staff development plan					X	X	

SOURCE: SMSD Shared Decision Making, District Framework, 2003.

- Providing a safe and healthy school environment;

- Staffing middle grade schools with teachers who are experts at teaching young adolescents, and engaging teachers in ongoing professional development;

- Governing democratically and involving all school staff members;

- Organizing relationships for learning;

- Using instructional methods that prepare all students to achieve higher standards; and

- Teaching a curriculum grounded in standards, relevant to adolescent's concerns, and based on how students learn best, and using a mixture of assessment models.

By using research based upon data collected from other middle schools with similar socioeconomic characteristics to SMSD, Stafford Middle School is developing a plan to increase student performance for the near- and long-term.

EASY ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION AND OPPORTUNITIES

SMSD provides prospective candidates for positions in the district easy web access to employment opportunities. Candidates do not have to rely on a phone call or on-site district visit to acquire necessary applications and employment information. Providing potential candidates with Internet access to employment information at all hours of the day enhances recruitment efforts.

The district's web site employment link includes the following information for professional, paraprofessional, and classified employment categories:

- Instructions for making an application;

- Application information;

- Reference forms;

- Form for criminal background check; and

- Applications.

The instructions on the web site are specific and provide contact information if the candidate needs additional information. The site also includes teacher salary information, benefit information, and all current job openings. District employees can access employment opportunities if interested in a transfer or promotion. The site is updated as changes occur to ensure current information is provided, and driving directions to the district are provided through a link to an Internet search engine.

By providing easy access to employment opportunities, the district is able to reach prospective candidates without spending any additional district funds.

ACTIVELY PROMOTING COMMUNITY RELATIONS

SMSD uses various methods to communicate with parents, area groups, and individuals in the community. Some of the methods used by the district include the following:

- The superintendent posts a periodic informational letter on the web site.

- The assistant superintendent communicates with the staff by e-mail and also visits the campuses.

- The superintendent is a member of the Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce and the Fort Bend Economic Development Council and attends meetings of these groups where he can exchange information with other group members.

- The superintendent spoke at a town hall meeting on January 22, 2004 about school funding.

- The district provides news releases to the local newspapers, *Fort Bend Sun, Fort Bend Southwest Star, Fort Bend Herald Coaster, Houston Chronicle (This Week section), Fort Bend Lavida Black Voice,* and *Las Noticas.*

- The district distributes the community newsletter, *Spotlight*, to 6,400 Stafford residents each quarter.

- Each school prepares and distributes various announcement flyers, monthly calendars, and a student handbook.

In addition, the superintendent held a series of five parent meetings to provide information about the district's organizational and operational plans. According to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, the purpose of the meetings was to enable the community to understand the roles and responsibilities of district staff members and address any community concerns. The administrative assistant to the superintendent provided the following discussion items from the first parent information meeting on October 8, 2003.

Strengths:

- Middle school stability (Teachers and administrative staff)

- Library (Resources, media services)

- Parent/Teacher Organization

- Community-based excellence

- One teacher's communication with middle school parents about scholarship opportunities

Concerns – Academic:

- Scholarship opportunities (Communication, PSAT, Duke Talent Search)

- Grading policy (GPAs, 4.0 scale)

- Academic concerns (Competitive SAT scores, grading policies, AP exams)

- Internet access to student grades and progress reports

- Insufficient use of library services and staff

- Parent outreach and education (ESL parents, Title I parents, current issues for parents)

Concerns – Support Services:

- Will the model ensure "justice" with the Student Code of Conduct?

- School safety (Role of officers on campus)

- Communication (E-mail, web site)

- Measurable outcomes to determine success of model (Will there be an external evaluation of the model?)

- Teacher retention

- Budgetary impact of staffing

- Responsibilities of administrative staff

- Best practices reaching across middle school to high school

- Use of profanity by faculty to students

- Cafeteria (Quality of food service)

The first four parent information meetings (October 8, 2003; October 15, 2003; October 29, 2003; November 19, 2003) were led by one of three administrators: the superintendent, the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, or the high school principal. According to the assistant superintendent, approximately 120 parents attended the first meeting, around 70 parents attended the second meeting, approximately 40 parents attended the third meeting, and around 25 parents attended the fourth meeting.

According to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, there were two parental steering committees created during the second parent information meeting to review academic structure and support services. The assistant superintendent said the parents on the steering committee came together with district staff members during the subsequent meetings to discuss issues. The main issues raised by the parental steering committees that were discussed during the October 29, 2003 meeting were as follows:

- Conduct an informal survey to determine how staff members feel about the purchasing procedures.

- Provide the current organization. Parents want the current organizational chart with a hierarchy of the staff.

- Develop student incentives. According to the assistant superintendent, parents felt there was a need to do something to motivate some students with programs such as dual credit courses.

- Phase out AP and move toward concurrent enrollment.

- Develop a process for keeping over-achievers in SMSD while also taking the general population into consideration. According to the assistant superintendent, the school introduced the Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) Program, which focuses directly on work-study, tutorials, dual credit, and field trips to colleges and universities.

According to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, the last of the five parent information meetings was held on January 21, 2004, and was attended by approximately 35 parents. The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction said the administration wanted someone in a parent-peer role to conduct the meeting. A parent was selected and paid $200 to lead the meeting. According to the assistant superintendent, the primary issue discussed in the meeting was parent training on how to get information from the Texas Education Agency and No Child Left Behind web sites. There was also a discussion about dual credit courses.

The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction said the main benefits of the information meetings for attending parents were the following:

- Understanding of the dual credit program.

- Understanding the reasons for moving from modified block to traditional student scheduling.

- Understanding of the district's drug prevention efforts.

- The district addressing and dealing with parent concerns.

- Involving parents in the school processes.

- Greater understanding of the school district's goals.

SMSD has also participated in the *Youth in Philanthropy,* sponsored by the Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce. The purpose of the program is to evaluate the needs of the community and to adopt a project to meet them, all

the while experiencing the rewards of volunteerism. A class or an organization of up to 50 students chooses a Not-for-Profit organization. The Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce gives a $500 grant for the work. The Not-for-Profit organization gets up to $2,000 on behalf of the school. Two students get $10,000 for participation in the program.

Fort Bend ISD is expanding their program, *Mastering Our Future*, to include SMSD. The purpose of the program is to encourage teachers to obtain a Masters degree and is accomplished on a cost-sharing basis. Businesses pay 50 percent of the costs for taking courses toward the Masters degree. The SMSD superintendent participates in the program.

PROVIDING INFORMATION TO PARENTS IN SPANISH

SMSD translates legal and immunization notices in the community newsletter and a variety of forms, notices, and flyers into Spanish. Teachers in each school have assumed responsibility for translating school materials into Spanish.

The Hispanic enrollment in SMSD is almost 34 percent of total enrollment, and the percentage of limited English proficiency (LEP) students is 12.4 percent. Since Spanish may be the primary language in a number of district households, providing information in Spanish is important so that more parents can keep up with what is going on in the district.

The intermediate school translates approximately 25 percent of school notices and flyers into Spanish, while the middle school has approximately one-half of the materials sent home translated into Spanish. The primary and elementary schools provide all materials sent home in Spanish.

By publishing school information both in Spanish and English, SMSD improves communication with many households in the district and helps ensure the information is available to more families.

ALLOWING COMMUNITY GROUPS TO USE SMSD FACILITIES

The SMSD Board of Trustees permits the use of school facilities to organizations or groups within the district when such use does not conflict with the regular instructional program. The rental of auditoriums and gymnasiums must not be for commercial use or personal gain or profit. Individuals or outside organizations make arrangements for the use of school facilities through the superintendent's office. SMSD charges a fee plus custodial costs for the use of gymnasiums, auditoriums, and cafeteria dining areas for general meetings and reunions. The kitchen facilities operate under the supervision of a Child Nutrition employee.

School activities, school sponsored activities, and school related activities are not charged rental fees.

Facilities fees (**Exhibit 2-3**) are paid to the business office prior to the date of use. One or more custodians are assigned to each building while it is in use. All activities require a minimum of one hour to set up and a minimum of one hour to tear down.

Exhibit 2-4 lists examples of activities that have occurred or are scheduled at SMSD facilities.

Facilities are used by outside groups approximately 20 to 30 times yearly. By opening its facilities for community use, SMSD promotes positive community relations with the City of Stafford, youth support organizations, and community members.

EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION TO FUND PROGRAMS

The district has developed a tax-exempt education foundation to secure financial support and other resources for district programs. The foundation's purpose is to promote the Stafford MSD mission of "producing individuals armed with academic and technological proficiency and strong values who function as contributing members of society."

The superintendent obtained education foundation startup information from Fort Bend ISD and Lamar ISD in January 2004. The initial education foundation board was selected through a recommendation from the SMSD Board of Trustees, in consultation with district administration. An organizational meeting with the directors in which they adopted the foundation's official by-laws occurred in January 2004 and tax filings for the foundation were submitted in March 2004. The organizational meeting established a seven-member

EXHIBIT 2-3
SMSD SCHEDULE OF FEES
2003–04

FACILITY	HOURLY FEE
Cafeteria/Commons	$60
Gyms	$60
Football Fields	$100
Track	$100
Athletic Field Lights	$20
Custodial Fees	$20 per custodian

SOURCE: SMSD secretary to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, March 2004.

EXHIBIT 2-4
EXAMPLES OF SMSD FACILITIES USE
2003–04

ORGANIZATION	ACTIVITY
Boy Scouts of America	Boy Scout Round Table
Texas Instruments	Games
Ft. Bend Education Program For Girls and Women	Expanding Your Horizons
Kick Start	Karate Tournament
Basketball Boys/Girls	Practice/Games
Spartan Band	Band Booster
Udavum Karangal USA	Dinner/Play in Civic Center
Athletic Booster Club	Meeting
Administration	City Council Joint Meeting
Stafford Choir	Parent Meeting
Cheerleaders	Cheer Clinic

SOURCE: SMSD secretary to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, March 2004.

board consisting of the board president, two board members, the superintendent, the elementary school principal, the high school principal, and the business manager.

SMSD education foundation funds will support needs within the district that fall outside the scope of the normal operating budget. The foundation's board of directors will establish funding priorities with input from district staff and administration. The board will also establish a system by which funding may be requested, accounted for, and granted. Examples of ways that other area school districts have used foundation funding include the following:

- At a district level, providing staff development.

- At the school level, establishing campus programs such as "Project Job Stations," a set of vocational activities for special education students to learn vocational skills.

- At the classroom level, providing money for individual teachers to implement creative teaching activities, such as "Expanding the Arts," an art enrichment program, and "Science in the Garden," a hands-on gardening activity incorporating science, language arts, and math while growing a class garden.

The superintendent said the education foundation is the answer to not only funding educational programs and activities but also improving community and business relationships for the district and the city. According to the superintendent, the director of Instructional Support Services will oversee education foundation efforts. The directors plan to meet at least quarterly, with the official annual meeting scheduled for February. The superintendent expects to have funding from the education foundation to support student enrichment programs in 2004–05.

DETAILED FINDINGS

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN SMSD AND CITY OF STAFFORD (REC. 20)

SMSD and the City of Stafford have not worked together to bridge differences in opinion and enhance communications between the two entities. The mayor and City Council have been critical of SMSD due to issues such as declining enrollment, teacher turnover, fiscal problems, and escalating tax rates. Newspaper articles citing comments from representatives of both the school district and the city have served to increase the distance between the two entities.

Passage of both House Bill 2964 during the Seventy-eighth session of the Texas Legislature in 2003 and the Home Rule City Charter heightened tension between the mayor and City Council and the school district. House Bill 2964 requires agreement of three-fourths of the total voting members present of the City Council and the Board of Trustees to approve both the tax rate and the annual budget. With the adoption of the Home Rule City Charter by the citizens of the City of Stafford in May 2004, both the City Council and the Board of Trustees have seven members, for a total of 14 voting members. If all were present, eleven votes would be required to approve either the tax rate or the budget. With all seven SMSD board members supporting passage, at least four of seven council members would also have to vote for approval.

According to the district's board president and the superintendent, this requirement was acceptable until the city proposed changing the city's charter from general government to home rule, expanding the City Council from five to six members, and giving a vote to the mayor, who previously was allowed to vote only in the case of a tie. Prior to the expansion of the City Council from five to seven votes, the district only needed nine total votes to approve the tax rate and budget (seven board members plus five council members equals 12 votes, of which nine equals three-fourths). That meant that if all seven board members

approved the budget, only two of five council members would have had to vote in agreement for approval.

Rather than the two entities working together in the closest possible fashion, there have been complaints from both sides. The mayor and City Council feel that the district has been poorly managed and has not spent money wisely. The superintendent and some school board members believe that the mayor and City Council are trying to impose themselves in the decision-making process of the district and "take over" SMSD.

In his *State of the City* speech in January 2004, the mayor of Stafford referred to the district's financial operations as "fiscal chaos." The city eliminated its property tax and survives only on sales tax revenue; yet, according to the city's director of Finance, their fund balance has continued to increase. At the same time, SMSD used $1.8 million of the SMSD fund balance to balance the 2003–04 budget. According to the mayor, House Bill 2964 was designed to help address the financial and management problems of SMSD by expanding the city's involvement in SMSD's financial governance.

Deliberations of the city's Charter Commission in other areas also added to the tension between the city and SMSD. In March 2004, the relationship between the city and SMSD worsened due to the presentation of the city's financial audit report, in which the city's external auditor included SMSD financial information as a component unit of the City of Stafford. During an interview with the superintendent by the review team, the superintendent said he did not believe that the district was a component unit of the city. According to the city's external auditor, an employee of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) contacted the external auditor to "relate the concerns of [the superintendent and] a lawyer for SMSD" that "the school district wanted the pages removed" and that inclusion of the district's financial information was "optional."

The review team interviewed the mayor, the SMSD board president and each trustee, and the superintendent. During the interview with the mayor, the review team asked for specific things the mayor would like to see done to foster a better relationship between the city and SMSD, and specific issues that he felt should be discussed. The mayor said he would like to see the City Council and Board of Trustees meet more frequently than the mandated once per year to approve the tax rate and the budget. Further, he identified other issues for discussion at such meetings (**Exhibit 2-5**). A similar request was made of the superintendent, who solicited SMSD's board members and provided a list of issues from the district.

The district held budget workshops with the City of Stafford in July and August 2004 regarding the district's budget and tax rate. On August 25, 2004 the school board and Stafford City Council unanimously approved a district budget of $23.5 million and tax rate of $1.708.

SMSD should increase the interaction with the City of Stafford to include meetings, committees, and communications not specifically required by law. The superintendent, the Board of Trustees, the mayor, and City Council should implement the following:

- Hold quarterly meetings between City Council and the Board of Trustees. An agenda should be prepared jointly by the superintendent and the mayor and involve issues of concern to both entities. Community participation should be encouraged.

- Establish a joint budget committee comprised of members of the City Council and the Board of Trustees to review the district's budget prior to the mandated approval meeting. The superintendent, SMSD's business manager, and the city's director of Finance should all be ex officio members of the committee. The committee should meet at least three times to discuss the assumptions on which SMSD's budget is based and facilitate questions by city participants. The committee should provide written comments to the City Council and the Board of Trustees highlighting areas of common agreement and areas that need further discussion prior to the final approval vote.

- Establish a committee of council members and board members to review current services provided by the city to SMSD and the cost of such services, and evaluate other opportunities for the city and school district to work together. The committee should meet at least twice per year or additionally if there is a specific need.

- Provide joint communications to the community on a periodic basis. At least following the proposed quarterly meetings between City Council and the Board of Trustees, the city and SMSD should issue joint, written communications to residents of the city. These communications should highlight issues discussed and additional issues to be discussed in future meetings.

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT POSITION (REC. 21)

SMSD's organization has two assistant superintendent positions, which results in additional administrative costs. The primary responsibilities of the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel are:

- Supervising the directors of Personnel, Child Nutrition, Athletics, Alternative Education, and Maintenance and Operations (which includes Transportation);

EXHIBIT 2-5
POTENTIAL ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE CITY OF STAFFORD AND THE STAFFORD MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
JUNE 2004

	IDENTIFIED BY THE	
ISSUE	**CITY**	**SMSD**
Communication	Communications and coordination between SMSD and the city.	Constructive and positive communication from city officials as it relates to the school district.
Involvement in school district matters	Involvement of the city in SMSD matters.	School/community safety to include city efforts at drug traffic suppression, increased police presence at the school after the instructional day, and increased traffic control before and after school.
		Recruitment and retention of faculty and staff. In particular teacher/employee recognition and appreciation.
		SMSD Educational Foundation.
Property use and cost	Civic Center and properties in the municipal complex, including the swimming pool.	Shared service agreements, lease of transportation facility, conditions and usage of shared transportation facility to include possible warehousing of school property other than vehicles at shared facility.
		Direct city support of youth, community, and employer-based organizations through assumption of operating costs of facilities and related costs.
Land use	Seventeen acres acquired by SMSD in Missouri City.	City's intended use of acreage surrounding school district property.
	Annexation of property to the city and/or SMSD.	
Governance	Future of municipal school district.	Proper usage and application of legal lines of authority to include the legislative intent of HB2964.
	Joint home rule charter.	
Demographics	SMSD enrollment projections and impact of city residential growth.	City demography and geography to include changes in demographic makeup of residents, occupancy rates, and possible room for residential growth.
Financial issues	Property taxes and SMSD financial factors.	Stabilization of the declining property tax base. Preliminary freeze-adjusted net taxable values for 2004–2005 show another $26.3 million decline in freeze-adjusted net taxable values on top of the approximately $9 million drop experienced this year. For Chapter 41 districts, the decline in base is not simply a loss in revenue; for SMSD it represents a $395,000 increase in expenditure for 2004–05.
		Economic development.
		Direct reduction of school operating costs through assumption of some maintenance and operating costs by city.
Other		City's legislative agenda with regard to the school district.

SOURCE: Interview with the Mayor, City of Stafford, March 2004 and information provided by the SMSD Superintendent, June 2004.

- Supervising the PEIMS coordinator;

- Overseeing renovation and construction projects;

- Serving as the Level Two hearing officer for employee complaints; and

- Serving as the district's primary recruiter.

According to interviews by the review team with the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel, he spends approximately 80 percent of his time on human resource matters, which includes his role as the primary recruiter. However, based on the information provided by the assistant superintendent and the director of Personnel, the latter position is performing the vast majority of human resource related responsibilities (**Exhibit 2-6**).

EXHIBIT 2-6
COMPARISON HUMAN RESOURCE (HR) RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES OF THE SMSD
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF OPERATIONS AND PERSONNEL AND DIRECTOR OF
PERSONNEL POSITIONS
2003–04

MAJOR HR RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES	ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF OPERATIONS AND PERSONNEL	DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL
RECRUITMENT		
Implementation and screening process of applications by creating a pool of qualified applicants.		X
Interview new teacher and paraprofessional applicants.		X
Forward applications, resumes, etc. to principals for campus interviews.		X
Scan web sites for prospective teachers.		X
E-mail and/or respond to telephone inquiries from applicants regarding their interest in SMSD (i.e., location of district web site / address, where to download application form, location of employment vacancies, information regarding district's participation at college/university job fairs).		X
Maintain original applications on teachers, paraprofessionals, custodians, food services and transportation.		X
Develop and maintain recruiting materials and displays.		X
Develop and maintain active liaison with college / university career teacher educator preparation programs.		X
Attendance at university/college job fairs.	X	X
TEACHERS/NEW HIRES		
Research applications and resumes of prospective teachers recommended by principals as information item(s) for board agenda and board approval.		X
Prepare packets for new-hires and interpreting the paperwork, etc. (includes TRS Active Care medical insurance and Delta Dental) to them.		X
Oversee the completion of all paperwork. Remind via phone or e-mail of required documents needed for submission for a new employee's personnel file folder.		X
File all required papers in respective parts of the personnel folder, key-in the demographics on the HR side of RSCCC program, then forward the individual file(s) to payroll and accounting.		X
Prepare and distribute new-hire employment contracts for signature. Forward to the superintendent's secretary to obtain board president's signature in a timely manner.		X
Process and receive criminal history background check information on all new-hires.		X
Prepare and process the state's Texas Employer New-Hire Report on a monthly basis.		X
Receive the completed I-9 form. Process the documents for evidence to support the INS form.		X
Maintain an active full-time employee list with campus location, years experience, number of working days for the employee, job title.		X
CURRENT EMPLOYEES		
Key-in demographics of employees on the Human Resources side of RSCCC.		X
Provide verification of employment.		X
Develop, prepare, and/or revise job descriptions.		X
Supervise personnel records and oversee state records as required.		X
Prepare and distribute job vacancy announcements via internet (i.e., Region 4, TASA, etc.)		X
Review all applications and contracts. Submit to lawyers and TASB for approval.		X
Maintain a list of employees in regard to expiration dates on certificates/licenses (teachers, nurses, speech pathologists, paraprofessionals).		X
Assist supervisory personnel in conducting due-process procedures.	X	
Provide cost analysis of salary and wage adjustments for the budgeting process.	X	
Implement policies associated with and oversee processing of employee complaints and grievances.	X	
Recommend policies that improve human resource related programs.	X	
Attend board meetings regularly and make presentations to the board.	X	
Work with others to compile and report projections of staff and facility needs.	X	
Administer the district employee evaluation program and ensure that it is implemented effectively and uniformly.	X	
Assist supervisory personnel in conducting due-process procedures.	X	
CONTRACTS		
Calculate in January/February the teachers' years of experience in regard to contract renewals.		X

EXHIBIT 2-6 (CONTINUED)
**COMPARISON HUMAN RESOURCE (HR) RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES OF THE SMSD
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF OPERATIONS AND PERSONNEL AND DIRECTOR OF
PERSONNEL POSITIONS
2003–04**

MAJOR HR RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES	ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF OPERATIONS AND PERSONNEL	DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL
Send memos to principals with names of teachers at respective campuses for principals' information for the renewing of teachers on Term or Probationary contracts.		X
Format a list of all teachers on Term or Probationary Contracts as a board item for March board meeting.		X
Process all contracts for each administrator, counselor, librarian, speech pathologist and teacher on Term or Probationary Contract.		X
RESIGNATIONS		
Conduct exit interviews of employees leaving the district.		X
Process photocopies of documents (i.e., teaching certificate(s), official transcripts, and service record(s) in the exiting employee's personnel folder.		X
Check absence-from-duty forms on employee with payroll printout for accuracy for documentation of remaining state days for service records.		X
Prepare and maintain the district's employee service records and mail service records to exiting employee(s) or requesting school districts.		X
Submit copy of exit interview to assistant superintendent.		X
SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS		
Collect substitute teacher applications and inform substitute applicants of next scheduled substitute orientation date.		X
Prepare and distribute the substitute application packets at orientation.		X
Schedule, organize, and conduct the substitute training orientation.		X
Assist with the screening and interviewing of substitute applicants.		X
Update the substitute teacher handbook on a yearly basis.		X
Maintain active substitute teacher list and distributes list to campuses via e-mail.	X	
CERTIFICATION		
Complete No Child Left Behind compliance report.		X
Ensure the district compliance with state certification and licensing requirements. Also compliance with No Child Left Behind requirements.		X
Verify, oversee, and research the various teaching permits and certificates possible for certified and non-certified teachers.		X
Process the permit information online to SBEC and monitors permit status.		X
Audit and maintain certification and licensing information of certified, non-certified and licensed professionals and paraprofessionals, and auxiliary employees.		X
Track certification, testing and permit status and communicate with employee(s) to ensure completion of certification requirements within established timelines.		X
Serve as resource person to administrators and employees on certification issues.		X
Maintain computer and physical database of certifications and permits of teachers.		X
PARAPROFESSIONALS		
Maintain certification requirements. Notify (twice a year) those employee(s) on the various permits regarding renewal or completion of certification requirements.		X
Process the Certified Educational Aides Exemption Program for teacher aides as requested.		X
Check status under the "No Child Left Behind" of teacher aides requiring the basic college hours, etc.		X
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS		
Administer SBEC-approved test to those paraprofessional teacher aides under the "No Child Left Behind" requirement.		X
Coordinate the employee benefits program for the district.		X
Maintain, record, and provide assistance to ensure effective use of benefits.		X
Administer employee benefit programs on group TRS Active Care medical insurance, Delta dental, and life insurance offered through the district.		X
Act as a liaison between employee and insurance carrier on some issues regarding enrollment.		X
Explain the Supplemental State Funding Election Form to employees.		X
LEAVES AND ABSENCES		
Provide timely notice to employees under the requirements of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) and Health Insurance and Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) as clarified and mandated under the insurance carrier(s) guidelines.		X
Coordinate the FMLA / Temporary Disability Leave Program according to established board policy, state rules, and federal regulations and answer questions from employees regarding FMLA.		X

SOURCE: Responses from SMSD assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel and director of Personnel to surveys of job responsibilities, May 2004.

Based on interviews by the review team with heads of the Child Nutrition Department and the Maintenance and Operations Department, the assistant superintendent spends a limited amount of his time overseeing their departments:

- Child Nutrition: According to the director, the assistant superintendent has "hardly any involvement. Once he realized that [she] could handle the job, he told her 'It's your department, you manage it and come to me if you have any problems. I trust you to do it." The director meets with the assistant superintendent about twice a month to provide him with a status report. The director indicated that she might call the assistant superintendent to get approval for a large purchase, such as the point-of-sale system, or to get approval to terminate an employee, but these situations do not occur very often.

- Maintenance and Operations: The director indicated that he and the assistant superintendent "talk at least 4-5 times per day, plus at night and on weekends." The director also calls him when he needs budget approval, permission to contact the district architect for minor projects and master plans, and for personnel issues, such as final approval on hiring and firing.

- Construction: Major construction projects are coordinated through the City of Stafford's director of Public Works. The former director of Maintenance and Operations was responsible for coordinating minor construction projects. The assistant superintendent is responsible for managing the bond budget and approving construction-related purchase orders. In 2003–04, these projects consisted of resurfacing the track, installation of a press box, construction of bleachers, and construction of a parking lot.

- Alternative Education: The director indicated that he speaks with the assistant superintendent about three times per week for no more than one hour in total. The conversations mostly concern the following: the seriousness of the referrals he's received; clarification of the scenarios of the referrals after the intake interview, in case there are differences in the information; indication of any important background information, such as whether a student was enrolled under a false pretext or if there was actually a felony; information from the data report such as the number of referrals by type and whether drugs were involved. Only in a dire emergency or in the event that a parent appears on-site with an issue that needs to be addressed at another level does the director call the assistant superintendent.

- PEIMS coordinator: The PEIMS clerk has been at the district level in this area for three years and handles all PEIMS reporting. The assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel assists with discipline, and the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction helps with special programs. In an interview with the review team, the PEIMS clerk indicated that she "does not need a lot of assistance in PEIMS but does ask [the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel] questions if needed." She estimates that, at the most, she takes 10-15 minutes of his time per day.

The other major department that the assistant superintendent oversees is Transportation, where the director resigned during the course of the TSPR review. The district has been out of compliance with required state reporting on transportation operations and cost since July 2002, as noted in Chapter 4, Operations. The assistant superintendent was unable to provide reasons for the lack of compliance or prepare or provide the necessary information to complete the required reports to the state. In fact, a member of the review team assisted the district in gathering and preparing a correct report for submission to the state for 2001–02.

Finally, as the Level Two hearing officer for employee complaints, the assistant superintendent serves as the superintendent's designee and hears all complaints that are not resolved at Level One, which involve the employee and the immediate supervisor or principal. During 2002–03 and 2003–04, there were no employee complaints referred to Level Two.

The district should eliminate the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel position. **Exhibit 2-7** presents the recommended organization based on the elimination of the assistant superintendent position.

The recommended organization reflects some changes that the superintendent already planned to make in 2004–05, such as transferring responsibility for PEIMS and alternative education to the director of Instructional Support Services. The remaining departments under the assistant superintendent would report to the superintendent.

By eliminating the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel's position, the district would save $88,686 annually. The district calculates benefits for each position using seven percent of the salary plus $1,974. The salary for the assistant superintendent position is $81,039 and benefits are $7,647 (7 percent of $81,039 = $5,673 + $1,974 = $7,647), for a total annual compensation of $88,686. Since the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel is under contract through June 30, 2005, the fiscal impact of

EXHIBIT 2-7
RECOMMENDED SMSD CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION ORGANIZATION

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                                    ┌──────────────────┐
                                    │  Superintendent  │
                                    └──────────────────┘
         ┌──────────────┬────────────────┬───────────────┬──────────────┐
┌────────────────┐ ┌────────────┐ ┌────────────┐ ┌──────────────┐ ┌────────────┐
│   Assistant    │ │  Business  │ │  Director  │ │   Director   │ │  Director  │
│ Superintendent │ │  Manager   │ │   Child    │ │ Maintenance  │ │  Personnel │
│   Curriculum   │ │            │ │  Nutrition │ │ and Operations│ │            │
│ and Instruction│ │            │ │            │ │              │ │            │
└────────────────┘ └────────────┘ └────────────┘ └──────────────┘ └────────────┘
         │                │
 ┌───────────────┐  ┌───────────────┐
 │   Principals  │  │     Clerk     │
 │      (4)      │  │    Payroll    │
 │               │  │  and Benefits │
 └───────────────┘  └───────────────┘
 ┌───────────────┐  ┌───────────────┐
 │   Director    │  │     Clerk     │
 │  Federal and  │  │   Purchasing  │
 │ State Programs│  │               │
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 ┌───────────────┐  ┌───────────────┐
 │   Director    │  │     Clerk     │
 │ Instructional │  │    Accounts   │
 │Support Services│ │    Payable    │
 └───────────────┘  └───────────────┘
         │
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 │  Alternative  │
 │   Education   │
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 ┌───────────────┐
 │  Coordinator  │
 │     PEIMS     │
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SOURCE: WCL Enterprises.

eliminating this position recognizes one month, or one-twelfth, of the total compensation ($7,391) in 2004–05 and the full impact ($88,686) annually thereafter.

STAFFING LEVELS BASED ON STUDENT ENROLLMENT (REC. 22)

SMSD does not use formulas based on student enrollment to determine the assignment of staff. The district does not implement local staffing formulas to determine its required personnel.

Exhibit 2-8 compares student and staff counts for the past five years. While the number of total students decreased by 1.0 percent, total staff increased by 9.9 percent. The largest increase was in the area of support staff, with a 61.1 percent increase. The number of teachers increased 1.0 percent.

Exhibit 2-9 shows the distribution of staff by campus.

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 Latin America.

SACS recommends *minimum* personnel requirements for elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools based on enrollment. The SACS minimum standards for middle schools cover SMSD's middle school and, since the intermediate school includes fifth grade, the review team included that school in this group for staffing comparison purposes.

Exhibit 2-10 compares SMSD campus staffing to SACS standards. The SMSD positions represented are funded only through general fund revenues. No positions funded through special funds, such as grants, special education, or compensatory education, are included in the SMSD totals. Also, the counselor-to-student ratio is 1:355, which is right on track with the State Comptroller's recommended counselor-to-student ratio of 1:350.

SMSD staffing exceeds the SACS standards by 0.5 administrator positions and 4.6 secretary/clerk positions. Since student enrollment in SMSD is not increasing, there will be no anticipated demand for adding staff.

EXHIBIT 2-8
SMSD STUDENT AND STAFF COUNTS
1999–2000 THROUGH 2003–04

	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	PERCENT CHANGE
Support staff	18	19	24	21	29	61.1%
Educational aides	20	20	18	28	26	30.0%
Auxiliary staff	95	113	130	120	112	17.9%
Teachers	196	201	204	203	198	1.0%
Administrators	13	13	13	12	12	(7.7%)
Total staff	342	366	389	385	376	9.9%
Total students	2,868	2,874	2,898	2,812	2,838 *	(1.0%)

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 1999–2000 through 2003–04. Note: Numbers are rounded off.
* Includes students in juvenile justice alternative education program.

EXHIBIT 2-9
SMSD CAMPUS ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF DISTRIBUTION
2003-04

	SECONDARY SCHOOLS		ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS			
POSITION	HIGH	MIDDLE	INTERMEDIATE	ELEMENTARY	PRIMARY	TOTAL
Enrollment	759	668	449	457	501	2,838 *
Principal	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.5	0.5	4.0
Assistant principal	2.0	2.0			1.0	5.0
Counselor	3.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	8.0
Athletic director	1.0					1.0
Librarian	0.5	0.5	1.0	0.5	0.5	3.0
Library aide	1.0	1.0		0.5	0.5	3.0
Secretary	2.6	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	7.6
Attendance clerk	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	5.0

SOURCE: SMSD director of Personnel.
* Includes students in the juvenile justice alternative education program.

EXHIBIT 2-10
COMPARISON OF SMSD CAMPUS STAFFING TO SACS STANDARDS
2003–04

	SECONDARY SCHOOLS		ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS			
	HIGH	MIDDLE	INTERMEDIATE	ELEMENTARY	PRIMARY	TOTAL
Enrollment	759	668	449	457	501	2,838 *
Economically disadvantaged	30.2%	34.6%	33.6%	34.6%	50.5%	36.1%
CAMPUS ADMINISTRATOR						
Recommended	2.5	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	7.5
Actual	3.0	3.0	1.0	0.5	0.5	8.0
Variance	0.5	1.0	0.0	(0.5)	(0.5)	0.5
SECRETARY/CLERK						
Recommended	3.5	1.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	8.0
Actual	3.6**	3.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	12.6
Variance	0.1	1.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	4.6
Totals	0.6	2.5	1.0	0.5	0.5	5.1

SOURCE: SACS standards and SMSD director of Personnel.
* Includes students in juvenile justice alternative education program.
** Includes part-time positions.

The district should develop staffing levels based on student enrollment and reduce campus staffing to reflect recommended minimum standards. SMSD may have particular circumstances/issues that require additional staff, such as the higher percentage of economically disadvantaged students at the primary campus. However, these issues should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis against standards and identified by the district as impacting staffing requirements.

The fiscal impact of implementing this recommendation assumes that SMSD reduces total staff by 4.6 secretaries/clerk positions. The average salary in 2003–04 for secretary/clerk was $19,054. The district calculates benefits for each position using seven percent of the salary plus $1,974. Total salary plus benefits for a secretary clerk is $19,054 plus $1,334 (7 percent) plus $1,974, or $22,362 for a secretary/clerk. The full annual savings from eliminating these positions is $102,865 ($22,362 x 4.6 positions = $102,865).

The full effect of the staff reduction will not be accomplished until 2005–06. However, the campus

secretary/clerk positions are at-will positions and can be eliminated immediately. The fiscal impact assumes the positions will be eliminated by January 2005, or one-third of the way through the 2004–05 year, which would result in savings of $68,920 for the 2004–05 year [$102,865 for the secretary/clerk positions x two-thirds (.67) of one year = $68,920].

DISTRICT STAFF HANDBOOK
(REC. 23)

SMSD does not provide a district staff handbook for all employees. Each campus provides staff members with a handbook outlining campus-operating procedures. Auxiliary departments such as custodial, maintenance, food service, and transportation do not provide employees with a handbook. During a training session conducted by the director of Personnel, the district provides substitutes with a handbook outlining procedures to follow while substituting in the district before the substitute reports to a campus for an assignment. Providing a handbook for all employees ensures each employee has access to and is made aware of district goals, policies, regulations, and benefits and provides new employees a valuable resource to locate district information and procedures. Handbooks formally outline performance expectations for employees. Failure to provide handbooks to all employees may lead to inconsistencies in implementing district policies and requirements.

The Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) recommends its member districts include information on the following topics in employee handbooks:

- Employment procedures and policies;

- Compensation and benefits;

- Leaves and absences;

- Employee relations and communications;

- Complaints and grievances;

- Employee conduct and welfare;

- General operating procedures;

- Termination of employment; and

- Student issues.

Each individual campus provides staff members with a campus handbook. All campus handbooks include information specific to the campus but do not include district employment policies and procedures. No other department provides employees with a handbook.

Texas Education Code §21.204(d) requires districts to distribute a copy of the district's employment polices to employees with a term contract at the teacher's request. An employee handbook is an appropriate vehicle to distribute employment policies to employees. The

section further requires districts to place the board's employment policies on the district's web site. At each school the district is required to make a copy of the board's employment policies available for inspection. SMSD was not complying with these requirements at the time of the review.

SMSD is a member of the TASB Human Resources Services, which provides member districts with an electronic version of a model employee handbook.

Grape Creek ISD provides a comprehensive employee handbook to all employees, which is updated annually. The handbook includes the district vision statement, goals and objectives, district organizational chart, school directories, and information regarding district policies and procedures. Samples of frequently used forms, such as the employee accident report, field trip bus request, and referrals to counselors and nurses are also in the handbook.

Del Valle ISD encourages its staff to be aware of district objectives, procedures, and policies by distributing comprehensive district and school-specific handbooks to staff each year. Their handbook also includes the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators.

Hays Consolidated School District goes a step further and makes the district employee handbook available to employees on the district's web site.

SMSD should develop one handbook that covers all district employees and establish procedures to update and distribute it to employees annually. The assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel should develop a process to create an employee handbook and establish procedures to ensure the information is updated annually. According to the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel, SMSD is using the TASB model employee handbook as a starting point in preparing a customized handbook for SMSD. The handbook should be ready for the 2005–06 school year and available on the district's web site.

EXEMPT AND NON-EXEMPT POSITIONS
(REC. 24)

SMSD does not designate positions as exempt or non-exempt and does not require all non-exempt positions to maintain time reports for each pay period as required by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Failure to accurately designate the exemption status of a position has resulted in noncompliance with the overtime requirements of FLSA. The district is unable to closely monitor the use and accumulation of compensatory time without a formal record keeping process.

Since 1985 school districts have been required to comply with all provisions of the Fair Labor Standards

Act, including minimum wage requirements, overtime compensation requirements, and record keeping regarding wages paid and hours worked. Districts must designate an employee as either exempt or non-exempt for the purpose of overtime coverage under the act. Most administrative and professional employees are exempt from overtime requirements if their position meets FLSA designated criteria for duties and responsibilities and they are paid on a salary basis. Teachers are classified as exempt. Any employee whose position does not meet the criteria for exempt must be classified as a non-exempt employee and must be compensated for every hour worked beyond 40 hours each week. That compensation may either be through additional pay or time off. Both forms of compensation must be calculated at 1.5 the regular rate of pay or time. FLSA includes three exemption tests for determining whether an employee is exempt or non-exempt. Each of the three tests has a long and short version. **Exhibit 2-11** illustrates the criteria established for the short test of each exemption category.

The review team identified four non-exempt positions working beyond a 40-hour week that were compensated in the form of an annual stipend rather than at a calculated overtime rate. Non-exempt employees must be compensated for all the time the employee is permitted or required to be at work. **Exhibit 2-12** identifies the non-exempt positions and additional duties assigned.

Employers must keep time records of the daily and weekly hours worked during each pay period for non-exempt employees. According to the *School Administrators Guide to the Fair Labor Standards Act* published by the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB), districts must include the following items in the records:

- Time of day and day of week when employee's work week begins;

- Hours worked each day;

- Total hours worked each work week;

- Number of hours of compensatory time earned during the pay period (one and one-half hours of compensatory time for one overtime hour worked); and

- Number of compensatory hours used during the pay period.

Although no particular format is required by the act, TASB offers a sample form for members to use.

In addition, the superintendent reports that the director of Personnel is a non-exempt, at-will employee even though she was reported to PEIMS (role ID) as an administrator (director of Personnel). She is not given the $500 Teacher Retirement System (TRS) supplement compensation for nonprofessional personnel, nor is she given an additional one percent of her annual salary

EXHIBIT 2-11
FLSA EXEMPTION SHORT TESTS

TEST	REQUIREMENTS
Executive test	The employee must: As a primary duty, be responsible for the management of the organization or a department or subdivision; Regularly direct the work of at least two full-time employees; Be paid a salary of at least $250 a week; Supervise or direct the work of two or more employees whose combined work week is 80 hours or more.
Administrative test	The employee must: Perform responsible office or non-manual work directly related to management policies or general business operations as a primary duty; or perform responsible work in the administration of a school or department of an educational establishment that is directly related to the academic instruction or training; Perform work that requires the exercise of discretion and independent judgment; Be paid a salary of at least $250 a week.
Professional test	The employee must: Perform work requiring advanced knowledge in a field of science or learning, or work as a teacher in an activity of imparting knowledge; or perform artistic work that requires invention, imagination, or talent in a recognized field of artistic endeavor; Perform work that requires the consistent exercise of discretion and judgment; Be paid a salary of at least $250 a week.

SOURCE: *Texas Association of School Boards School Administrator's Guide to the Fair Labor Standards Act.*

EXHIBIT 2-12
SMSD NON-EXEMPT POSITIONS WITH ADDITIONAL DUTIES

POSITION	ADDITIONAL DUTY	ANNUAL STIPEND FOR ADDITIONAL DUTY
Special education aide	Coaching	$3,100
ISS aide	Coaching	$6,600
ISS aide	Coaching	$4,500
Superintendent secretary	Board secretary	$1,500

SOURCE: *SMSD director of Personnel and 2003–04 staff directory.*

as life insurance that is provided to other district administrators. She is compensated for hours worked beyond a 40-hour work week, but not at 1.5 her regular rate of pay. The position is treated as an exempt position with regards to the PEIMS submission for role ID and for not providing the $500 TRS supplement. Compensation beyond the 40 hour work week and not providing the additional life insurance given to district administrators indicates the position is treated as non-exempt.

The Board of Trustees revised policy DBA (Local) in a December 2003 meeting to prohibit assigning a paraprofessional or non-exempt employee to a coaching position. The revision states, "all instructional positions, including but not limited to, teacher, teacher intern or teacher trainee, coach, counselor and librarian, shall be certified and/or meet all certification requirements established under Texas Education Code Subchapter B, Chapter 21 with the exception of instruction positions governed by Texas Education Code §37.008(a)(8)."

The district should comply with the designation, overtime, and pay period reporting requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Compliance with this board policy should eliminate the district's violation of the overtime requirements of the FLSA. Job descriptions in the district should designate the exemption status of all positions. The assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel should develop relevant forms and strategies to assure compliance with overtime requirements.

According to information provided by the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel near the completion of the performance review, SMSD plans to reclassify the director of Personnel position as an exempt position.

TIME AND ATTENDANCE FUNCTION FOR ALL NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEES (REC. 25)

SMSD departments and campuses have different standards for recording hours worked by non-exempt employees. Due to limited staffing levels, the Payroll Department is required to rely on the expertise of the campus and department heads to ensure that actual time worked is appropriately reflected on an employee's record and forwarded to payroll. Employee time records are maintained by the different departments and campuses as follows:

- Custodial and maintenance employees punch in and out manually.

- Transportation drivers are paid by the route rather than for actual hours worked.

- Food service and secretarial employees use a variety of sign-in sheets.

The Payroll Department does not receive the time clock punch cards to validate the hours recorded by the Maintenance Department on the summary time sheet. Detailed hourly reporting is verified by the director of Maintenance, who then forwards it to payroll for data entry. The payroll clerk relies solely on the information contained in the summary sheet. Information regarding actual time worked by transportation employees is not available, as employees are paid based on their expected route time and are not required to sign-in and sign-out.

The business manager expressed frustration that employees were not recording actual time worked on their time sheet. Rather, employees were recording their daily work schedule. For instance, members of the central office secretarial staff frequently report to work in advance of their regularly scheduled work time but do not record these hours on their time sheets. Based upon a review of the time sheets for secretarial and other non-exempt campus employees, it appears that this group of employees is paid based upon their work schedule rather than actual hours worked, as there is little variation in the hours worked per day indicated on the time sheets. This problem is compounded by the fact that campuses and departments are maintaining compensatory time at their site and are not recording the hours centrally in a compensatory time bank.

The Fair Labor Standards Act requires that the hours worked each workday and the total hours worked each week be documented. Under law, employees who work fixed schedules are permitted to document only the deviations from their schedule. It is the responsibility of the district to make certain that all employees and supervisors properly understand the procedures to follow when recording hours worked and the consequences for failing to properly report hours.

The American Payroll Association (APA) indicates that companies that automate their time and attendance systems not only achieve significant savings in their direct payroll processing costs, but some also achieve substantially greater savings on their total labor costs. Automating the time and attendance function provides improved control over unscheduled overtime and helps to ensure compliance with all aspects of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

The Department of Labor (DOL) has indicated that computerized records for timekeeping are permissible as long as they afford an accurate representation of time worked and the employer is able to convert the data into a form that is suitable for inspection.

The Round Rock Independent School District has implemented an automated time and attendance function for all non-exempt employees. Auxiliary

employees are required to clock in and out using a time clock located in the department. Paraprofessionals have the option of using the time clock or recording their hours through the web entry system.

Paraprofessionals monitor their hours worked through the web module. Auxiliary employees are provided a hard copy of their time sheet to review for accuracy. On a weekly basis, supervisors electronically review and approve departmental time sheets. Upon approval, hours are uploaded into the district's payroll system. This system has ensured that the district is in compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act and has allowed the size of the payroll department to remain the same despite continued student growth.

SMSD should automate the time and attendance function using standardized procedures for all non-exempt employees. The timekeeping requirements for all areas of the district should be reviewed to ensure compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Penalties for non-compliance with the act are severe. Therefore, the district should establish compliance with the FLSA and make the automation of the timekeeping processes a priority for 2004–05. The business manager should review the existing manual systems and make any changes necessary to ensure compliance with the record keeping requirements of the FLSA.

The business manager should then review available automated systems for implementation in 2005–06. Many inexpensive timekeeping systems have been developed recently which take advantage of Windows technology using existing hardware. Inexpensive systems are available and would require a one-time cost of around $750 with an annual software maintenance cost thereafter of about $200 for a district of this size.

AUTOMATED SUBSTITUTE TEACHER CALLING SYSTEM (REC. 26)

SMSD does not have a process to contact substitutes after working hours to ensure that positions are covered at the beginning of the school day. The assistant principal of each campus is responsible for ensuring that instructional positions are provided with substitute coverage in the event that the teacher is out due to illness or personal leave. Employees are required to ask for personal and professional development leave in advance. This practice allows the campus to easily fill vacant positions the day prior to the teacher's absence.

However, in the event that a teacher becomes ill during the night and must miss work due to illness, the teacher is required to contact the school and leave a message for the assistant principal. The assistant principal contacts authorized substitutes using a district-provided master substitute listing. Since that means that the assistant principal may not contact a qualified substitute until right before the beginning of the school day or

after the school day starts, the position of the absent teacher could remain unfilled at the beginning of the instructional day, which means that students in the class of the absent teacher may not have a full day of instruction.

Automated substitute calling systems automatically contact approved substitutes to fill positions through a computerized phone calling system. Employees may call in their absences over the telephone or indicate their absence via the web. Most systems allow substitutes to accept jobs over the web or the telephone. Automated systems help to ensure that substitutes are on campus prior to the start of the school day, as the automated system begins calling substitutes at a time pre-determined by the district, typically 5:30 a.m. Individuals have the ability to accept a job early in the morning and arrive at the workplace prepared for their assignment. This should ultimately contribute to the students in the classroom having a more positive learning experience with their substitute.

Also, automated systems have the capability to provide a listing of absences by employee, date, day of week, type of absence as well as the substitute filling the vacancy. Such information is useful when reviewing the absence patterns of individuals or a group of employees, if necessary. Currently, SMSD cannot provide absence management reports to campus administrators.

Absences located on an automated system may also be easily downloaded into the district's payroll system. Downloading absences will increase accuracy and efficiency of the absence data contained in the payroll. Downloading absences also increases the accuracy of the account codes used for substitutes, as the account can easily be tied to the employee's master pay record. This practice will allow SMSD to more accurately reflect the various programs to which substitutes working are assigned, such as special, vocational, and compensatory education.

SMSD should implement an automated substitute calling system to ensure continuity of instruction in the classroom and improve the efficiency of payroll processing. A variety of Internet-based systems are currently available which do not require the purchase of expensive hardware. These systems should be thoroughly evaluated prior to April 2005 so that a solution can be tested and implemented prior to the start of 2005–06.

Inexpensive automated service provider systems exist for automated substitute systems. The initial cost of $895 is a one-time set up fee for the computers at each location. Annual maintenance fees of about $295 would exist after the initial investment.

EMPLOYEE PAYROLL INFORMATION (REC. 27)

Payroll information is maintained by the Human Resource Department in an individual employee folder and not in a separate file in the Payroll Department. Personnel information is considered to be private under the law. The availability of the folder to other departments violates an employee's privacy.

When the Personnel director hires an individual, the director prepares a folder containing the application, references, copies of his/her driver's license and social security card, W-4 form, benefits information, and the pay sheet indicating salary and budget code. The payroll clerk verifies the information entered by human resources and builds the payroll record using the pay sheet. The folder remains in the payroll office until such time as the payroll is balanced and completed. If an individual has a change or a question for payroll, the payroll clerk checks out the folder from human resources and takes it to her office. The folder contains evaluation documents for existing employees and other specifically private personnel information.

Section 21.355 of the Texas Education Code requires that a document evaluating the performance of a teacher or administrator is confidential. Access by the payroll clerk would be considered a violation of the individual's confidential privilege.

SMSD should require the Payroll Department to maintain employee payroll information in a file located in the Payroll Department. The payroll clerk and other finance employees should not be allowed access to an employee's individual personnel file. The director of Personnel and the superintendent should be the only ones to view information contained in that file.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION (REC. 28)

SMSD has a high number of teachers with temporary or emergency permits. As a result, the district may not be able to comply with provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001, which requires all teachers of the core academic subjects to be highly qualified by the end of school year

2005–06. A highly qualified teacher is one with full certification, a bachelor's degree, and demonstrated competence in subject knowledge and teaching. Core subjects include English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography.

Goal V of the 2003–04 SMSD District Improvement Plan addresses human resource goals. The first objective under this goal is to "Recruit and retain certified, result-based faculty and staff." The first activity listed under this objective is to "Meet No Child Left Behind requirements by recruiting and retaining certified and quality teachers." Yet of 198 FTE teacher positions in SMSD for 2003–04, 13.0 positions, or 6.5 percent, were on some form of temporary or emergency permit (**Exhibit 2-13**). From 1999–2000 through 2003–04, the number of teachers not fully certified has remained fairly constant in SMSD, with the exception of the 2001–02 school year. According to interviews conducted by the review team, district administrators were uncertain why such a high percentage of teachers were on permits.

Uncertified teachers may not be sufficiently trained in the field in which they are teaching. As a result, they may not be able to provide the necessary foundation in their subjects to students. *Texas Study Links Teacher Certification, Student Success* uses findings based on a study at the Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas at Austin. It concludes that Texas students do better on state exams when their instructors are certified in the subjects they teach.

According to the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel, the nine uncertified teachers on emergency permits have all passed content area exams and are on schedule to be certified by 2005–06.

For 2002–03, the latest year for which peer district information was available, SMSD had the second highest number of teachers and the second highest percentage on permits among the peer districts. Compared to the regional and state averages, SMSD has a higher percentage of teachers on permits than

EXHIBIT 2-13
SMSD TEACHER PERMITS BY TYPE
1999–2000 THROUGH 2003–04

TYPE OF PERMIT	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Emergency (certified)	3	3	3	1	1
Emergency (uncertified)	7	3	13	10	9
Non renewable	2	3	4	1	3
Temporary Classroom Assignment	1	2	2	2	0
District Teaching	0	0	0	0	0
Temporary Exemption	0	0	0	0	0
Total permits	13	11	22	14	13
Total teacher FTEs	196	201	204	203	198
Percentage of teachers on permits	6.6%	5.5%	10.8%	6.9%	6.5%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 1999-2000 through 2002–03, PEIMS 2003–04, WCL calculations, and SMSD director of Personnel.

both (**Exhibit 2-14**). This information is only available in AEIS, and 2003–04 data had not been released at the time of the review.

Reliance on teachers with permits typically stems from high turnover and the inability of a district to recruit certified teachers. From 1998–99 through 2002–03, the latest year for which such information is currently available, SMSD teacher turnover averaged 22.4 percent, well above peer districts, region, and state averages for the same period (**Exhibit 2-15**). From 2000–01 through 2002–03, more than one-fifth of the teachers at SMSD left each year.

There is no method for the superintendent or the board to assess the reasons why turnover is consistently high among teachers. Seventy-four percent of SMSD teachers responding to a review team survey either agreed or strongly agreed that the district could do more to reduce teacher turnover (**Exhibit 2-16**).

Among the primary causes of teacher turnover is salary and lack of recruitment efforts. Based upon current salary information, SMSD teacher salaries are higher than the Region 4 and peer district averages for

beginning teachers and for each five-year increment of experience through 20 years (**Exhibit 2-17**). As a result of the TASB salary survey, SMSD increased coaching stipends and added a $3,000 stipend for a bilingual teacher.

SMSD also makes extensive recruiting efforts. SMSD participated in 14 teacher career fairs in spring 2004 (**Exhibit 2-18**). However, the district does not evaluate the success of each fair attended regarding the number of certified teachers hired from each fair.

Exit interviews are a method used to gather information why employees leave an organization. Some reasons are considered uncontrollable, such as having children or moving due to a transfer of employment by a spouse. Other reasons, however, are considered more controllable, such as morale and salary. While SMSD conducts exit interviews for teachers leaving SMSD using the TASB recommended exit interview form, no report summarizing the predominant reasons is generated for discussion between the superintendent, district administrators, and principals.

EXHIBIT 2-14
PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS ON PERMITS SMSD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 4, AND STATE 2002–03

ENTITY	TOTAL TEACHERS ON PERMITS	TOTAL TEACHER FTES	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL TEACHERS FTES ON PERMITS
Bandera	22	204	10.8%
SMSD	**14**	**203**	**6.9%**
Decatur	7	189	3.7%
Sweeny	5	150	3.3%
Fredericksburg	6	206	2.9%
Region 4	3,786	58,560	6.5%
State	14,956	288,386	5.2%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03.

EXHIBIT 2-15
SMSD, PEER DISTRICT, REGION 4, AND STATE TEACHER TURNOVER 1998-99 – 2002-03

ENTITY	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	AVERAGE
SMSD	16.9%	16.7%	20.7%	36.0%	21.7%	22.4%
Decatur	12.8%	20.6%	16.7%	14.4%	21.0%	17.1%
Bandera	15.8%	16.9%	16.8%	17.8%	17.3%	16.9%
Sweeny	11.9%	13.1%	15.8%	15.8%	16.6%	14.6%
Fredericksburg	12.5%	10.0%	12.0%	8.4%	11.0%	10.8%
Region 4	15.9%	15.4%	17.4%	16.3%	15.6%	16.1%
State	15.5%	15.0%	16.0%	15.7%	15.6%	15.6%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 1998–99 – 2002–03.

EXHIBIT 2-16
SMSD TEACHER RESPONSES TO SURVEY QUESTIONS APRIL 2004

SURVEY QUESTION	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO				
	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	HAVE NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
The district could do more to reduce teacher turnover.	49%	25%	9%	9%	7%

SOURCE: Review team survey, April 2004.
NOTE: Percentages are rounded off.

EXHIBIT 2-17
TEACHER SALARY COMPARISON
SMSD, REGION 4, AND PEER DISTRICTS BY YEAR INCREMENTS
2003–04

TEACHER SALARY BY YEARS	SMSD	REGION 4	PEER DISTRICT AVERAGE
Beginning	$36,010	$31,271	$29,393
5 Years	$37,155	$36,002	$32,123
10 Years	$39,942	$38,581	$36,179
15 Years	$43,249	$42,066	$40,459
20 Years	$46,556	$45,465	$43,735

SOURCE: Texas Association of School Board survey, peer district salary information, and PEIMS 2003–04.

EXHIBIT 2-18
SMSD CAREER FAIRS
2003–04

DATE	UNIVERSITY/TEACHER FAIR
February 19, 2004	Baylor University
February 27, 2004	University of Houston
March 26, 2004	Stephen F. Austin University
March 30, 2004	University of Texas
April 7, 2004	Angelo State University
April 7, 2004	Texas State University
April 8, 2004	Abilene Christian University
April 14, 2004	Prairie View A&M
April 15, 2004	Lamar University
April 15, 2004	University of Houston
April 19, 2004	Texas A&M
April 20, 2004	Texas A&M Kingsville
April 21, 2004	Texas A&M Corpus Christi
June 7-8, 2004	Gulf Coast Teacher Fair

SOURCE: SMSD director of Personnel.

On the teacher survey conducted by the review team, 67 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that teacher morale is not a problem (**Exhibit 2-19**).

The community open house and campus focus groups expressed concerns regarding uncertified teachers. Some comments included:

- "Hire more certified teachers."

- "Some teachers are not certified."

- "Teachers are not certified – may contribute to turnover."

- "Teachers are not certified appropriately."

- "High school has lost some very qualified teachers and replaced with uncertified."

SMSD should develop strategies to increase the percentage of teachers with proper certification. The assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel and director of Personnel should conduct the following tasks in 2004–05:

- Evaluate current hiring practices and recommend policies and procedures to eliminate causes of teachers being hired without proper certification.

- Evaluate current recruitment trips and assess the number of teachers interviewed versus hired and establish methods to track the success of those teachers during their first year in the district.

- Conduct telephone interviews with teachers who left SMSD in 2002–03 and 2003–04 to determine what percentage were due to controllable reasons and document the reasons.

- Assess methods for gathering information on school climate and teacher morale and recommend one for use in 2005–06. Many school systems use

EXHIBIT 2-19
SMSD TEACHER RESPONSES TO SURVEY QUESTIONS
APRIL 2004

	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO				
SURVEY QUESTION	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	HAVE NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Teacher morale is not a problem.	2%	17%	14%	35%	32%

SOURCE: Review team survey, April 2004.

the Organizational Health Instrument as a way to assess organizational climate or how teachers feel about their work environment.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS (REC. 29)

SMSD does not have job descriptions for all positions in the district. The effectiveness of employees is reduced when there are no job descriptions or out-of-date job descriptions. Without current job descriptions, employees, especially new ones, can be uncertain of their responsibilities, and supervisors may evaluate the incumbent's performance on job duties for which the person is no longer responsible.

Accurate job descriptions also reduce the risk of problems by clearly stating the essential duties of each position. Providing employees with copies of their job descriptions helps clarify their roles and responsibilities. The HR Department is using TASB model job descriptions but is not customizing them for each position in the district. There is also no central place where job descriptions can be located and no process to keep existing job descriptions current. A review of job descriptions did not include dates, which made it difficult to determine when updates were made.

Exhibit 2-20 shows examples of job title and job description discrepancies and cases where no current job description exists in SMSD.

Job title and job description discrepancies lead to a confusion of responsibilities. In cases where the district posts a job with one title and the job description shows a different title or level, inaccurate decisions regarding hiring can occur.

According to the Texas Association of School Boards, benefits from a district providing current job descriptions for all positions include the following:

▪ Provides a basis for hiring and placement activities, including job position, recruiting, and selection of new employees;

▪ Assists supervisors in developing employee orientation and training programs;

▪ Clarifies responsibilities and expectations of employees;

▪ Serves as a reference tool in evaluating employee performance;

▪ Clarifies lines of authority and communication;

▪ Indicates inconsistencies, areas of inefficiency, and overlapping responsibilities in job assignments and work flow;

▪ Enables supervisors to design career paths or promotional systems for employee groups; and

▪ Assists in compliance with equal employment opportunity laws and regulations.

Hays Consolidated Independent School District (HCISD) makes job descriptions available as needed and strives to update participants on an annual basis. Each location administrator updates the appropriate job description for his/her location and forwards them to the division of Human Resources for consideration and approval. Employees have access to HCISD job descriptions in hard copy or online versions.

SMSD should update all job descriptions and establish a system to ensure they are kept current. The assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel should customize job descriptions, disseminate them to employees, and continue to review and update those descriptions. Employees should be surveyed to give input regarding the tasks of their particular position. This information should be the foundation of the newly created job description. Information from the survey will also allow the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel to study whether tasks are being assigned appropriately and efficiently. Job descriptions should include job title, supervisor, pay grade, wage/hour status, primary purpose, qualifications, major responsibilities and duties, supervisory responsibilities, and working conditions.

According to the business manager, the payroll specialist and accountant position job descriptions will be updated in fall 2004.

EXHIBIT 2-20
SMSD EXAMPLES OF JOB TITLE AND JOB DISCREPANCIES OR STATUS OF JOB DESCRIPTION
2003–04

JOB TITLE	JOB DESCRIPTION
Assistant superintendent (Same title for two positions.)	Assistant superintendent of elementary and secondary education (One position not current and no job description for other position.)
Instructional technology coordinator	Information technology manager
Winschool/PEIMS Specialist	PEIMS coordinator
Payroll specialist	None available
Accountant	None available
Computer technician	Information technology specialist
Director of Personnel	Human Resources director
Maintenance Department employees	None available

SOURCE: SMSD job descriptions, 2003–04 SMSD staff schedule, and SMSD web site.

DISTRICT'S WEB SITE (REC. 30)

SMSD does not maximize the use of the district web site. As a result, the SMSD web site is not being used to improve communication with parents. The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction said the web site lacks sufficient parent access to information and does not provide effective communication with the community.

The web site does provide information on the school calendar, articles from the local newspaper, board meeting agendas/decisions, general meetings, special events, teacher phone numbers, and e-mail addresses. The district Webmaster is a grade 3 teacher and is responsible for web site content additions and modifications. The district does not have a formal web site content team to support the Webmaster. The assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel and the secretary to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction send the Webmaster content updates.

Redesigning the web site to provide more information to parents was one of four goals the superintendent gave the Instructional Technology director to complete last year. The superintendent used the Aldine ISD web site as an example of a web site that provides information to parents. The Instructional Technology director was unable to provide the redesign of the web site.

The superintendent said that the district web site is important in improving the district's public relations. The Webmaster said the following ideas are being considered as upgrades to the district web site:

- Vocabulary lists for parents and staff

- Reading and math strategies

- General lesson plans on the elementary school site

Conroe ISD (www.conroe.isd.tenet.edu) has information accessibility on their web based student information system. Students can access the district web site and use a personal calendar and an online personal electronic portfolio. Parents can view their student's data online; longitudinal data, which shows the changes in the performance of an individual or group over a period of years; attendance; discipline; schedules and report cards for secondary campuses; and transcripts for the high school. The Conroe ISD web site also includes a technology flyer, which highlights technology status and how technology is supporting district goals.

SMSD should develop and implement a plan to upgrade the district web site. There are software products that provide a web site structure template to shorten design effort and allow a user to focus on providing web content. The district Webmaster should develop a prioritized plan for improving the district web site. The plan should be reviewed with the superintendent and implemented during 2004–05.

According to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, four meetings have been held with SMSD Information Technology staff and an outside vendor to discuss the design of a new web site.

COMMUNITY/BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS (REC. 31)

SMSD does not have a plan for developing community/business partnerships. Each school is responsible for their community/business relationships, and there is no district or administrative involvement with this function. The superintendent does expect the education foundation to assist in developing community/business partnerships.

SMSD had an active program with businesses when the district's School and Community Services Department was operational. The department was responsible for Adopt-a-Grade and Junior Achievement, and also provided ideas for the ways businesses could be involved. After 2001–02, the functions of the School and Community Services Department were discontinued, and only campus-initiated business relationships were continued.

The SMSD Middle School does not have any business partnerships but does receive donations from Washington Mutual Bank. The middle school has also received contributions from Office Depot. The SMSD Intermediate School has a partnership with Sterling Bank that helps support the school's Student Council. The high school, primary, and elementary schools do not have business partnerships. According to the superintendent, the district has around 27 corporate sponsors. The superintendent described Texas Instruments as a good partner for providing a Wellness program and lunch for new school hires.

The high school facilitator for the automotive technician class, who reports to the high school principal, has been involved in developing financial/service support relationships with businesses by placing high school students in jobs as part of a work/study program. Several students were placed with a local auto dealership, which in 2000 led to the first automotive technology classes that were financed by the General Motors Corporation (GMC). The high school facilitator is not actively developing business contacts but, as a result of placing students in jobs, does have business contacts in the area. According to the high school facilitator, SMSD has had previous contact with and received financial/service support from the following companies:

- K-Mart Owners - Los Angeles, CA

- Carl Barnett/Auto Group - National

- Southwest Pontiac/GMC - Local

- Rockwell Management - National

- Windfield Town Homes - Local

- Team Texas – Local

- Marshalls, Inc. – Local and National

- Weaver, Davis, & Jacob Realty – Houston

- Greenberg & Company – Houston

- Cornerstone Consulting – Houston

- Golden Corral #687 – Local

- Softrac 2000 – Houston

- Intech Global Resources, Inc. – Houston

- Serv/Pro – Local

- Southern Maid – Local

- Binswanger Glass – Local and National

- Salons of Houston – Houston

- Spartan Aviation – Tulsa, OK

- Corporate Repository – Local and National

- Transtar Air Conditioning & Refrigeration Supply – Houston

- General Motors – Detroit, Michigan

- Coca-Cola – Local and National

- A-Mobile Car Doctor – Local

- Snap-On-Tools – Spring, TX and National

- Bellaire High School Automotive – Houston ISD

- Dulles High School Automotive – Fort Bend ISD

- Houston Community College NE, Automotive/Transportation – Houston

- Bake-O-Body & Paint – Local

- D & D Automotive – Local

- Sam's Club – Local

- Champion/AutoNation – Local and National

The director of the Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce said he did not think businesses are being actively solicited by SMSD. The high school facilitator said there are companies that may want to help the district, but there has not been any coordinated effort to develop partnerships. The City of Stafford has approximately 2,000 businesses, and the Education

Committee for the Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce has expressed interest in helping educational entities develop business relationships.

Clear Creek ISD uses community partnerships to strengthen and enhance the quality of education in its district. Local business and industry participate in student recognition programs, career exploration, teacher grant awards, student scholarship endowments, and other partnership opportunities that help support students.

SMSD should develop a plan that assigns responsibilities for developing community/business partnerships. The district should use the business contacts of the high school facilitator, the Stafford City Council, the Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce, the president of the school board, the superintendent, and the principals from each school to help in developing a plan to build these relationships.

As a member of the Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce, the superintendent should contact the chairman of the Education Committee of the Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce to enlist support. The superintendent should request the Stafford City Council to participate as advisors to the community/business partnership effort. The superintendent should prepare a community/business partnership development plan in 2004–05 to begin the effort of developing community/business relationships.

VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM (REC. 32)

SMSD does not have a community involvement program to encourage parents and other citizens to volunteer in the district or at the school level. Community volunteers can enrich the educational program, assist staff members in the performance of their duties, and enhance the relationship between the school district and the community. With the diverse student population, it is important the district understand the current parent-school partnerships that are working and consider their use as a best practice for all schools.

"Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs," which can be found on the web site of the National Parent Teachers Association, provides a compilation of research findings regarding "Parent and Family Involvement and Student Success." These research findings include the following:

- When parents are involved, students achieve more, regardless of socio-economic status, ethnic/racial background, or the parents' education level.

- The more extensive the parent involvement, the higher the student achievement.

- When parents are involved in their students' education, those students have higher grades and test scores, better attendance, and complete homework more consistently.

- When parents are involved, students exhibit more positive attitudes and behavior.

- Students who have parents involved in their lives have higher graduation rates and greater enrollment rates in post-secondary education.

- Different types of parent/family involvement produce different gains. To have long-lasting gains for students, parent involvement activities must be well-planned, inclusive, and comprehensive.

- Educators hold higher expectations of students whose parents collaborate with the teacher. They also hold higher opinions of those parents.

- In programs that are designed to involve parents in full partnerships, student achievement for disadvantaged children not only improves, it can reach levels that are standard for middle-class children. In addition, the children who are farthest behind make the greatest gains.

- Children from diverse cultural backgrounds tend to do better when parents and professionals collaborate to bridge the gap between the culture at home and the learning institution.

- Student behaviors, such as alcohol use, violence, and antisocial behavior decrease as parent involvement increases.

- Students are more likely to fall behind in academic performance if their parents do not participate in school events, develop a working relationship with their child's educators, or keep up with what is happening in their child's school.

- The benefits of involving parents are not confined to the early years; there are significant gains at all ages and grade levels.

- Junior and senior high school students with parents who remain involved make better transitions, maintain the quality of their work, and develop realistic plans for their future. Students whose parents are not involved, on the other hand, are more likely to drop out of school.

- An accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is not income or social status, but the extent to which that student's family is able to (1) create a home environment that encourages learning; (2) communicate high, yet reasonable, expectations for their children's achievement and future careers; and (3) become involved in their children's education at school and in the community.

The highest number of Stafford Parent-Teacher Organization (SPTO) parents reported (100) is at the primary and elementary schools. The superintendent said the district's status regarding volunteers and parental involvement is good at the primary, elementary, and intermediate school level, but participation is less at the middle school and high school level. Some activities include the following:

- The high school has their Stafford High School Parent and Partners Organization but has not had any meetings this past year and does not have any parents as members of the organization. The high school has approximately five volunteers that provide occasional support. The primary volunteer organization is the Stafford Spartan Athletic Boosters Club, which sponsors a Fourth of July parade, annual spaghetti dinner, and an annual athletic banquet, among other activities.

- The middle school SPTO (43 parent members) meets monthly to address teacher requests for both financial support and volunteers. They have one big fundraiser each year, a cookie dough sale. This year they earned $13,000 for the campus that was used to fund teacher requests for items that directly support students. The middle school has a limited number of parent volunteers.

- The intermediate school has approximately 50 SPTO members and 30 volunteers. The Reading and Riding Program involves community volunteers dedicated to improving reading skills. The Harley Owners Group motivates intermediate students to read by participating in a program that offers motorcycle rides, books, and bookmarks to prolific readers in each classroom.

- The primary and elementary schools have 20 parents that volunteer on a regular basis. The assistant principal has started a Dad's Club this year. The organization has enlisted 80 student fathers. Their first official duty was to act as hosts at the annual Mom's and Muffins Breakfast in May.

SMSD schools do not track volunteer information consistently or have a system for sharing volunteer information, such as names, home and e-mail addresses, and areas of interest or specialty. Each school has a sign-in and sign-out sheet that includes the name of the volunteer and the activity. There is no standard for the type of volunteer information kept at each school, and each school decides on the kind of volunteer information that will be kept.

Parents, staff, and members of the community said there was a need for more volunteers in the schools. The following comments were made in interviews, the Community Open House, and in focus groups:

- "The schools need to do a better job at parental involvement. The community relationship is not that strong. It is a struggle to deal with the schools."

- "Parental involvement – not enough."

- "Parental involvement at the high school is very low. I believe the problem is the lack of timely notice or no notice at all. Communication MUST improve."

- "Parent involvement is very poor. I have participated in meetings held by both school board members and school management and have volunteered to participate in school meetings where policies were discussed but have never been invited."

Some examples of where school volunteers can help are:

- In the office: answer phones, assist parents who come to the office, write grants, file papers.

- In and around the school buildings: serve as greeters to car riders, bus duty.

- In the classroom: read with children, assist teachers with projects, guest speakers.

- At home: prepare mailings, sew costumes, create learning materials for teachers, and design forms and newsletters.

"Seven Steps to a Successful Volunteer Program," located on the web site of the National Parent Teachers Association, provides useful information for creating and maintaining a vibrant volunteer program. The article includes suggestions for recruiting, training, using, retaining, and recognizing volunteers.

Corpus Christi ISD (CCISD) has established a plan to develop and assess community involvement programs. CCISD established clear, well-developed goals, objectives, and strategies to set a direction for progress.

SMSD should develop a volunteer involvement program. In order to develop a program, the superintendent should direct the primary and elementary school principal to chair a committee of teachers and parents from all schools to develop a volunteer plan.

The committee should prepare a survey for teachers and other school staff to determine where volunteers could work and a survey for parents and citizens to learn about their talents, interests, and skills. After the survey results are compiled and a volunteer plan developed, the superintendent should review the plan, make adjustments, and submit the plan to the board for approval. The superintendent should then recruit a volunteer coordinator for the program. The volunteer coordinator should form a committee to recruit, train, and initiate the volunteer program during the 2004–05 school year.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 2: DISTRICT MANAGEMENT							
20. Increase the interaction of SMSD and the City of Stafford to include meetings, committees, and communications not specifically required by law.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
21. Eliminate the position of assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel.	$7,391	$88,686	$88,686	$88,686	$88,686	$362,135	$0
22. Develop staffing levels based on student enrollment and reduce campus staffing to reflect recommended minimum standards.	$68,920	$102,865	$102,865	$102,865	$102,865	$480,380	$0
23. Develop one handbook that covers all district employees and establish procedures to update and distribute it to employees annually.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
24. Comply with the designation, overtime, and pay period reporting requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
25. Automate the time and attendance function using standardized procedures for all non-exempt employees.	$0	$0	($200)	($200)	($200)	($600)	($750)
26. Implement an automated substitute calling system to ensure continuity of instruction in the classroom and improve the efficiency of payroll processing.	$0	$0	($295)	($295)	($295)	($885)	($895)
27. Require the Payroll Department to maintain employee payroll information in a file located in the Payroll Department.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
28. Develop strategies to increase the percentage of teachers with proper certification.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
29. Update all job descriptions and establish a system to ensure they are kept current.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
30. Develop and implement a plan to upgrade the district's web site.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
31. Develop a plan that assigns responsibilities for developing community/business partnerships.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
32. Develop a volunteer involvement program.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Totals-Chapter 2	$76,311	$191,551	$191,056	$191,056	$191,056	$841,030	($1,645)

CHAPTER 3
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

School districts must have sound financial practices in order to maximize available resources to ensure that quality instruction and learning is available to each student. Efficient financial management ensures a school district receives and manages all available revenue from local, state, and federal resources; maintains a track record of sound financial decisions and adequate and equitable budget allocations; issues timely, accurate, and informative reports on the district's financial position; maintains adequate internal controls; employs a skilled, well-trained staff; and maintains a consistent record of favorable reports by external auditors.

To fulfill their mission, school districts must maximize the use of their assets and protect them against loss from unforeseen events. Among a district's most valuable assets are employees, cash, fixed assets, and overall borrowing capacity. A district's ability to function effectively will be reduced if its assets are significantly impaired. As a result, districts must establish effective risk management techniques and programs. The goal of risk management is to provide reasonable assurance that a district's assets are safeguarded from loss, catastrophic risk exposure is minimized, and financial interests are protected should losses occur.

A critical component of the business management of schools is the purchasing function. The purchasing function is a major management process that supports financial accountability in Texas public schools. The overall objective of purchasing is to use available fiscal resources to obtain the best product or service for the resources expended. The purchasing process supports instructional delivery, administration, and other areas of a district's operations. The purchasing process also influences day-to-day financial functions, including budget management and accounting.

Exhibit 3-1 shows SMSD's business office organization chart.

At the start of the performance review in March 2004, SMSD's staff with business office responsibilities had all been in their positions for less than one year. The superintendent began working in the district in April 2003. In July 2003, the superintendent hired a new business manager. The business manager is a CPA and worked at the Harris County Department of Education for four years as controller. This was the fourth business manager in a five year period for the district. The business manager supervises three employees: an accountant, an accounts payable clerk, and a payroll clerk. All three of these employees began working in their positions in February 2004. The accountant

EXHIBIT 3-1
SMSD BUSINESS OFFICE ORGANIZATION CHART
MARCH 2004
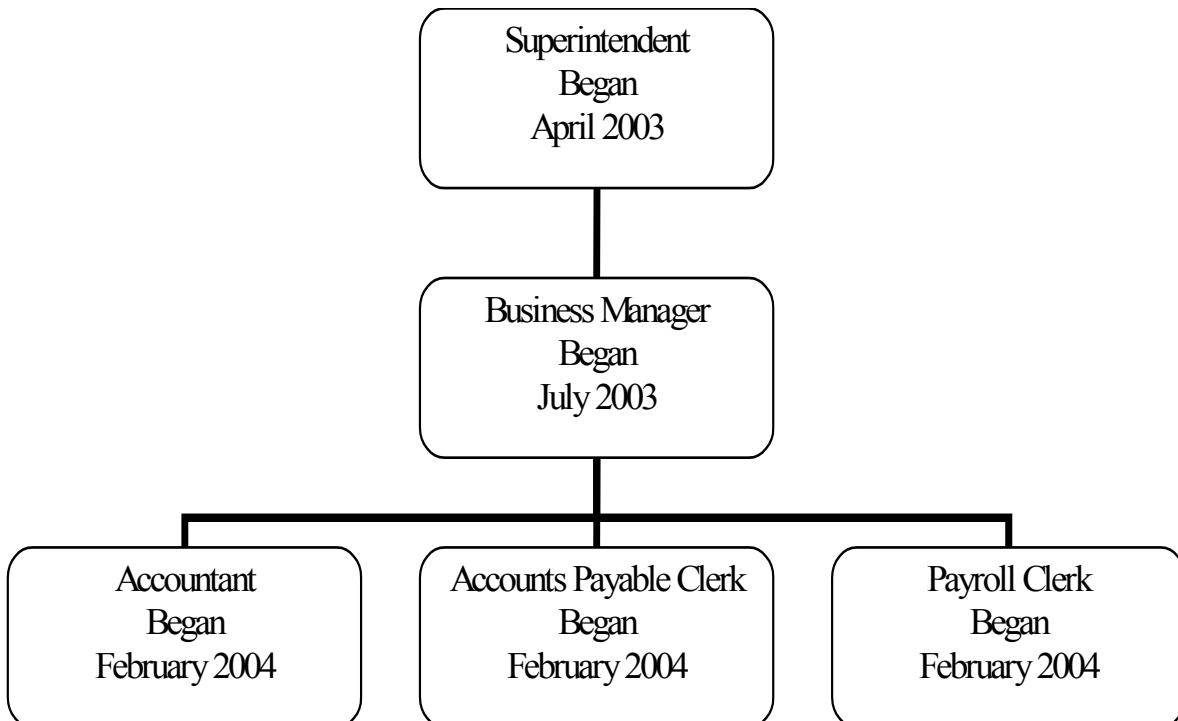
SOURCE: SMSD business manager, March 2004.

position was vacant from November 2003 until February 2004. Also, the department lost a secretarial position in July 2003.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- SMSD minimized its recapture liability despite increasing wealth per weighted average daily attendance (WADA) by increasing student enrollment and actively pursuing multiple Chapter 41 district options.

- The district implemented a 457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan that saves taxpayer dollars and provides retirement benefits for full-time and temporary employees who are not eligible for the Teacher Retirement System.

FINDINGS

- SMSD offers a local optional homestead exemption of 20 percent of the property value in addition to the state-mandated $15,000 homestead exemption. By providing this exemption the district is losing more than $600,000 annually, funding not available to offset district expenses.

- SMSD does not have a written policy to ensure that the district maintains an adequate fund balance, and the district's expenditures have exceeded revenues in four of the last seven years.

- SMSD does not prepare individual grant budgets for approved grants or account for related federal grant funds separate from the general fund. Districts are penalized by the granting agency if they fail to expend funds properly within the established limits, as unused funds are returned to the grantor and unavailable for use the following year.

- The district's monthly financial statements presented to the board do not match the corresponding end-of-month general ledger statements. Failure to reflect all the incurred expenditures from an account in the general ledger can cause the campus or department to inadvertently overspend their budgets and mislead the board about the true amount of funds available.

- SMSD business staff lack training related to their jobs in public schools and in financial management. Without training, the district cannot ensure that the business staff understands and remains current with the laws, rules, and regulations regarding all aspects of school business.

- SMSD lacks formal procedures manuals describing daily, weekly, monthly, and annual duties for functions in accounting, payroll, and accounts

payable. As a result, there are no consistent tools in place to ensure required business reports are accurate and that job duties are covered when employees are absent or depart.

- SMSD has been operating under board-declared financial exigency since May 2003 and has not taken action to undeclare the district's state of financial exigency, even though the district and the City Council jointly adopted a 2004-05 budget plan with the financial resources necessary to meet the district's needs.

- SMSD does not have a written budget process that ensures that all stakeholders have sufficient input into the district's budget development. Lack of a written budget process may result in the district's educational goals and needs not being addressed in the final adopted budget.

- SMSD does not prepare multi-year budget forecasts. Without the use of multi-year budget forecasts, the district cannot plan for the use of its fund balance reserves for future years. Forecasting improves the decision-making ability of the administration and board during the budget development time, especially in districts with a variable or declining fund balance.

- The district does not update its cash flow forecast regularly or forecast beyond the current fiscal year. Failure to properly complete a cash flow analysis can cause a district to expend funds that are not available and to realize lower interest earnings due to funds not being properly invested.

- SMSD's legal and local policy CDA does not meet all the standards required by the Public Funds Investment Act and does not provide guidance as to the diversification of investment types and maturities, along with broker capabilities, which are acceptable to the district.

- SMSD's investment policy does not require disclosure of the deposit and investment risks associated with the investments and collateral of the district. Failure to include these risks in the investment policy can cause the district to be noncompliant with Statement Number 40 of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board and can result in an audit exception.

- SMSD requires campus and department personnel to make copies of all checks included in a deposit so that the district can easily research any potential loss situations. Requiring employees to make copies of all checks received is a time consuming process that provides very little benefit to the district in the event of a loss.

- The district has not performed regular monthly bank and investment account reconciliations. The failure to perform timely reconciliation can cause errors in the general ledger or errors at the depository institution to go undetected.

- SMSD has not fully implemented positive pay check clearing in conjunction with the sweep account. The district is assuming too much risk for loss due to fraudulently cleared items because the Uniform Commercial Code has shifted liability for fraudulent items from banking institutions to governmental and commercial account holders.

- The business office does not provide monthly reports regarding the receipt, deposit, and expenditure of funds generated from activities at the schools. Principals and activity sponsors do not know if their accounts have properly been credited with deposits or the subsequent balance that is available for use.

- Campus secretaries do not consistently verify activity fund deposits prepared by the activity sponsor. Failure to verify the accuracy of such information is an internal financial control weakness that places both the sponsor and the campus secretary in a tenuous position should the deposit be short.

- SMSD is not enforcing its workers' compensation third party administrator contract terms that provide for periodic analysis and reports from the claims administrator. Not having workers' compensation claims information to accurately identify and communicate the causes of workers' compensation injuries or identify specific buildings that may be a safety hazard can result in continued claims issues and ultimately higher premiums to the district.

- SMSD does not have a perpetual inventory system and has not conducted a physical inventory of its assets since 2002. As a result, the equipment records provided by the district do not agree with the balances reflected in the financial statements because the equipment records have not been updated.

- SMSD did not submit required periodic calculations on its bonded indebtedness to ensure compliance with federal laws. Failure to properly file arbitrage rebate reports may cause the Internal Revenue Service to declare the bonds taxable or assess penalties and interest on the bond issue.

- SMSD purchased goods and services in a manner that did not comply with board policies, district-purchasing procedures, and Texas Education Code competitive bid requirements. Without proper monitoring of its purchasing process, the district may continue to experience compliance violations with state competitive bidding laws.

- The district does not have a written, comprehensive purchasing procedures manual. When comprehensive purchasing procedures are not readily available, employees who have purchasing authority may inadvertently violate purchasing policies and procedures.

- SMSD does not have a complete, written textbook procedures manual. Principals and school textbook clerks have to rely on word-of-mouth to learn how to perform their textbook-related duties and have no written materials to refer to during the year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 33 (p. 87): Discontinue the 20 percent optional homestead exemption**. SMSD's maintenance and operations tax rate is capped at the maximum level of $1.50. Eliminating the optional homestead exemption would provide the district with additional operating funds.

- **Recommendation 34 (p. 88): Develop a written fund balance policy for the general fund.** The superintendent should consult with the district's auditors and financial advisors to determine a reasonable level for a fund balance goal for the general fund. Adopting a written fund balance policy for the general fund will allow the district to plan for a realistic goal that reflects SMSD's cash needs and financial condition

- **Recommendation 35 (p. 89): Prepare and adopt a budget for each approved grant using appropriate fund types.** Upon approval of a grant by TEA, the district should prepare a budget that reflects the activity contained in the application. The superintendent should ensure that the business manager and curriculum leaders have implemented a system that will require that federal program budgets to be appropriately prepared. The superintendent should require that the curriculum leaders fully communicate the goals and objectives of the grants to the campus leaders to ensure that the funds are expended appropriately.

- **Recommendation 36 (p. 90): Require adjusting journal entries to be booked to the general ledger as they occur to ensure that the general ledger records reflect current account balances.** The district should implement a standard that would require that guidelines be met so that the monthly financial statement presented to the board most accurately presents the financial

condition of the district. Additionally, since campuses and departments rely on information presented in the general ledger, it is important that the information reported be accurate and up-to-date.

- **Recommendation 37 (p. 91): Develop an annual training program for business office staff.** The business manager should develop this annual training plan for staff members based on individual job responsibilities and employee needs. The business manager should then present this training schedule to the superintendent, along with budget implications, as part of the annual budgeting process.

- **Recommendation 38 (p. 91): Develop written procedures manuals for the accounting, accounts payable, and payroll areas.** Developing and adopting easily accessible written procedures for these areas will provide consistent guidance for staff performing these functions. The business manager should obtain copies of procedures manuals from other districts as a guide in the development of SMSD's manuals. Staff meetings should be held to discuss the procedures. Manuals should be updated as needed but at least on an annual basis.

- **Recommendation 39 (p. 92): Undeclare the district's state of financial exigency.** The board should vote to undeclare the district's financial emergency status at the earliest opportunity to avoid possible future negative impacts on the district's credit worthiness. The Texas Education Agency informally recommends that districts "undeclare" financial exigency once the financial emergency is remedied.

- **Recommendation 40 (p. 93): Develop a written budget planning process that allocates resources based on district goals and objectives and includes the involvement of the board, administration, staff, and community.** A formal, written process allows everyone involved in the budget process to understand where resources need to be expended. A written budget process should include a budget calendar that meets the TEA timeline, allocations to the district goals and objectives, and a budget book that can be made available to staff, parents, and the public and available on the district's web site.

- **Recommendation 41 (p. 94): Develop and implement multi-year budget forecasting as part of the budget process.** The superintendent and the business manager should develop a budget forecasting worksheet that includes the prior year budget information, the proposed information for

the budget year under consideration, and an estimated forecast for three succeeding years. This worksheet should be updated throughout the budgeting process and included in every budget work session with the board.

- **Recommendation 42 (p. 94): Develop a two-year cash flow analysis and provide periodic updates to the board.** The business manager should prepare an initial two-year cash flow analysis and review it with the superintendent, department heads, and principals. The analysis should be updated on a periodic basis, preferably at least twice per year, which allows the district to manage its investments appropriately.

- **Recommendation 43 (p. 95): Develop an investment policy that incorporates all provisions of the Public Funds Investment Act.** The board should adopt an investment policy and appoint officials authorized to make investment decisions for the district in accordance with the Public Funds Investment Act. The policy should incorporate all provisions included in the act so that the district may quickly adapt to changing market conditions while also ensuring that existing investments are within the limits of the policy.

- **Recommendation 44 (p. 97): Update the investment policy to comply with Statement Number 40 of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board.** SMSD should review their investment policy thoroughly with their external auditor to ensure that the policy appropriately reflects the provisions contained in the Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement Number 40 and the Public Funds Investment Act and ensure that the required elements are present for inclusion in the 2004–05 financial statements.

- **Recommendation 45 (p. 97): Discontinue the practice of making copies of all checks included in deposits.** The business manager should develop a system requiring that individual receipts indicate the check number so that they can be researched in the event of a deposit discrepancy, eliminating the need for check copies.

- **Recommendation 46 (p. 98): Adopt a policy that requires the district's accounting staff to reconcile bank and investment accounts within 30 days of the receipt of the monthly statement.** Requiring timely reconciliation will allow errors to be corrected quickly and ensure current and correct information is being provided to the board. The business manager should draft a policy for approval by the board that requires a

monthly report to the superintendent on the status of bank and investment reconciliations.

- **Recommendation 47 (p. 98): Fully implement positive pay check clearing with the sweep account.** In June 2004, the board took initial steps to reduce the district's risk by updating the Treasury Management Services Agreement to include positive pay. The district should fully implement this process and ensure that it is incorporated as a part of the biennial depository contract process.

- **Recommendation 48 (p. 99): Require the business manager to send detailed student activity general ledger reports to the campuses on a monthly basis.** Requiring regular reports from the business manager to appropriate campus staff and sponsors that include all deposits, expenditures, and transfers would ensure appropriate district staff and sponsors had adequate financial information about student activity accounts and could be reasonably held accountable for their student activity funds.

- **Recommendation 49 (p. 99): Require a dual control system for the verification of funds received at the campuses.** The business manager implemented a practice for 2003–04 that all district deposits, such as operating, food service, and activity funds, must have two signatures prior to the deposit. Campuses, however, do not consistently verify activity fund deposits prepared by the activity sponsor. The business manager should communicate the importance of dual control when preparing deposits and ensure that all campus secretaries and appropriate staff receive training in dual control.

- **Recommendation 50 (p. 99): Require the third party administrator to complete an annual workers' compensation claims analysis.** Since the district's contract includes a provision for periodic analysis and reports from the claims administrator, SMSD should require the claims administrator to develop annual reports of injury and time-off by department or building to help the district to spot trends, target safety training and preventative programs for areas with high incident rates, and minimize insurance premiums.

- **Recommendation 51 (p. 100): Implement a perpetual inventory system.** Implementing a perpetual inventory system with one set of files will allow the district to maintain current and accurate inventory records. When the district updates its financial software, a fixed assets module should be purchased and all records of district assets should be entered. Once the fixed

asset information is confirmed and updated, the fixed asset records should be updated periodically throughout the year to ensure currency of data.

- **Recommendation 52 (p. 100): Complete arbitrage compliance reports on an annual basis**. Arbitrage is the ability to obtain tax-exempt bond proceeds and invest the funds in higher yielding taxable securities, resulting in a profit. Completing the IRS-required annual report will allow the district to be proactive and set aside necessary funds for any excess arbitrage, which may need to be remitted to the Internal Revenue Service.

- **Recommendation 53 (p. 101): Establish a purchasing process to monitor and ensure compliance with state and federal procurement laws and board policies.** Establishing processes that comply with state and federal laws and board policies for purchasing will help ensure compliance and avoid future legal and financial purchasing violations. The business manager and the superintendent should develop a written process that includes the development of a bid calendar and the review of budgets to monitor bidding compliance to determine which categories of purchases might exceed the $10,000 or the $25,000 thresholds, and prepare bids according to the law or district policy.

- **Recommendation 54 (p. 103): Develop a purchasing procedures manual and provide training to district staff on purchasing policies, procedures, and practices.** The business manager should obtain copies of other school districts' purchasing manuals for review and expand the district's purchasing manual to include details of each type of purchase, instructions for using purchasing cooperatives, and clear descriptions of all purchasing processes. After the manual is completed, training should be conducted for all staff involved in purchasing and the manual should be published on the district's web site with copies given to all staff involved in purchasing.

- **Recommendation 55 (p. 104): Develop and implement a textbook procedures manual and provide training.** SMSD should complete the textbook procedures manual and train all school textbook coordinators on the procedures. The manual should include processes for collecting reimbursement for lost textbooks from students and taking an annual inventory. The textbook manual should contain specific instructions for completing loss reports, and these reports should be reviewed by administration. According to

district staff, a written manual is now awaiting board approval.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

RECAPTURE PAYMENT

SMSD has minimized its recapture payment to the state for 2003–04 at the same time its wealth per weighted average daily attendance (WADA) was increasing by instituting an open enrollment policy and expanding payment-reducing options for the recaptured funds.

Chapter 41 of the Texas Education Code (TEC) defines recapture provisions in the law. For 2003–04, a district was determined to have a high wealth per student when its tax base exceeds the equalized wealth level of $305,000 in property value per student, counted as WADA. SMSD's property wealth in WADA for 2003–04 was $447,756 per student, well above the wealth level established by the state, as illustrated in **Exhibit 3-2**. Overall, SMSD's recapture obligation under Chapter 41 has increased primarily due to an increase in the certified property value for school funding purposes. Of the 9.3 percent increase in recapture payment from 2002–03 to 2003–04, about 4 percent is attributed to the T2 versus T4 value being applied for funding purposes. T2 and T4 are two of the components that are used in computing school district taxable value for the purposes of state funding and recapture. If SMSD's 2003–04's T4 value ($1,460,804,943) had been applied instead of the T2 value, the estimated recapture payment would have been $6,132,797.

Under the provisions of TEC Chapter 41, SMSD has five options available to reduce its property wealth per WADA. The options may be exercised singly or in combination. Districts may choose from the following options:

- Consolidate with another district

- Detach property

- Purchase attendance credits from the state

- Contract to educate nonresident students from a partner district

- Consolidate tax bases with another district

Districts can most dramatically impact their recapture liability by increasing student enrollment. TEC Section 41.124 states that the Board of Trustees of a school district with a wealth per student that exceeds the equalized wealth level may reduce the district's wealth per student by serving nonresident students who transfer to the district and are educated by the district but who are not charged tuition.

SMSD initiated an open enrollment policy in August 2003, which allows the superintendent to designate an open enrollment period for nonresident students. Students are admitted based upon available space and staff capacity, receipt of a completed application form, and established administrative regulations. Transfers are not approved which would limit the educational opportunities of students. SMSD admitted 105 out-of-district students under the new policy, which reduced the district's recapture payment by $509,847.

SMSD has historically used the provisions of the law to equalize wealth under an option three agreement with the state. However, for 2003–04, SMSD chose to pursue both options three and four, purchasing attendance credits from the state along with contracting to educate nonresident students from partner districts. The district has entered into option four agreements with the Littlefield, Albany, and Blanket Independent School Districts to purchase WADA. As part of SMSD's option four agreements, the district received unrestricted efficiency credits totaling $300,302 and reduced the district's recapture payment by $283,560.

Two other administrative efforts, successfully getting the district's 2002 certified property value reduced through an appeal of some assigned property values, and requesting and receiving credit from TEA for Central Appraisal District costs for three prior years, reduced the recapture payment by an additional $101,236. Through the various efforts noted

EXHIBIT 3-2
CHAPTER 41 ANALYSIS FOR SMSD
2000–01 THROUGH 2003–04

YEAR	WADA	VALUE TYPE USED FOR FUNDING PURPOSES	CERTIFIED PROPERTY VALUE	WEALTH PER WADA	RECAPTURE
2003–04 (estimated)	3,330.23	T2	$1,491,132,087	$447,756	$6,444,631
2002–03	3,289.96	T4	$1,403,272,158	$426,531	$5,897,049
2001–02	3.394.37	T2	$1,336,536,661	$393,751	$4,747,947
2000–01	3,380.49	T4	$1,196,049,105	$353,809	$2,868,825

SOURCE: For 2000–01 and 2001–02: Texas Education Agency Summary of Finance and Comptroller of Public Accounts, Property Tax Division; for 2002–03 and 2003–04 estimate: Texas Education Agency Foundation School Program Manager, September 2004. Note: For state funding purposes, Texas Education Agency uses prior year Comptroller's Property Tax Division (CPTD) values.

previously, SMSD's board and administration cumulatively lessened the district's 2003–04 Chapter 41 recapture payment by $894,643. It should be noted that any decrease in a school district's recapture payment impacts the state budget.

DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN

SMSD provides retirement benefits for full-time and temporary employees who are not eligible for Teacher Retirement System (TRS) retirement benefits under an eligible deferred compensation plan authorized by Internal Revenue Service Code Section 457(b). As a result of using this plan versus Social Security, the district saves money by not having to make an employer matching contribution.

Chapter 822.001 of the Texas Government Code, enacted by the Seventy-eighth Legislature, established a requirement that membership for newly qualified TRS eligible employees begin on the 91st day of employment. Employees subject to this waiting period are covered under the alternative 457(b) plan until such time as they are eligible for TRS membership.

Under the district's 457(b) plan, employees are required to contribute 7.5 percent of their monthly earnings to the retirement plan during their first 90 days of employment until they qualify for TRS. During that 90-day period, a district with a 457(b) plan does not have to provide matching payments.

During the first quarter of 2004, SMSD returned to employees $12,511 in 457(b) compensation withheld from those employees. Estimated annual savings in 2004 to SMSD from the use of a 457(b) alternative plan are expected to be around $50,000.

DETAILED FINDINGS

HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION (REC. 33)

SMSD offers a local optional homestead exemption of 20 percent of the property value in addition to the state mandated $15,000 homestead exemption. By providing this exemption the district is losing over $600,000 annually, funding not available to offset district expenses. School finance funding involves multiple components related to school district property values. Two components that are used in computing school district taxable value for the purposes of state funding

and recapture, T2 and T4, are defined as follows:

- T2: School district taxable value after the loss of the additional $10,000 exemption (used to determine state funding for Chapter 42 districts and recapture for Chapter 41 districts);

- T4: T2 value less 50 percent of the loss to the local optional percentage homestead exemption (used in place of T2 value in funding formulas when authorized by the legislature).

Districts that offer a local homestead option are treated differently than those that do not offer the option under the current law, except in years where there are sufficient funds available that allow the commissioner of Education to use the T4 values for school funding purposes. In the six years since the T4 value authorization was granted to the commissioner of Education, there have only been two years, 2000–01 and 2002–03, that districts were able to use T4 values. **Exhibit 3-3** shows SMSD's T2 and T4 values for funding purposes.

Funds were not available for this option during 2003–04, so all districts were required to use the T2 value in the state funding and recapture formulas. The use of the T2 value requires the district to calculate recapture based upon a property value which they cannot assess a property tax. The district loses the tax revenue that would have been generated had the district been able to tax the exempted value and is also required to remit a recapture amount that assumes that taxes have been collected on the full value.

SMSD experienced additional loss in 2003–04 due to the decline in local freeze adjusted net taxable value. The decline in local taxable value coupled with state funding formula shift from the T4 value to the T2 value resulted in a direct reduction in fund balance.

For 2003–04, SMSD's local 20 percent homestead exemption was valued at $60,654,289.

The district should discontinue the 20 percent optional homestead exemption. The district's maintenance and operations tax rate is capped at the maximum level of $1.50. Eliminating the optional homestead exemption would provide the district with additional operating funds.

EXHIBIT 3-3
T2 AND T4 VALUES FOR SMSD
2000–01 THROUGH 2003–04

YEAR	T2 VALUE	T4 VALUE
2003–04	$1,491,132,087	$1,460,804,943
2002–03	$1,430,349,308	$1,403,272,158
2001–02	$1,336,536,661	$1,312,974,966
2000–01	$1,215,704,467	$1,196,049,105

SOURCE: Comptroller of Public Accounts.
NOTE: SMSD was allowed to use T4 values for recapture purposes in 2002–03 and 2000–01, which resulted in a lower recapture amount.

Eliminating the optional homestead exemption would result in an estimated additional $877,971 in tax revenue at the $1.50 per $100 of value tax rate, and assuming a 96.5 percent collection rate. (The $60,654,289 optional homestead exemption value times $1.50 tax rate, divided by $100 property value equals $909,814, which would be the total additional assessed tax amount.) According to SMSD's tax collector, the collection rate for current (tax year 2003 taxes paid on or before June 30, 2004) is 96.5 percent. Applying the 96.5 percent rate, the additional amount estimated to be collected is the $909,814 total additional assessed tax amount times 0.965, SMSD's tax year 2003 non-delinquent collection rate, which equals $877,971.

Of the $877,971 collected, assuming SMSD only uses option 3 to meet its Chapter 41 recapture obligation, 31.641 percent, or $277,799, would be sent to the state. The recapture percentage is computed using the Texas Education Agency's 2003–04 Option 3 template and SMSD's 2003–04 funding data. The net difference, $600,172 ($877,971 - $277,799), would remain in the district for maintenance and operation purposes.

The additional tax revenue would be available to the district starting in 2005–06, assuming the board votes to eliminate the 20 percent optional homestead exemption by February 2005.

FUND BALANCE (REC. 34)

SMSD does not have a written policy to ensure that the district maintains an adequate fund balance. Without a written fund balance policy to guide the board and administration, a district could adopt a budget that would create a fund balance shortfall in future years. Continued usage of fund balance can cause districts to have a negative fund balance that could downgrade the district's bond ratings and cause a district to receive an unacceptable rating from TEA on the Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas. A district's fund balance serves as a key indicator of its financial condition.

SMSD's expenditures have exceeded their revenues in four out of the last seven years (**Exhibit 3-4**). SMSD's fund balance was over $4.2 million at the end of 2000–01 but dropped to $2.6 million at the end of 2002–03. The 2003–04 budget estimates the usage of $1.8 million of the fund balance, which will leave only around $825,020 in the fund balance. This is only 3.3 percent of the budgeted expenditures. In the budget information that was prepared for the board, the financial advisor recommended a fund balance of 25 percent of the expenditures, or $6.32 million.

In August 2003, the board adopted a budget that indicated the use of $1.6 million from the general fund balance. In October 2003, the district submitted to TEA through PEIMS a budget for the general fund showing the use of $1.8 million of fund balance, as shown in **Exhibit 3-4**. In June 2004, the district amended the 2003–04 general fund budget and reduced the use of fund balance to $770,000. Actual expenditures and use of fund balance are determined when the district closes its books for the year. The final amounts were not available at the time of this writing.

TEA has developed a formula to estimate a school district's "optimum" fund balance. The optimum fund balance for the general fund is included as an exhibit in school district audits. This estimates the amount necessary to cover cash flow deficits in the general fund, taking into consideration state delayed payments and underpayments by the state. **Exhibit 3-5** displays the excess or deficit undesignated unreserved general fund balance, according to SMSD's annual audit.

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recommends that districts establish a formal policy on the level of fund balance. Districts should assess their own specific circumstances. In establishing a policy, districts should consider factors such as:

- Predictability of its revenues and the volatility of its expenditures;

- Availability of resources in other funds as well as

EXHIBIT 3-4
SMSD REVENUES, EXPENDITURES, AND GENERAL FUND BALANCE
1997–98 THROUGH 2003–04

YEAR	REVENUES	EXPENDITURES	OTHER FINANCING SOURCES AND (USES)	DIFFERENCE OF REVENUE LESS EXPENDITURES	GENERAL FUND BALANCE	PERCENTAGE OF FUND BALANCE TO EXPENDITURES
2003–04 Proposed	$23,463,040	$25,312,741	0	($1,849,701)	$825,020	3.3%
2002–03	$23,429,483	$24,326,727	($171,336)	($1,068,580)	$2,674,721	11.0%
2001–02	$21,901,741	$22,326,194	($112,206)	($536,659)	$3,743,301	16.8%
2000–01	$20,380,111	$18,769,928	$104,192	$1,714,375	$4,279,960	22.8%
1999–2000	$17,341,663	$17,276,410	($155,027)	($89,774)	$2,565,584	14.9%
1998–99	$16,535,680	$15,204,875	($150,815)	$1,179,990	$2,655,358	17.5%
1997–98	$14,418,534	$13,150,737	($75,179)	$1,192,618	$1,475,368	11.2%

SOURCE: SMSD financial audits and 2003–04 budget from the Texas Education Agency.

EXHIBIT 3-5
SMSD'S OPTIMUM FUND BALANCE AND CASH FLOW CALCULATION
1997–98 THROUGH 2002–03

BUDGET YEAR	SMSD GENERAL FUND FUND BALANCE AND CASH FLOW	TEA GENERAL FUND OPTIMUM FUND BALANCE AND CASH FLOW	EXCESS (DEFICIT) UNDESIGNATED UNRESERVED GENERAL FUND FUND BALANCE
1997–98	$1,475,368	$2,817,777	($1,342,409)
1998–99	$2,655,358	$3,028,733	($373,375)
1999–2000	$2,565,584	$4,758,975	($2,193,391)
2000–01	$4,279,960	$4,639.868	($358,908)
2001–02	$3,743,301	$5,177,372	($1,434,071)
2002–03	$2,674,721	$3,893,586	($1,218,865)

SOURCE: SMSD financial audits.

the potential drain upon general fund resources from other funds;

▪ Liquidity of assets; and

▪ Any designations for specific purposes.

Many districts adopt fund balance goals that are then used in the budget development process. GFOA recommends, at a minimum, that districts maintain unreserved fund balances in their general fund of no less than five to 15 percent of regular general fund operating revenues, or of no less than two months of regular general fund operating expenditures. Bastrop ISD adopted a local board policy that sets a fund balance goal for the total fund balance and for the unreserved/undesignated fund balance.

SMSD should develop a written fund balance policy for the general fund. The superintendent should consult with the district's auditors and financial advisors to determine a reasonable level for a fund balance goal for the general fund. The superintendent should be sure that the financial advisors and auditors have the most current financial information in determining a recommended fund balance goal. The superintendent's presentation to the board should include a comparison of fund balances of other districts and information from auditors and financial advisors for board discussion. The board should then adopt a fund balance goal that reflects SMSD's cash needs and financial condition. This goal should be adopted into policy and become a part of the budget process.

GRANTS (REC. 35)

SMSD does not prepare individual grant budgets for approved grants or account for related federal grant funds separate from the general fund. SMSD is eligible for several block grants. Block grants are automatically awarded by TEA based upon enrollment, at-risk status, and types of services. Districts are required to prepare an application for federal funding and include the anticipated budget for the program.

SMSD budgets for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), Title I, Part A - Improving Basic Programs, English Language and Acquisition - Title III, and Vocational Career and Technology Grants awarded to the district by the Texas Education Agency, but these grants were not included in the general ledger. This caused the expenditures for grant related items to be included in the general fund of the district. Federal program salaries related to the grants were budgeted and expended from the general fund even though the positions were included in the grant budget when it was submitted to TEA for approval.

Improperly including federally funded positions and expenditures in the district's general funds has made it difficult for SMSD's business manager to adequately project the general fund balance and report it to the board. The failure to appropriately recognize and monitor federal fund expenditures may also result in the district exceeding the authorized unexpended award amount which may be carried to the next school year.

The district has received several block grants from TEA under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as seen in **Exhibit 3-6**. ESEA programs are authorized to provide opportunities for the children served to acquire the knowledge and skills contained in the challenging state content and performance standards developed for all children. Funding is used in a variety of ways to ensure student achievement by improving teacher and principal quality, increasing the number of highly qualified teachers and staff, assisting limited English proficient children to learn English, and providing funding for a variety of local reform and improvement activities to meet the higher standards. Funds are authorized by the federal government and distributed to the state of Texas on an annual basis for further distribution by TEA.

The district also received block funding from TEA for vocational and special education programs under the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Funds and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Programs for special education students, as shown in

EXHIBIT 3-6
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT (ESEA) RECEIVED BY SMSD
2003–04

PURPOSE	ESEA TITLE I, PART A	ESEA, TITLE II, PART A	ESEA TITLE II, PART D	ESEA TITLE IV, SDFSC	TITLE V, PART A	TITLE III, LEP/ IMMIGRANT
Payroll Costs	$221,237	$57,933	$0	$4,633	$0	$4,000
Professional and Contracted Services	$5,000	$5,000	$893	$3,000	$500	$14,000
Supplies and Materials	$30,621	$2,500	$5,745	$2,500	$7,805	$9,000
Other Operating Costs	$5,000	$27,468	$1,000	$538	$3,135	$6,230
Total	$261,858	$92,901	$7,638	$10,671	$11,440	$33,230

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency grants application and entitlement notifications.

EXHIBIT 3-7
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND IDEA FUNDING RECEIVED BY SMSD
2003–04

PURPOSE	CARL PERKINS, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION	IDEA
Payroll Costs	$1,000	$252,855
Professional and Contracted Services	$1,000	$50,000
Supplies and Materials	$16,986	$25,000
Other Operating Costs	$4,000	$10,000
Total	$22,986	$337,855

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency grants application and entitlement notifications. Note: IDEA stands for Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Exhibit 3-7. Funding under these programs is used to provide technical and education programs for identified students. Funds are authorized by the federal government and distributed to the state on an annual basis for further distribution by TEA.

The district participated in a pilot process for the revised District Effectiveness and Compliance (DEC) review from TEA in May 2003. Auditors expressed a concern that the district could be supplanting grant expenditures rather than using the grants to improve programs. Grant funds are awarded to a district to enhance the educational process. Failure to maintain and support programs locally by shifting the support of a program to federal funds is called supplanting and is a violation of grant guidelines. Failure to establish grant budgets and clearly communicate their purpose to the campuses can easily lead to a supplanting issue. Further, districts are penalized by the granting agency if they fail to properly expend funds within the established limits, as unused funds are returned to the grantor and unavailable for use the following year.

The district should prepare and adopt a budget for each approved grant using appropriate fund types. Upon approval of a grant by TEA, the district should prepare a budget that reflects the activity contained in the application. The superintendent should ensure that the business manager and curriculum leaders have implemented a system that will require federal program budgets to be appropriately prepared. The superintendent should require that the curriculum leaders fully communicate the goals and objectives of the grants to the campus leaders to ensure that the

funds are expended appropriately. The business manager should monitor the grants on a quarterly basis to ensure that they are properly expended within the guidelines of the program.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (REC. 36)

The district's monthly financial statements presented to the board do not match the corresponding end-of-month general ledger statements. A review of the February 2004 financial statements presented to the board indicated that the financial statements did not agree with the February month end general ledger. Failure to reflect all the incurred expenditures from an account in the general ledger can cause the campus or department to inadvertently overspend their budgets and misinform the board about the true amount of funds available.

The business manager indicated awareness of certain items that needed to be corrected and that the corrections were included in the financial statements but not properly booked in the general ledger. Proper accounting procedures would require that the general ledger reflect all adjusting entries. Certain recurring adjusting entries should be prepared according to the following timelines:

- Salary budget code corrections – monthly as identified.

- Investment transactions – posted as completed.

- Bank adjustments – posted as identified.

- Debt payments – posted as completed.

▪ TRS on-behalf – monthly.

▪ Accrued salaries – monthly.

Since campuses and departments rely on information presented in the general ledger, it is important that the information reported be accurate and up-to-date.

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) has published a report showing that many well-run operations accurately close their books within four days of month end. The district should implement a standard that would require that these guidelines be met so that the monthly financial statement presented to the board most accurately represents the financial condition of the district.

The district should require adjusting journal entries to be booked to the general ledger as they occur to ensure that the general ledger records reflect current account balances.

STAFF TRAINING (REC. 37)

SMSD business staff lacks training related to their jobs in public schools and in financial management. Training is critical to ensure that the business staff understands and remains current with the laws, rules, and regulations regarding all aspects of school business. The business staff members began working in their current positions within the last year. Although some have several years of school district experience, they have recently changed positions in the district and training has been on-the-job only.

In interviews with the business manager, accountant, payroll clerk, and accounts payable clerk, none of the staff members have been on the job for more than a year in their current positions. The business manager stated that she had hoped staff could attend the Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASBO) conference in February 2004, but that was not possible because staff started in their positions during that month and were training in the district. The business manager stated that she hopes in the future staff will be able to attend training. The business manager is a certified public accountant and completes her required continuing education training in order to retain certification.

The review team noted some training issues with budgeting, purchases exceeding bid limits, the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), use of financial software, insurance, TEA's Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG) coding, and understanding of internal controls including cash management and internal auditing. Targeted staff training areas include purchasing, budget and financial planning, financial coding, training on financial software, FLSA, payroll accounting, insurance, activity fund accounting, and state aid calculation.

Staff training allows employees to expand their professional knowledge base and stay abreast of the ever-changing rules and regulations of state and federal laws. Training helps ensure that staff has the tools to do their jobs effectively.

The Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASBO) offers certification programs for school business officials. Business officials with a four-year degree can become Certified Texas School Business Officials by fulfilling the years of service requirement and completing coursework. This certification requires ten courses, with three in each of three different areas of specialization and one other course of a member's choosing from areas such as management, management information systems, PEIMS, or personnel. Business staff without a four-year degree can become Certified Texas School Business Specialists. This requires seven courses, with four being from their area of specialization. Staff can choose from relevant areas such as purchasing, payroll, and accounting.

SMSD should develop an annual training program for business office staff. The business manager should complete the Certified Texas School Business Official certification offered through TASBO. Each of the three clerks should complete the requirements for a Certified Texas School Business Specialist. The certifications will take approximately three years to complete. Many of the courses are available on-line. This will also require that all four become members of TASBO.

The business manager should develop an annual training plan for business office staff based on individual job responsibilities and employee needs. The business manager should then present this training schedule to the superintendent along with budget implications as part of the annual budgeting process.

To implement this recommendation, membership fees for TASBO would be $285 annually for the department. Training for the business manager and three positions should cost approximately $550 annually per staff member, including travel costs. The total annual cost for the plan for the first three years is $2,485 (4 staff at $550 per staff plus $285 annual membership fees). After completion of certification (3 years), the staff should continue to take at least one course annually, resulting in a cost for 2007–08 and 2008–09 of $1,085 ($285 annual fee plus $200 each for travel and training times 4 staff).

PROCEDURES MANUALS (REC. 38)

SMSD lacks formal procedures manuals describing daily, weekly, monthly, and annual duties for functions in accounting, payroll, and accounts payable. As a result, there are no consistent tools in place to ensure

that financial reports are accurate and that job duties and responsibilities are covered in the case of employee absences.

SMSD's staff is small with each person assigned a specific job. For example, there is only one payroll clerk. Without a formal, written procedures manual, if this person were out for an extended period, there would be no written instructions for someone to follow when filling in for the absent employee. However, the SMSD business manager stated that although there are no formal procedures, there are notes at each desk and current personnel have prior experience in other areas in the business office and could cover in the case of an extended absence.

Procedures manuals are vital for continuing critical functions in the event of staff absences. Written procedures manuals also provide a basis for periodic evaluations of processes and practices for purposes of continuous improvements. Written procedures manuals provide improved control environments.

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recommends that every government document its accounting policies and procedures. The documentation should be readily available to all employees who need it. The procedures should describe the authority and responsibility of all employees, especially those authorized to transact business for the district and those responsible for the safekeeping of assets and records. Procedures should be described as they are intended to be performed. These procedures should be updated periodically according to a predetermined schedule.

McKinney ISD has a detailed accounting and procedures manual. The manual contains information on TEA coding instructions, purchasing, activity funds, budget amendments, computer hardware and software purchases, copy paper, monthly reports, travel reimbursements, and other information necessary to do financial accounting for the district.

The district should develop written procedures manuals for the accounting, accounts payable, and payroll areas. Initially, the formal procedures can be a series of memos, and SMSD can continuously develop written procedures. These procedures should follow board policy and should be available on the district web site. The business manager should train staff to ensure the implementation of the procedures is included in the procedures manuals.

The business manager should obtain copies of procedures manuals from other districts. Many procedures manuals can be found on district web sites or at the TEA web site. The other districts' manuals should be used as a guide in the development of SMSD's manuals. Staff meetings should be held to discuss the procedures and train employees. Manuals should be updated as needed, but at least on an annual basis.

FINANCIAL EXIGENCY (REC. 39)

SMSD has not taken action to undeclare the district's state of financial exigency. On May 6, 2003, pursuant to the new superintendent's recommendation, the district's school board declared a state of financial exigency. According to SMSD policy DFF (LOCAL), financial exigency shall mean any event or occurrence that creates a need for the district to reduce financial expenditures for personnel including, but not limited to, a decline in the district's financial resources, a decline in enrollment, a cut in funding, a decline in tax revenues, or an unanticipated expense or capital need. The declaration option is designed as a short-term protection for the district's credit worthiness while it reorganizes priorities to meet monetary obligations.

Although the district is current with bond refunding as of June 2004, the district could negatively affect its future bond rating if the financial emergency declaration is prolonged unnecessarily. In the 2003 audit, the superintendent and business manager prepared a Management Discussion and Analysis (MD&A) for the auditors to include with the published audit. The MD&A gave the following four primary reasons for the declaration of financial exigency:

- SMSD's status as a Texas Education Code Chapter 41 or wealthy school district, coupled with technical changes within the state funding formulas; the effects of Truth in Taxation; static or declining enrollment; and static adjusted net taxable property tax base growth and subsequent decline;

- Liberal expenditure practices;

- Poor data controls; and

- Lack of controls on hiring practices.

SMSD became dependent upon having to use its fund balance, or reserves, to offset the difference between the district's taxable values set by the county appraisal district for the current tax year and the State Comptroller's Property Tax Division's property values for the prior year. In the past years, SMSD had budgeted in a manner that tax revenue growth was not properly reserved but was expended. This budgeting practice caused a projected reduction of fund balance such that financial exigency was declared.

For 2003–04, SMSD maintained the state tax rate cap for maintenance and operations of $1.50 per $100 valuation while experiencing a drop in net taxable base. The drop in net taxable base was due to an actual decline in locally assessed property tax values. The

district's financial position was further constrained due to a technical change in the Chapter 41 recapture calculation that disallowed a credit of 50 percent of the optional homestead exemption, which the district has historically given and continues to provide to its homeowners. This change increased the amount of recapture the district was required to remit even though maintenance and operations taxes were not collected on the exempted homestead values.

Since the financial emergency declaration, however, SMSD has not reduced any contract employees through the reduction in force option available in policy DFF (LOCAL). SMSD instead reduced staff through attrition of professional staff. Pupil/teacher ratios were increased at the lower grades, and new schedules are in place for 2004–05 at the secondary level to increase pupil/teacher ratios and require less staff.

In August 2004, SMSD and the Stafford City Council jointly adopted a 2004–05 budget plan that was able to meet the district's needs while lowering the total property tax rate. The Texas Education Agency informally recommends that districts "undeclare" financial exigency once the financial emergency is remedied. When asked about the continuing financial emergency declaration, the superintendent agreed that the district should "undeclare" but noted a conservative approach of reviewing the district's recently released 2002–03 FIRST rating and the 2003–04 external audit report prior to a board recommendation for removing the declaration.

SMSD should undeclare the district's state of financial exigency. The board should vote to undeclare the district's financial emergency status at the earliest opportunity to avoid future negative impacts on the district's credit worthiness.

BUDGET PROCESS (REC. 40)

SMSD does not have a written budget process that ensures that all stakeholders have sufficient input into the district's budget development. Lack of a written budget process may result in the district's educational goals and needs not being addressed in the final adopted budget. A formal, written process allows everyone involved in the budget process to understand where resources need to be expended. The superintendent and the business manager developed the budget for 2003–04. The review team did receive a budget calendar that began with budget development in July. The calendar only included the listing of budget meetings with the board. A complete budget calendar includes the preliminary work on a budget that must be done prior to the first budget workshop.

The district uses zero-based budgeting. Under this method, no budget allocations are made to the campus

or department, and the business manager or superintendent evaluates every request individually. Principals raised concerns that they do not know how much they may have to spend, nor do they know the total amounts that they have spent for the year. The budget management process has been frustrating to the staff. No reports have been sent to the campuses this year.

In the SMSD Executive Summary included in the public budget presentation, the district stated that the budget process for 2003–04 started much later than usual. SMSD also stated that prior year data is critical in the preparation of a budget but, because of inadequate records for prior years, estimates were difficult. The administration had problems with inconsistent coding in prior years that created problems in developing historical data. The administration used the best estimates that they could to build the 2003–04 budget.

According to the business manager, this process is only for 2003–04. In 2004–05, budgets will be allocated to the campuses, and campuses will be allowed to manage and control their expenditures.

Even though the plan is to change the process for 2004–05, there is no written information for budget allocations at the campus or program level, no budget calendar, and no written budgeting process that includes the linking of resource allocations to performance measures and goals for 2004–05.

A key responsibility of school districts is to develop and manage programs, services, and their related resources as efficiently and effectively as possible and communicate the results of these efforts to the community. Linking performance measures to the budget and strategic planning process can assess accomplishments for the district. This can help district officials and citizens in identifying financial and program results, evaluating past resource decisions, and facilitating improvements in future decisions regarding resource allocation and service delivery.

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recommends that program and service performance measures be developed and used as an important component of long term strategic planning and decision-making that should be linked to governmental budgeting. These performance measures should include the following:

- Focus on program goals and objectives that tie to a statement of program mission or purpose;

- Measure program outcomes;

- Provide for resource allocation comparisons over time;

- Measure efficiency and effectiveness for continuous improvement;

- Be verifiable, understandable, and timely;

- Be consistent throughout the strategic plan, budget, accounting and reporting systems and to the extent practical, be consistent over time;

- Be reported internally and externally;

- Be monitored and used in managerial decision-making processes;

- Be limited to a number and degree of complexity that can provide an efficient and meaningful way to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of key programs; and

- Be designed in such a way to motivate staff at all levels to contribute toward organizational improvement.

The district should develop a written budget planning process that allocates resources based on district goals and objectives and includes the involvement of the board, administration, staff, and community. A written budget process should include a budget calendar that meets the TEA timeline, allocations to the district goals and objectives, and a budget book that can be made available to staff, parents, and the public and available on the district's web site.

MULTI-YEAR BUDGETS (REC. 41)

SMSD does not prepare multi-year budget forecasts. Without the use of multi-year budget forecasts, SMSD cannot plan for use of its fund balance reserves for future years. Forecasting improves the decision-making ability of the administration and board during the budget development time, especially in districts with a variable or declining fund balance.

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recognizes the importance of combining the forecasting of revenues and the forecasting of expenditures into a single financial forecast. A government entity should have a financial planning process that assesses long-term financial implications of current and proposed policies, programs, and assumptions that develop appropriate strategies to achieve its goals. A key component in determining future options, potential problems, and opportunities is the forecast of revenues and expenditures. Revenue and expenditure forecasting does the following:

- Provides an understanding of available funding;

- Evaluates financial risk;

- Assesses the likelihood that services can be sustained;

- Assesses the level at which capital investment can be made;

- Identifies future commitments and resource demands; and

- Identifies the key variables that cause change in the level of revenue.

The GFOA recommends that governments at all levels forecast major revenues and expenditures. The forecast should extend at least three to five years beyond the budget period and should be regularly monitored and periodically updated. The forecast, along with its underlying assumptions and methodology, should be clearly stated and made available to participants in the budget process. It also should be referenced in the final budget document. To improve future forecasting, the variances between previous forecast and actual amounts should be analyzed. The variance analysis should identify the factors that influence revenue collections, expenditure levels, and forecast assumptions.

Bastrop ISD includes as a part of the budget process three-year budget projections. Included in the projections are student enrollment, property value, tax rates, revenues, expenditures by category, and fund balance projections.

The district should develop and implement multi-year budget forecasting as part of the budget process. The superintendent and business manager should develop three-year projections of revenues, expenditures, and estimated fund balances for at least the general fund, food service fund, and debt service fund.

The superintendent and the business manager should develop a budget forecasting worksheet that includes the prior year budget information, the proposed information for the budget year under consideration, and an estimated forecast for three succeeding years. This worksheet should be updated throughout the budgeting process and included in every budget work session with the board.

CASH FLOW ANALYSIS (REC. 42)

The district does not update its cash flow forecast regularly or forecast beyond the current fiscal year. Cash flow analysis provides a district with the ability to manage their liquidity and investments. Failure to properly complete a cash flow analysis can cause a district to expend funds that are not available or realize lower interest earnings due to funds not being properly invested.

The district performed a cash flow analysis in August 2003 in anticipation of securing a tax anticipation note and provided the analysis to the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB). SMSD has not updated the

cash flow forecast or forecasted beyond the current fiscal year.

A cash flow analysis is particularly valuable to a district that is designated as a Chapter 41 district and is at the maximum tax rate allowed under the law. The ability of SMSD to recapture revenues to offset excess expenditures is severely limited.

Historic patterns regarding the receipt of revenue and expenditure of funds are typically used when preparing the cash flow forecast. Cash flow forecasts are prepared by estimating major revenues such as tax payments, state aid, and the receipt of grant funds. Districts then estimate expenses by type such as payroll, accounts payable, benefits, and debt payments to offset the revenues indicated.

Monthly cash flow forecasts provide a district with valuable information for investment purposes and allow the district to better predict anticipated future cash needs. Cash flow forecasts can be an indicator of true financial position and can provide information regarding the impact of future expenditures.

The Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts has identified cash flow forecasting as one of the key steps necessary to developing and monitoring an effective investment program. North East ISD has developed a cash management guide that illustrates the tools necessary to properly manage district funds using existing spreadsheet software. The cash flow analysis clearly documents the revenue stream and the types of funds that are received at various points in the year, along with the expenditure characteristics, including the date and anticipated clearing time of expenditures such as payroll.

The district should develop a two-year cash flow analysis and provide periodic updates to the board. The business manager should prepare an initial two-year

cash flow analysis and review it with the superintendent, department heads, and principals. The analysis should be updated on a periodic basis, preferably at least twice per year, which allows the district to manage its investments appropriately.

INVESTMENT POLICY (REC. 43)

The legal and local policy CDA, adopted by the district, does not meet all the standards required by the Public Funds Investment Act (PFIA). Local policy CDA states that the main goal of the investment program is to ensure its safety and maximize financial returns within current market conditions, but it does not provide guidance as to the diversification of investment type and maturities, along with broker capabilities, which are acceptable to the district.

The PFIA requires that the board annually approve the investment policy, strategies, and authorized investment officers for the district. Investment policies that include all elements of the Public Funds Investment Act provide clear guidance to financial advisors, broker/dealers, and investment pool managers of the district's investment standards. The Government Treasurer's Organization of Texas (GTOT) has issued a checklist for investment policy certification at www.gtot.net. A model investment policy, which meets all the standards outlined in the law, includes the elements shown in **Exhibit 3-8.**

Among the key items missing in SMSD's investment policy are the following:

- The current investment policy does not require the board to adopt a written instrument stating that it has reviewed the policy and strategies of the organization annually as it relates to both the individual fund types and the organization as a whole. This requirement would help to ensure that the board has clearly communicated their

EXHIBIT 3-8
GTOT INVESTMENT POLICY CHECKLIST

ELEMENT	CRITERIA	PRESENT IN SMSD
Policy Statement	Statement emphasizing the guiding principles of the investment program and conformance to all statutes, rules and regulations governing the investment of public funds.	No
Scope	List of funds covered by the policy (2256.002).	Yes
General Objectives	Policy must primarily emphasize safety of principal, liquidity and yield (2256.005).	Yes
Prudent Person Rule	Prudent person statement relating to the standard of care that must be exercised when investing public funds (2256.006).	No
Capability of Investment Management	Policy must address quality and capability of investment management (2256.005).	No
Ethics Disclosure and Conflicts of Interest	Policy must require the investment officer to file a disclosure statement with the Texas Ethics Commission and the government body if the officer has a personal business relationship with a business organization offering to engage in an investment transaction or the officer is related within the second degree to an individual seeking to transact investment business (2256.005).	No

EXHIBIT 3-8 (CONTINUED)
GTOT INVESTMENT POLICY CHECKLIST

ELEMENT	CRITERIA	PRESENT IN SMSD
Delegation of Investment Authority	Policy must designate one or more officers of the entity as the investment officers responsible for the investment of its funds (2256.005).	Yes
Investment Training	Training is required for the treasurer, CFO and the investment officers (2256.008).	No
Signed Investment Policy Certification	Investments shall only be made with those business organizations that have provided the entity with a written instrument which acknowledges that the business organization has received and reviewed the entity's investment policy and implemented reasonable procedures and controls to ensure compliance with policy (2256.005).	Yes
Establishment and Annual Review of Qualified Bidders List	Requirement to annually review, revise and adopt a list of qualified brokers that are authorized to engage in investment transactions (2256.025).	No
Independent Third-Party Safekeeping	Securities and collateral will be held by a third party custodian designated by the entity, and held in the entity's name.	No
Delivery vs. Payment	Policy must require a delivery vs. payment settlement of all transactions except local government investment pool and mutual fund transactions (2256.005).	Yes
Competitive Bidding	Policy should require at least three competitive offers or bids for all individual security purchases and sales.	No
Suitable and Authorized Investments	Policy must list the types of authorized investments in which the investing entity's funds may be invested (2256.009-2256.019).	Yes
Prohibited Investments	Policy must list prohibited investments (2256.009).	No
Effect of Loss of Required Rating	Prudent measures will be taken to liquidate an investment that is downgraded to less than the required minimum rating (2256.021).	No
Collateral Policy	The governing body must approve a written policy relating to collateralization. (Collateral for Public Funds, Chapter 2257, Texas Government Code).	No
Diversification and Maximum Maturities	Policy must address investment diversification, yield, and maturity (2256.005).	No
Investment Strategies	Policy must require adoption by the governing body of a separate investment strategy for each of the funds (2256.005).	Yes
Weighted Average Maturity for Pooled Fund Groups	Maximum dollar-weighted average maturity of the portfolio, based on the stated maturity date, must be stated (2256.005).	Yes
Quarterly Reporting	Policy must require quarterly investment reports (2256.023).	No
Marking to Market	The market value of the portfolio must be determined at least quarterly and included in the investment report (2256.005).	No
Review by Independent Auditor	Quarterly reports must be formally reviewed at least annually by an independent auditor and reported to the governing body.	No
Internal Controls	Investment policy must require a compliance audit of management controls on investments (2256.005).	Yes
Exemption for Existing Investments	An entity is not required to liquidate investments that were authorized investments at the time of purchase.	No
Annual Review	Policy must require the governing body to adopt a written instrument stating that it has reviewed the policy and strategies (2256.005).	No

SOURCE: Government Treasurer's Organization of Texas.

tolerance for investment risk and the acceptable forms of investment by thoroughly reviewing the policy.

- By not specifically identifying the standard of care and types of investments, the board increases the risk that the investments of the district will be placed in instruments that assume a higher level of risk than that desired by the board, which may inadvertently place district funds in jeopardy.

- The district does not currently invest in securities such as treasury bills and notes. Prior to investing in these types of instruments, the board should require that a listing of investment broker/dealers

be approved annually to ensure that the broker/dealers used by the district are reputable and understand the unique needs of SMSD.

- The investment policy should be changed to require the investment officer to seek three competitive offers on securities prior to purchase and must sell any instrument which has been downgraded below a minimum acceptance level to ensure that the level of risk acceptable to the board is maintained. Placing a requirement to locate three competitive offers on securities ensures that the district receives the maximum interest rate possible on investments.

- The investment policy also does not address the issue of third party safe-keeping of collateral. Failure to ensure that the district's securities are placed with a third party increases the risk of loss to the district in the event of the failure of the investment firm.

The GTOT has awarded Cypress-Fairbanks ISD and Ysleta ISD with an investment policy certificate of distinction that recognizes outstanding examples of written investment policies which fully meet the criteria outlined in the Public Funds Investment Act.

SMSD should develop an investment policy that incorporates all provisions of the Public Funds Investment Act. The board should adopt an investment policy and appoint officials authorized to make investment decisions for the district in accordance with the PFIA. The policy should incorporate all provisions included in the act so that the district may quickly adapt to changing market conditions while also ensuring that existing investments are within the limits of the policy. The University of North Texas Center for Public Management provides sample investment policies and guidance on their web site at www.unt.edu/cpm.

INVESTMENT RISK (REC. 44)

The district's investment policy does not require disclosure of the deposit and investment risks associated with the investments and collateral of the district. Failure to include these risks in the investment policy will cause the district to be noncompliant with Statement Number 40 of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) and can result in an audit exception. This statement indicates that when there is a risk requiring disclosure, associated deposit or investment policies should be disclosed in the financial statements. GASB adopted this policy to ensure that the financial statements clearly communicate a government's tolerance for risk.

Statement Number 40 is effective for fiscal years beginning after June 15, 2004, and requires governmental entities to establish comprehensive disclosure requirements that address the common risks of deposits and investments of state and local governments. The statement, which will be applicable for SMSD for 2004–05, requires that governmental entities briefly describe their deposit or investment policies that are related to the following:

- Custodial credit risk – the risk that governments face of not recovering the value of their investments and deposits upon the failure of the counterparty.

- Credit risk – credit quality of investments can fluctuate over time. Statement 40 requires the

disclosure of the credit quality as of the date of the financial statements.

- Concentrations of credit risk – concentrated investments with one issuer present a heightened risk of potential loss.

- Interest rate risk – potential fair value losses from future changes in prevailing market interest rates.

If a governmental entity has an exposure to a type of risk identified in the statement, an investment policy regarding the risk is required. Investment policies prepared using best practices incorporate the levels of acceptable risk so that the financial statement user and public are aware of an entity's risk tolerance.

The district should update the investment policy to comply with Statement Number 40 of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board. SMSD should review their investment policy thoroughly with their external auditor to ensure that the policy appropriately reflects the provisions contained in GASB Statement Number 40 and the Public Funds Investment Act and ensure that the required elements are present for inclusion in the 2004–05 financial statements. Any necessary changes identified by the auditor should be incorporated.

CHECK COPIES (REC. 45)

SMSD requires campus and department personnel to make copies of all checks included in a deposit so that the district can easily research any potential loss situations. Requiring employees to make copies of all checks received is a time consuming process that provides very little benefit to the district in the event of a loss.

The student activity sponsor or the food service cashier prepares deposits using a district provided cash tally sheet, which requires the depositor to list the checks, currency, and coin by type. Copies of each check included in the deposit are required to be included in the deposit and attached to the cash tally sheet for verification purposes.

Depository institutions prepare electronic images of all items contained in deposits. Technology has greatly enhanced the retrieval and research of images contained in deposits. Banks are typically able to research discrepancies within a 24-hour period.

Bastrop ISD requires that deposits be prepared from individually prepared receipts that indicate the cash or check number received. The district does not require the campus or department to make copies of the checks for their records. In the event of a loss, the district researches the daily receipts to determine which check is missing from the deposit credit. The district

then contacts their depository institution to research the loss using the check information.

The district should discontinue the practice of making copies of all checks included in deposits. The business manager should develop a system that requires that individual receipts indicate the check number so that they can be researched in the event of a deposit discrepancy.

BANK AND INVESTMENT ACCOUNT RECONCILIATION (REC. 46)

SMSD has not performed regular monthly bank and investment account reconciliation. The failure to perform timely reconciliation can cause errors in the general ledger or errors at the depository institution to go undetected.

SMSD has not performed investment and bank account reconciliation due to a change in personnel. The district's accountant left in October 2003, and no account reconciliation was performed during the period that the position was open. The district has no policy to address the timeliness of bank and investment account reconciliation.

During March 2004, the district's staff accountant reconciled all accounts to bring them up to date. Prior to that time, they had not been reconciled as the position was vacant. Banking institutions typically limit depositors to 60 days from the receipt of the statement to correct any bank-generated errors, such as incorrectly cleared checks, deposit errors, or fraudulently cleared items. Failure to reconcile the bank statements in a timely manner could possibly result in the inability of the district to recover fraudulent or incorrectly cleared items. Reconciliation also provides a means for the district to monitor the activity in their general ledger so that any fraudulent activity can be detected in a timely manner.

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) has identified timely bank reconciliation as a best practice to prevent check fraud. Timely account reconciliation decreases the likelihood of fraud in that the general ledger transactions of the district are regularly reviewed against bank and investment statements to ensure that the transactions reflected are appropriate.

The district should adopt a policy that requires the district's accounting staff to reconcile the bank and investment accounts within 30 days of the receipt of the monthly statement. The business manager should draft a policy for approval by the board that requires a monthly report to the superintendent on the status of bank and investment reconciliations.

POSITIVE PAY CHECK CLEARING (REC. 47)

SMSD has not implemented positive pay check clearing in conjunction with the sweep account. As a result, the district is assuming too much risk for loss due to fraudulently cleared items. However, in June 2004, the SMSD board took initial steps to reduce the district's risk by updating the Treasury Management Services Agreement to include positive pay.

Positive pay check clearing accounts prevent fraudulent items from clearing the district's bank accounts by clearing only checks that match an electronic file forwarded by the issuer. The use of positive pay accounts allows the district to provide the bank an electronic file of checks that have been generated. The banking institution uses this file to validate the checks that are clearing against the district's accounts.

SMSD uses a sweep account for their general fund depository activity. Funds are deposited to a master account. At the end of the day, excess funds on deposit are automatically "swept" out of the account into an overnight investment account to maximize interest earnings. Banking institutions typically charge an additional two to five cents per check processed to manage the positive pay check clearing process. These charges are included in the analysis fees along with other banking fees. Some districts offset positive pay and other analysis fees by maintaining an agreed upon compensating balance amount on deposit in the banking institution.

The Uniform Commercial Code has shifted liability for fraudulent items from banking institutions to governmental and commercial account holders. If the governmental entity has not taken reasonable steps to protect themselves from loss, the entity is responsible for fraudulently cleared items. The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) has identified positive pay as a best practice. The GFOA indicates that positive pay is the leading method of check fraud deterrence available and recommends that governmental entities include positive pay as an element in banking service agreements.

SMSD should fully implement positive pay check clearing with the sweep account. The district should fully implement this process and ensure that it is incorporated as a part of the biennial depository contract process.

In 2002–03, SMSD averaged 648 payroll and operations checks monthly–7,776 total checks for the year. Assuming a five-cent per check processing fee for positive pay protection, and using the same number of payroll and operations checks as in 2002–03 for this estimate, the district would spend about $389 annually ($0.05 x 7,776 checks = $389) for this protection.

ACTIVITY FUND ACCOUNTS (REC. 48)

The business office does not provide monthly reports regarding the receipt, deposit, and expenditure of funds generated from activities at the schools. Principals and activity sponsors do not know if their accounts have been properly credited with deposits or the subsequent balance that is available for use. This has caused frustration with the campus administrators, as they are unsure of the financial accountability of their sponsors and the amount of funds that are available to use.

SMSD centralized the student activity function. Centralization requires that the various campuses and student organizations deposit their funds to a central account managed by the business office. Campus secretaries prepare activity fund deposits at the campus site and deliver them in a locked bank bag to central administration for pick-up by the police courier. The business office enters the deposit into the financial accounting system using the cash tally sheet generated at the campus. The business office is also responsible for managing the campus' disbursement requests and incorporating those requests into the regular processing of accounts payable.

Campuses do not have on-line access to the district's financial accounting system and are dependent on the business office for reporting.

Round Rock ISD includes the distribution of detail account activity on a monthly basis to the campus principal for further distribution to the individual activity fund sponsors. Campuses have on-line access to their accounts to allow review of account balances on a daily basis.

The district should require the business manager to send detailed student activity general ledger reports to the campuses on a monthly basis. Campus leaders and activity fund sponsors should be held accountable for the financial solvency of their organization. Regular reports that include all deposits, expenditures, and transfers must be provided to ensure that management has the tools necessary to properly evaluate the financial condition of their accounts. On a quarterly basis, the business department should confirm the balances reflected with a random sample of club accounts to ensure that deposits and receipts are properly reported.

In 2004–05, the business manager should implement procedures to notify campus leaders and activity fund sponsors of account activity on a monthly basis. In January 2005, the business manager should directly confirm a selected group of accounts with the activity fund sponsor to ensure that the transactions have been accounted for appropriately.

ACTIVITY FUND DEPOSITS (REC. 49)

Campus secretaries do not consistently verify activity fund deposits prepared by the activity sponsor. Failure to verify the accuracy of such information is an internal financial control weakness.

The business manager implemented a practice for 2003–04 that all district deposits, such as operating, food service, and activity funds, must have two signatures prior to the deposit. Interviews with the high school secretary and the business manager indicated that campuses do not consistently verify activity fund deposits prepared by the activity sponsor. Sponsors frequently drop funds off with the high school secretary or receptionist in a locked bank bag to be forwarded to the bank for deposit. As a consequence, there are not two signatures on each campus deposit.

Dual control requires deposits to be verified simultaneously by both the individual preparing the deposit and another independent individual. The failure to implement a system of dual control places both the sponsor and the campus secretary in a tenuous position should the deposit be short.

Generally accepted accounting and auditing standards recognize dual control, the process by which monies are verified by two individuals simultaneously, as a best practice. Under a system of dual control, all funds received by a campus or department would be counted in the presence of another individual.

An effective method that a district could use to verify activity fund deposits would be to require all currency received by student organizations be verified in the presence of a campus secretary or bookkeeper. Sponsors would be required to prepare currency, coin, and checks for deposit prior to bringing it to the office. The currency could be placed in numerical order and banded in groups of $50. The campus secretary would immediately verify the currency in the presence of the sponsor and place the deposit in a locking bank bag. If the secretary were unavailable, the deposit would be placed in a locking bag and then stored in the vault pending the availability of both the sponsor and secretary to verify the deposit.

The district should require a dual control system for the verification of funds received at the campus. The business manager should communicate the importance of dual control when preparing deposits and ensure that all campus secretaries and appropriate staff receive training in dual control.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIMS (REC. 50)

The district is not enforcing its workers' compensation third party administrator contract terms that provide for periodic analysis and reports from the claims

administrator. As a result, central and campus administrators do not have workers' compensation claims information to assist them in identifying employee groups that are having a high number of accidents, the types of accidents which are occurring, or identifying specific buildings that are a safety hazard. Failure to accurately identify and communicate the causes of workers' compensation injuries can result in continued claims issues and ultimately will result in higher premiums to the district. Without claims information, SMSD cannot develop specific employee training programs that address types of accidents that have occurred and the preventative techniques to avoid future incidents.

When a worker is injured on the job, they are required to contact the accounts payable clerk for medical treatment and to file a claim. The clerk arranges the workers' compensation doctor visit and files the necessary paperwork. The accounts payable clerk is also responsible for sorting the workers' compensation claims costs among departments and campuses as the clerk remits payment. However, the departmental summary information is filed with the billing statement and is not shared with the campus or department.

In Dallas ISD (DISD), the director of Risk Management produces a Risk Management Annual Report that provides a comprehensive overview of the district's insurance programs (excluding health insurance), including the costs of risks associated with workers' compensation, unemployment, employee injuries, vehicle operations, and other property claims. The report tracks annual costs, number of claims, and accidents for each type of risk, and is an excellent tool for analyzing trends and controlling the district's risk costs.

Another management tool under development by the DISD Risk Management Department is a Building Detail Report. The report will provide an overview of every DISD facility, including pictures of the facility, building characteristics, valuations, and safety features, including the location of utility cutoffs and fire protection. The report is online and is designed for use by the district for both insurance and safety and security purposes.

SMSD should require the third party administrator to complete an annual workers' compensation claims analysis. Since the district's contract includes a provision for periodic analysis and reports from the claims administrator, SMSD should require the claims administrator to develop annual reports detailing injury and time-off by department or building. The information should be used to build an historical database, which can be compared to current results. The administrator should be required to present the findings on-site to central and campus administrators.

Specific information regarding types of accidents should be investigated by the administration to determine the type of safety training necessary.

INVENTORY SYSTEM (REC. 51)

SMSD does not have a perpetual inventory system and has not conducted a physical inventory of its assets since 2002. As a result, the equipment records provided by the district do not agree with the balances reflected in the financial statements because the equipment records have not been updated. The financial statements reflect vehicles and equipment valued at $2,613,167, while the fixed asset records indicate a value of $2,462,545.

The business manager indicated that the district was upgrading to a new platform of their financial software product and that she desired to transfer the fixed asset records to the new platform from the third party vendor's software.

A perpetual inventory system is constantly updated to reflect asset purchases and deletions. According to the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), one advantage of establishing and maintaining a sound perpetual inventory system for tangible capital assets is that such a system can relieve a government entity of the burden of performing an annual inventory of its tangible capital assets. Instead, managers and auditors can use tests of randomly selected items to verify that the inventory system for tangible capital assets is continuing to function properly as designed.

SMSD should implement a perpetual inventory system. When the district updates its financial software, the fixed assets module, already available to the district in the basic financial software package, should be implemented and all records of district assets should be entered. The business manager should send out a current asset listing to each department and campus and have its existence confirmed.

Once the fixed asset information is confirmed and updated, the fixed asset records should be updated regularly throughout the year to ensure currency of data. A physical inventory should also be taken on a periodic basis.

ARBITRAGE COMPLIANCE REPORTS (REC. 52)

SMSD did not submit required periodic calculations on its bonded indebtedness to ensure compliance with federal laws. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) notified the district that they failed to properly file arbitrage compliance reports for Series 1994-A, 1995, and 1999 bonds. Arbitrage is the ability to obtain tax-exempt bond proceeds and invest the funds in higher yielding taxable securities, resulting in a profit. Failure to properly file arbitrage rebate reports may cause the

IRS to declare the bonds taxable or assess penalties and interest on the bond issue.

SMSD issued bonds in 1990, 1994, 1995, 1999, and 2000. As a result, the district is required to calculate potential arbitrage and make timely payments to the IRS of arbitrage amounts on the due date. An issuer of debt is required to make payments of arbitrage on both installment calculation dates and on the final computation date. The first installment of rebate must be paid no later than the end of the fifth bond year, with the final computation due as of the date that all bonds of the issue have been retired. On any installment date, an issuer is required to remit an amount which, when added to the future value on the computation date of previous payments, equals 90 percent of the cumulative rebate amount. On the final computation date, the issuer is required to pay 100 percent of the unpaid rebate amount.

Exhibit 3-9 shows the arbitrage amount for each bond issue and the fees of a third-party firm to calculate the arbitrage. Final calculations indicated that the district did not have an arbitrage liability to the IRS, but the fee to calculate the accrued arbitrage was significant due to the lack of timely reporting by the district.

Compliant districts complete annual arbitrage compliance reports for all outstanding bond issues to ensure that funds are appropriately set aside for potential liabilities and compliance with the law.

SMSD should complete arbitrage compliance reports on an annual basis. Completing an annual report allows the district to be proactive and set aside necessary funds for any excess arbitrage which may need to be remitted to the IRS.

To implement this recommendation, the fiscal impact takes into consideration that final computations have not been performed on the 1994-A, 1995-A, 1999, and 2000 series bonds and further reporting to the Internal Revenue Service will be required. Based upon a $1,200 annual computation amount, the total for all four issues currently outstanding is $4,800 annually.

PURCHASING PROCESS (REC. 53)

SMSD purchased goods and services in a manner that did not comply with board policies, district-purchasing procedures, and Texas Education Code competitive bid requirements. The purchases occurred between September 2003 and March 2004. Without proper monitoring of its purchasing process, the district may continue to experience compliance violations with Texas' competitive bidding laws.

The review team conducted interviews with the business manager and the accounts payable clerk and reviewed actual purchases from vendors with cumulative purchases exceeding $10,000. The purchases covered September 2003 through April 2004. Of the 64 vendors selected by the review team, 29 of the aggregate procurements, or total purchases, from vendors for 2003–04 had purchase volumes that equaled or exceeded $25,000. In three of the 29 instances, the purchases were not competitively bid in accordance with Texas competitive procurement laws or SMSD procedures.

Thirty-five of the selected aggregate procurements equaled or exceeded $10,000. According to SMSD

EXHIBIT 3-9
SMSD ARBITRAGE REQUIREMENTS AND THIRD-PARTY FEES FOR CALCULATIONS AS OF MARCH 2004

SERIES	ARBITRAGE AMOUNT	CALCULATION EXPENSE
All issues	$0	$ 1,337
Series 1990	($336,924)	$13,850
Series 1994	($2,762)	$ 4,212
Series 1994-A	($39,699)	$ 7,362
Series 1995-A	($95,090)	$ 7,362
Series 1999	($8,611)	$ 3,000
Total Fee		$37,123

SOURCE: Arbitrage Compliance Specialist Invoices/Reports.

EXHIBIT 3-10
SMSD CATEGORIES PURCHASED WITHOUT COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT OVER $25,000 2003–04

VENDOR	ITEMS PURCHASED	PURCHASES
Pavecon LTD	Track	$37,635
Durwood Greene Construction LP	Athletic stadium project	$51,042
Vibra Whirl LTD	Track resurface	$107,362

SOURCE: SMSD business manager and report from the finance system, April 2004.

policy, any purchase over $10,000 should have three quotes attached to the purchase requisition. Of these 35 cases, eight did not follow competitive procurement processes.

Exhibit 3-10 presents a summary of the purchase of goods and services over $25,000 not obtained through proper competitive procurement procedures.

According to the business manager, Pavecon LTD and Durwood Greene Construction LP were bids that the City of Stafford had access to through Missouri City and Fort Bend County. The City of Stafford has agreements with Missouri City and Fort Bend County to piggyback onto the bids of these entities. However, no agreement has been found that gives SMSD the right to use these bids. The board approved the track expenditures to Vibra Whirl for $107,362 in October 2002, prior to employment of the current superintendent or business manager. The invoices were submitted for payment in 2003.

Exhibit 3-11 presents a summary of purchases for goods and services between $10,000 and $25,000 not obtained through proper competitive procurement procedures.

The review team analyzed maintenance purchases from Dow Pipe & Fence Supply, Scanlon Electric Inc., Fort Bend Mechanical LTD, and Doug Turner Plumbing. All purchases reviewed were made without following established purchasing procedures. The business office received these invoices at the time the purchase orders were submitted. Although three quotes were received on the fencing, no evidence of advertising was found. The student insurance contract was awarded prior to the employment of the business manager. On the copier machines, the business manager received quotes and met with several copier vendors to see product demonstrations and review pricing. No advertisements were made and the copiers were not purchased through a state contract or approved purchasing contracts to meet the requirements of purchasing laws.

A review of 2002–03 purchases also showed the district

automotive supplies totaling $29,977 from two vendors. The district did not purchase the automotive supplies from a cooperative, nor did they go through any bid process. For 2003–04, the district expended over $9,300 to these same two vendors but again did not use a cooperative or bid.

SMSD's computer system does not have the capability to sort information by vendor category and produce a monthly listing by category to show whether cumulative spending per category is nearing bid limits. TEA's Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG) has a partial list of related categories to be used as a guide to determine purchasing requirements under the TEC. Some categories listed by TEA are athletic/trainer supplies; various sports supplies; uniforms; custodial supplies; food service supplies such as milk, dry goods, and poultry; equipment; instructional supplies; office equipment; office furniture; and duplicating paper.

In a review of bid folders, no bid folders were found that were considered complete. Advertisements for bids were only found in two of six folders. The folders did not contain bid tabulations or notices of awards. Some of the folders had the information that was taken to the board, but other folders did not.

Under SMSD board policy, the board assumes responsibility for debts incurred in the name of the district as long as those debts are for purchases made in accordance with adopted board policy and have been requested through authorized internal administrative procedures. The policy also makes it clear that the board is not responsible for debts incurred by individuals or organizations not directly under board control. Further, under board policy, individuals making unauthorized purchases are required to assume full responsibility for all such debts.

TEA's FASRG states:

"The purpose and intent of competitive bidding is to help public schools secure the best work and materials at the lowest practical prices by stimulating

EXHIBIT 3-11
SMSD CATEGORIES PURCHASED WITHOUT COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT BETWEEN $10,000 AND $25,000
SEPTEMBER 2003 THROUGH APRIL 13, 2004

VENDOR	ITEMS PURCHASED	PURCHASES
Comp USA	Computers	$13,593
Dow Pipe & Fence Supply Co.	Fencing	$13,881
Microcheck Systems, Inc.	Software	$15,287
Scanlon Electric Inc.	Electrical	$17,460
Student Insurance	Insurance	$18,065
Saving Corp – Houston	Copier leases	$21,633
Fort Bend Mechanical LTD	Air conditioning repair	$23,448
Doug Turner Plumbing Co.	Maintenance contracted	$23,882

SOURCE: SMSD business manager and report from the finance system, April 2004.

competition. If a district advertises purchasing needs relating to large expenditures, then economies of scale, such as purchasing in large quantities, may result in lower costs, either per unit item; or in the aggregate. Another reason for competitive bidding is that it is an open process.*"*

The purpose and intent of competitive bidding laws were defined in <u>Sterrett v. Bell</u>, 240 S.W.2c 516, 520 (Texas Civil Appellate–Dallas 1951) using the following guidelines:

- Gives opportunity to bid… on the same undertaking…upon the same thing;

- Requires all bidders be placed upon the same plane of equality…each bid; upon the same terms and conditions;

- Stimulates competition and prevents favoritism; and

- Secures the best work and materials at the lowest practical price.

In 2001, Killeen Independent School District (KISD) made its bid process more efficient by establishing an annual calendar that identifies when specific items should be bid during the year. The calendar was based on historical experience and allowed the district to purchase items as-needed, as well as spread the bid process out over the full year rather than trying to bid multiple items at the same time. Based on KISD's prior experience, the Purchasing Department worked with other departments to develop the calendar.

SMSD should establish a purchasing process to monitor and ensure compliance with state and federal procurement laws and board policies. The business manager and the superintendent should develop a written process that includes the development of a bid calendar and the review of budgets to monitor bidding compliance to determine which categories of purchases might exceed the $10,000 or the $25,000 thresholds, and prepare bids according to the law or district policy.

PURCHASING PROCEDURES MANUAL (REC. 54)

SMSD does not have a written, comprehensive purchasing procedures manual. Although the district has a three and one-half page handout to explain purchasing, it is not a complete set of instructions to guide employees in purchasing procedures. When comprehensive purchasing procedures are not readily available, employees who have purchasing authority may inadvertently violate purchasing policies and procedures.

SMSD's purchasing procedures handout has been distributed to staff on an as-needed basis and emailed to principals, directors, faculty, and other staff members. The procedures give a brief overview of the state guidelines and state that the superintendent has given the business manager the authority to issue purchase orders. The business manager's job description states that the business manager has the responsibility for supervision of the preparation of bids and bid specification and also for the tabulation and preparation of the written recommendation.

TEA's FASRG recommends that school districts have a written manual describing the district's purchasing policies and procedures. This manual assists campus-level and department level personnel in the purchasing of supplies and services and should contain rules and guidelines for purchases consistent with relevant statutes, regulations, and board policies. The manual can provide direction to district staff at all levels and help train staff in the district's established policies.

According to TEA, a purchasing manual typically addresses the following items:

- Purchasing goals and objectives;

- Statutes, regulations, and board policies applicable to purchasing;

- Purchasing authority;

- Requisition and purchase order processing;

- Competitive procurement requirements and procedures;

- Vendor selection and relations;

- Receiving, distribution, and disposal of property;

- Bid or proposal form;

- Purchase order;

- Purchase requisition;

- Receiving report;

- Vendor performance evaluation form; and

- Request for payment voucher.

Many school districts publish their purchasing manuals on their district web sites. Hays CISD's purchasing manual includes a listing of all of the purchasing cooperatives that the district uses and instructions for making purchases through the cooperatives.

SMSD should develop a purchasing procedures manual and provide training to all district staff on purchasing policies, procedures, and practices. The business manager should obtain copies of other school districts' purchasing manuals for review and expand the district's purchasing manual to include details of each type of purchase, instructions for using purchasing cooperatives, and clear descriptions of all purchasing

processes. Details of what to include in the bid folders should be listed. The manual should clearly state the duties and responsibilities of the business manager in the tabulation, evaluation, and recommendation of the bids. The manual should contain all forms used in the district and instructions for the use of the forms, as well as SMSD policies and state and federal laws. The superintendent should review the manual. After the manual is completed, training should be done for all staff involved in purchasing. The manual should be published on the district's web site and copies given to all staff involved in purchasing.

TEXTBOOK PROCEDURES (REC. 55)

SMSD does not have a complete, written textbook procedures manual. Principals and school textbook clerks have to rely on word-of-mouth to learn how to perform their textbook-related duties and have no written materials to refer to during the school year.

In April 2004, the district textbook coordinator provided a draft of a textbook manual to the review team. In June 2004, a copy of the draft manual was given to the review team showing the recommended changes from the textbook committee written in handwriting. According to the district, the manual is awaiting board approval. The district's textbook coordinator holds training sessions each year to discuss procedures, relying primarily on knowledge from work experience rather than through the use of comprehensive documented procedures.

The textbook coordinator in Kennedy ISD developed a textbook manual that provides detailed guidance on how to manage the district's textbook needs. The manual also allows the district to maintain compliance with applicable textbook rules and regulations.

It allows anyone to find answers to questions in one easy-to-locate place.

The folder contains the following:

- All correspondence from the Texas Education Agency's textbook division;

- 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.

The district should develop and implement a textbook procedures manual and provide training. According to district staff, a written manual is now awaiting board approval. SMSD should complete the textbook procedures manual and train all school textbook coordinators on the procedures. The manual should include processes for collecting reimbursement for lost textbooks from students and taking an annual inventory. The textbook manual should contain specific instructions for completing loss reports and these reports should be reviewed by administration.

For more background on Chapter 3, Financial Management, see page 175 in General Information section of the Appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 3: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT							
33. Discontinue the 20 percent optional homestead exemption.	$0	$600,172	$600,172	$600,172	$600,172	$2,400,688	$0
34. Develop a written fund balance policy for the general fund.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
35. Prepare and adopt a budget for each approved grant using appropriate fund types.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
36. Require adjusting journal entries to be booked to the general ledger as they occur to ensure that the general ledger records reflect current account balances.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
37. Develop an annual training program for business office staff.	($2,485)	($2,485)	($2,485)	($1,085)	($1,085)	($9,625)	$0
38. Develop written procedures manuals for the accounting, accounts payable, and payroll areas.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0

FISCAL IMPACT (CONTINUED)

RECOMMENDATION	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 3: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT							
39. Undeclare the district's state of financial exigency.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
40. Develop a written budget planning process that allocates resources based on district goals and objectives and includes the involvement of the board, administration, staff, and community.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
41. Develop and implement multi-year budget forecasting as part of the budget process.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
42. Develop a two-year cash flow analysis and provide periodic updates to the board.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
43. Develop an investment policy that incorporates all provisions of the Public Funds Investment Act.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
44. Update the investment policy to comply with Statement Number 40 of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
45. Discontinue the practice of making copies of all checks included in deposits.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
46. Adopt a policy that requires the district's accounting staff to reconcile bank and investment accounts within 30 days of the receipt of the monthly statement.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
47. Fully implement positive pay check clearing with the sweep account.	($389)	($389)	($389)	($389)	($389)	($1,945)	$0
48. Require the business manager to send detailed student activity general ledger reports to the campuses on a monthly basis.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
49. Require a dual control system for the verification of funds received at the campuses.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
50. Require the third party administrator to complete an annual workers' compensation claims analysis.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
51. Implement a perpetual inventory system.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
52. Complete arbitrage compliance reports on an annual basis.	($4,800)	($4,800)	($4,800)	($4,800)	($4,800)	($24,000)	$0
53. Establish a purchasing process to monitor and ensure compliance with state and federal procurement laws and board policies.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0

FISCAL IMPACT (CONTINUED)

RECOMMENDATION	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 3: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT							
54. Develop a purchasing procedures manual and provide training to all district staff on purchasing policies, procedures, and practices.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
55. Develop and implement a textbook procedures manual and provide training.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Totals-Chapter 3	($7,674)	$592,498	$592,498	$593,898	$593,898	$2,365,118	$0

A comprehensive facilities maintenance and energy management program coordinates all the physical resources in a school district. School energy management keeps operating costs down by reducing energy waste while providing a safe and comfortable environment for learning. Stafford Municipal School District (SMSD) facilities include a high school/middle school, a primary/elementary school, an intermediate school, a field house, gymnasiums, one alternative school, a transportation building, and an administration building.

Child nutrition operations in schools are responsible for providing students and staff a nutritious breakfast and lunch served at a reasonable cost in a safe, clean, and accessible environment. SMSD's Child Nutrition Department consists of a director, an administrative assistant, three cafeteria managers, and 22 cafeteria workers who provide breakfast and lunch to students in the primary/elementary, intermediate, and middle/high school cafeterias.

The Texas Education Code authorizes, but does not require, Texas school districts to provide student transportation to and from home, school, career and technology training locations, and extracurricular and co-curricular activities. The SMSD Transportation Department consists of one director, one secretary/dispatcher, 24 regular route drivers, two special education route drivers, two special education bus aides, and 11 substitute drivers who transport students to and from school and approved extra-curricular activities.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The SMSD Maintenance Department in 2002–03 and 2003–04 implemented a number of procedural changes that improved maintenance operations and saved money.

- SMSD's close monitoring of monthly energy bills and energy management controls on equipment reduced energy costs by 23.4 percent from $1.37 per square foot in 2000–01 and 2001–02 to $1.05 per square foot in 2002–03, saving taxpayers more than $181,000.

- The director of Child Nutrition improved the department's financial stability and productivity by implementing recommendations from the October 2003 Harris County Department of Education review and is reversing a trend in recent years of expenditures exceeding revenues.

- SMSD has a School Resource Officer Program that provides a visible security presence to deter school crime and increase the safety of students and staff, provides the police with an opportunity to instill lasting and positive impressions in students, and clarify any misconceptions they may have about law enforcement.

- SMSD created a comprehensive Crisis Management Plan designed to provide clear procedures when dealing with severe weather, violent disruptions, and emergencies.

- SMSD's Character Development Program encourages students to make good choices by guiding students through example and demonstration, with an encouraging approach to the development of respect, self-discipline, courage, kindness/fairness, honesty, responsibility, bully prevention, staying drug free, and careers.

- SMSD has a comprehensive Student Code of Conduct that is distributed to parents, students, and staff each year. As a result, rules and disciplinary guidelines are communicated to students and parents with a clear identification of the consequences for misbehavior and the procedures for appeals.

FINDINGS

- SMSD has not updated its facility master plan since 1998, when the district planned its last bond program. Consequently, the district's facility master plan does not allow the district to plan beyond the scope of the bond program or look at strategies other than new facilities or modernization.

- SMSD does not perform an annual cost-benefit analysis of its contract with the City of Stafford for lawn maintenance that includes mowing, edging, fertilizing, outside pest management, trimming trees, dirt work, maintaining athletic fields, and sprinkler repair for almost 103 acres of land. As a result, the district may not always get the best value for those services.

- While the SMSD Maintenance Department logs maintenance requests, they do not track preventive maintenance, labor costs, or materials costs by building or type of equipment. As a result, the district does not have the capability to establish cost control strategies and determine the optimum time for equipment replacement.

- SMSD's custodial staff assignment for the intermediate school is not appropriate because it exceeds the industry average recommended cleaning square footage standard by about 20 percent, while the high school/middle school custodial staff is less than the industry average.

- While the SMSD director of Child Nutrition has made significant progress in improving cafeteria worker productivity, the district still falls below

industry standards by about seven hours per workday and is not maximizing its revenues.

- The district's web page does not include a Child Nutrition Department web page or information to inform parents about free and reduced-price meal applications and other related information, menus, newsletters, and nutrition information. As a result, the Child Nutrition Department distributes this information to parents by mail or by sending home documents with the students at a cost of about $2,064 per year for postage and $500 per year for materials.

- SMSD does not currently offer alternative breakfast programs. As of February 2004, only 33.8 percent of SMSD students who were approved for free and reduced-price meals ate a school breakfast, yet 79.3 percent ate a school lunch. As a result, SMSD is not ensuring that all eligible children are receiving a nutritional breakfast, and the district is not maximizing federal reimbursement revenues.

- There is no process in place to ensure that all aspects of safety and security are coordinated, controlled, and not duplicated. The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel, and campus principals all have major responsibilities for safety and security. This lack of a clear process and definition of roles results in confusion of accountability and several critical areas remaining unmonitored, like the Safe and Drug Free committee and campus wide coordination of campus improvement plans.

- SMSD does not have a regular, uniform method for reviewing and improving the physical security in its schools. As a result, the district may not identify a problem until a security breach occurs, which places the district in a potentially vulnerable position.

- SMSD does not centrally coordinate or monitor the information it emphasizes in safety and security initiatives in both the district improvement plan and campus improvement plans. The plans do not set timelines for reaching goals or periodically measure progress toward the performance objectives.

- The district does not consistently enforce its identification program for staff and high school students and its sign-in rule for visitors at the high school and middle school, permitting unauthorized visitors to enter the premises. Inconsistent enforcement could foster an atmosphere of disorder where students and staff would not know whether the visitor had entered the school grounds for a legitimate purpose.

- SMSD does not have a coordinated program to address bullying so that student compliance is reinforced on a repetitive basis. School resource officers and counselors both offer limited programs on bullying geared primarily to classroom discussions, but there have been parent and focus group comments regarding bullying incidents.

- The number of discipline incidents at SMSD was higher than all of the peer districts, and the discipline incidents at the middle and intermediate schools increased by 98.6 percent from 2000–01 to 2003–04.

- The library located at the middle and high school building has some safety concerns. It lacks an accessible rear exit, alarms, and fire extinguishers and links some computers together improperly, creating a potentially hazardous environment for students during an emergency.

- The exit pathways at Stafford Intermediate School contain non-fire rated glass that violates City of Stafford Building Code and could result in injury during a fire emergency.

- SMSD does not have a documented process for completing required transportation functions or successfully submitting state-required reports on time. At the time of the data gathering for the review in March–May 2004, SMSD had not successfully submitted information for the 2001–02 and 2002–03 School Transportation Route Services Report nor identified why submissions for those two years had been rejected.

- In 2003–04, the district had inefficient bus routes and schedules because these processes were managed manually. SMSD is now in the process of updating its manual bus routing and scheduling process but has not completed the effort.

- SMSD does not have a bus replacement schedule. A bus replacement plan is designed to maintain the necessary fleet size, reduce bus hazards by replacing buses once they reach the end of their life cycle, and stagger replacement costs.

- The SMSD Transportation Department keeps manual fleet maintenance records instead of computerized records, which limits their ability to schedule and track preventive maintenance on buses, such as oil changes, brake checks, and tire inspections.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 56 (p. 118): Update the district's long-range facilities master plan to incorporate building capacities, building inventories, enrollment projections, and a facilities maintenance plan.** SMSD could contract with an outside consultant or agency to update the district's facilities master plan that includes a thorough study of existing facilities and future building needs as well as demographic analysis and enrollment forecasts.

- **Recommendation 57 (p. 120): Develop and implement a cost-benefit evaluation process for choosing the district's maintenance services provider.** The district should solicit proposals each year from the City of Stafford, private lawn-service vendors, and the SMSD Maintenance Department (in-house) to obtain the best pricing and best quality service for lawn maintenance. SMSD could also consider multi-year contracts as a way to keep costs from escalating each year.

- **Recommendation 58 (p. 122): Implement a computerized maintenance management system.** The district should install a system to track maintenance and preventive maintenance work orders and use the information to monitor costs and schedule equipment replacements. The SMSD technology staff can assist the director of Maintenance and Transportation in evaluating the computerized maintenance management systems available and selecting one that fits the need of the Maintenance Department and one that the SMSD Technology Department can support.

- **Recommendation 59 (p. 123): Monitor custodial staffing and reassign one custodial position from the intermediate school to meet industry-staffing standards.** The district should monitor custodial staffing at the various facilities and compare it to industry standards on a continual basis. Reassigning one custodial position from the intermediate school to the high school/middle school would change the ratio of square feet per custodian from 16,252 to 20,315 for the intermediate school and from 22,874 to 21,349 for the high school/middle school, which is more on target with the average industry standard of 20,000 square feet per custodian.

- **Recommendation 60 (p. 124): Regularly track meals served per labor hour (MPLH) and increase MPLH to meet minimum industry standards for school cafeterias.** SMSD can increase meals served per labor hour by reducing labor hours or increasing the number of meals served. The director of Child Nutrition should calculate MPLH on a monthly basis and submit a report to the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel and adjust labor hours to ensure the district is meeting minimum industry standards.

- **Recommendation 61 (p. 125): Establish a Child Nutrition Department web page, as a part of the district web page, to communicate with parents and staff about child nutrition.** The director of Child Nutrition should search the Internet for examples of child nutrition web sites from other school districts, then meet with the district's web designer to define the items needed for SMSD. According to the director of Child Nutrition, the district's Technology Department plans to contract with an outside technology vendor to create and implement a new district web site, and include a web page for the Child Nutrition Department, which would include school menus, nutritional information, meal prices, free and reduced-price meal applications, and cafeteria employment opportunities.

- **Recommendation 62 (p. 126): Increase free and reduced-price breakfast participation by at least 50 percent by using alternative breakfast programs.** The director of Child Nutrition should contact other child nutrition directors to get ideas for increasing breakfast participation. Offering alternative breakfast programs would allow more free and reduced-price program students to eat breakfast at school and could produce additional reimbursement revenue.

- **Recommendation 63 (p. 128): Consolidate all safety and security reporting under one position.** The district should review its safety and security programs and designate one position to oversee and coordinate the district's safety planning and implementation process to ensure there is no confusion of accountability and that all aspects of safety and security are coordinated, controlled, and not duplicated.

- **Recommendation 64 (p. 129): Conduct security reviews on an annual basis and make necessary improvements.** The district should develop a system to conduct physical security assessments to strengthen the safety environment of schools and facilities and follow up on recommended improvements on a timely basis.

- **Recommendation 65 (p. 133): Centrally monitor and update improvement plans throughout the district.** The superintendent should direct all staff members responsible for either the campus improvement plans or the

district improvement plan to work together to ensure coordination and to periodically report progress toward goals and objectives. This update should begin with an immediate review of the current plans.

- **Recommendation 66 (p. 137): Enforce the visitor sign-in rule and the wearing of identification badges by teachers and high school students.** SMSD should enforce its visitor sign-in policy through diligence on the part of all teachers and staff to help improve school security and identify any individuals who should not be on campus.

- **Recommendation 67 (p. 138): Create a bullying awareness and prevention program.** The counselors and school resource officers should use their available resources to evaluate various programs and implement one that increases student awareness of bullying, informs students of the harmful effects of bullying, teaches steps to take when students witness bullying, encourages students to report bullying incidents, and establishes consequences for bullying offenses.

- **Recommendation 68 (p. 138): Create a program to address discipline incidents with an aggressive focus at the middle school.** The superintendent should direct the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction to analyze programs in other districts and implement a program to reduce discipline incidents.

- **Recommendation 69 (p. 141): Install an emergency release door in the library, replace the fire extinguishers, bring the library computers up to code, and remove or contain unnecessary extension cords.** The district should have qualified personnel complete all design, layout, and installation. Testing of computer cabling and electrical wiring must ensure that the installation conforms to applicable building, fire, and electrical code.

- **Recommendation 70 (p. 142): Install sprinklers in the interior common areas at Stafford Intermediate School.** The superintendent should direct the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel to obtain bids on this installation to resolve the non-fire rated glass issue and ensure that the work meets the specifications of the city fire marshal.

- **Recommendation 71 (p. 142): Implement a documented process for completing all required transportation reports and functions.** The district should develop a documented process to ensure that all required transportation functions are completed and all state-required reports are successfully submitting on time.

- **Recommendation 72 (p. 143): Install the computerized bus routing software and monitor the recommended bus routing changes for efficiency.** The district should complete the workstation hardware set up to receive the customized software from the vendor and schedule vendor training for district staff. Implementing the bus routing changes reduces the total number of SMSD bus routes from 24 to 18 routes, and monitoring routes for efficiency would help scheduling to be able to adapt to any construction, road changes, or closures as they occur.

- **Recommendation 73 (p. 144): Develop a 15-year bus replacement schedule.** By establishing a regular bus replacement schedule, the district will save on the cost of unnecessary new buses and spread out the cost of replacing buses over a 15-year period.

- **Recommendation 74 (p. 145): Purchase and implement an automated fleet maintenance system.** By using an effective automated fleet maintenance program, the district can maintain records of work orders and personnel; track parts inventories, vendor history, fuel usage, and warranties; schedule preventative maintenance; and generate management reports.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

IMPROVING MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS

The SMSD Maintenance Department in 2002–03 and 2003–04 implemented a number of procedural changes that improved maintenance operations and saved money.

Exhibit 4-1 shows how the department operated in 2001–02 and the changes made in 2002–03 and 2003–04.

In addition, in 2001–02, SMSD did not routinely solicit competitive pricing for custodial supplies, resulting in higher costs and potential circumvention of state laws and local policy. In 2002–03, the district enrolled in state-approved purchasing cooperatives where SMSD receives volume discounts based on the purchasing volume of all members of the cooperative. Cooperative purchasing programs also satisfy the state and local bid requirements.

According to the director of Maintenance and Operations, the district saved at least 25 percent in the cost of supplies over 2001–02 pricing. **Exhibit 4-2** shows some examples of lower prices resulting from the use of cooperative bids.

EXHIBIT 4–1
PROCEDURAL AND FINANCIAL CHANGES IN THE SMSD MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT
2001–02 THROUGH 2003–04

2001–02 PROCEDURES	2002–03 AND 2003–04 CHANGES
Custodial staff did not have adequate floor cleaning equipment, causing custodians to work longer and harder to clean floors.	SMSD purchased floor scrubbers and burnishers saving custodians time, while providing a more acceptable quality floor finish.
SMSD had no standard brand of door locks and the Maintenance Department did not control the brand of lock installed, which resulted in each school making their own decisions on lock systems. This created security problems and increased costs to the district due to smaller quantity purchases.	The district standardized on one brand of door locks and the Maintenance Department controls all locks and key duplication.
The district had no standards for brands of custodial supplies, including paper, trash bags, floor pads, brooms and brushes, mops, and custodial chemicals. As a result, performance quality of some products was inadequate or inconsistent and supply costs were higher due to smaller quantity purchases.	SMSD now standardizes on specific custodial supplies that the district tested and approved, resulting in better quality control and lower costs due to larger quantity purchases.
SMSD purchased maintenance and custodial uniforms instead of renting them, resulting in higher costs for uniforms that had to be laundered by the employees. The district did not automatically replace uniforms due to wear and tear.	SMSD switched to renting uniforms at a lower cost, with more uniforms per employee, that are laundered by the vendor and are replaced when the uniforms show wear and tear.
SMSD had no formal training program for custodians, relying instead on on-the-job training that was inconsistent across the district.	The director of Maintenance and Operations developed a training manual, written in English and Spanish, that defines cleaning processes and standards for each area of a school. All custodians receive training when they start work and annually as a refresher.

SOURCE: SMSD director of Maintenance and Operations, March 2004.

EXHIBIT 4-2
SMSD EXAMPLES OF COST SAVINGS FOR CUSTODIAL SUPPLIES
2001–02 COMPARED TO 2002–03

SUPPLY ITEMS	2001–02 COST	2002–03 COST	PERCENTAGE CHANGE
Toilet tissue	$37.00	$33.36 plus free dispensers	(9.8%)
Multi-fold towels	$26.95	$16.75	(37.8%)
Small trash can liners	$19.00	$10.77	(43.3%)
Large trash can liners	$24.00 (200)	$19.02 (200)	(20.8%)
Broom	$6.50	$3.59	(44.8%)
Dust mop head – 24"	$7.50	$3.36	(55.2%)
Dust mop head – 48"	$9.95	$5.60	(43.7%)
Latex gloves	$10.99	$3.67	(66.6%)

SOURCE: SMSD director of Maintenance and Operations, March 2004.

REDUCING ENERGY COSTS

SMSD reduced its energy costs 23.4 percent from 2001–02 to 2002–03, saving taxpayers $181,485. **Exhibit 4-3** shows that SMSD's energy expenditures dropped from $1.37 per square foot in 2000–01 and 2001–02 to $1.05 per square foot in 2002–03 and are approaching the $1.00 per square foot energy benchmark established by the Texas State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) for energy-efficient schools. Another good sign is that SMSD's energy expenditures from September 2003 through May 2004 ($427,855) are lower than they were during the same months in 2002–03, which totaled $452,063.

The lower energy costs are attributed to the district's close monitoring of monthly energy bills and daily monitoring of energy management controls on the district's HVAC equipment.

EXHIBIT 4-3
SMSD ACTUAL ENERGY COSTS
2000–01 THROUGH MAY 2004

ENERGY	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	PERCENTAGE CHANGE 2001–02 TO 2002–03	2003–04 *
Natural gas	$99,366	$92,952	$83,456	(10.2%)	$59,160
Electricity	$659,904	$669,892	$497,903	(25.7%)	$368,695
Total energy costs	$759,270	$762,844	$581,359	(23.8%)	$427,855
Energy costs per square foot	$1.37	$1.37	$1.05	(23.4%)	N/A

SOURCE: SMSD business manager, May 2004 and WCL Enterprises calculations.
* September 2003 through May 2004 only.

IMPROVING CHILD NUTRITION DEPARTMENT'S FINANCIAL STABILITY

SMSD's Child Nutrition director has made changes recommended by an outside review that have improved the district's child nutrition management and service delivery.

In October 2003, the Harris County Department of Education (HCDE) reviewed SMSD's Child Nutrition operation and identified 30 recommendations to correct perceived deficiencies in the program. **Exhibit 4-4** shows HCDE's recommendations and the district's action to date.

SMSD's director of Child Nutrition has implemented a number of improvements to the Child Nutrition Program. **Exhibit 4-5** shows 2002–03 operations compared to 2003–04 operations.

Exhibit 4-6 shows that SMSD's Child Nutrition expenditures exceeded revenues from 1999–2000 through 2002–03. However, as of June 2004, revenues for 2003–04 are now exceeding expenditures by $41,434. The director of Child Nutrition projects that when the department posts the remaining year-end expenditures, they will exceed revenues by only $5,000. Had the district not incurred a $28,498 cost for a new point-of-sale system in 2003–04, the district would have made a profit in the director's first year on the job.

From August 2003 through February 2004, daily lunch participation grew 17.9 percent, breakfast participation grew 46.7 percent, and income grew 19.1 percent (**Exhibit 4-7**).

EXHIBIT 4-4
SMSD'S CORRECTIVE ACTIONS IN RESPONSE TO HCDE'S CHILD NUTRITION REVIEW
2003–04

HCDE RECOMMENDATION	SMSD ACTION/STATUS
Develop a handbook.	Complete handbook is now available.
Revise departmental job duties.	Complete job duties are now available.
Develop a profit and loss statement for each school.	Profit/loss statements are now available monthly.
Develop a policy and procedures manual.	Complete manual is now available and cafeteria managers are training their employees.
Repair copy machine.	Copy machine is now functioning.
Connect all managers and staff to email.	All managers now have email capabilities.
Secure Child Nutrition areas.	Locks are being changed and keys secured.
Develop accurate, up-to-date financial records.	The Child Nutrition Department generates accurate records.
Purchase a kitchen video system.	Incomplete at this time.
Arrange for a secure daily deposit pick-up.	Deposits picked up daily by security officer.
Develop written cash management procedures.	Complete procedures are now available.
Set Meals-Per-Labor-Hour standards.	Standards are now available for review.
Provide monthly MPLH reports to the managers.	Managers now receive monthly reports.
Provide extensive staff training on meal preparation.	Food quality improving – in progress.
Determine pre and post-cost on food and paper service.	Meal costing is now available each day.
Use all of the district's earned commodity dollars.	All commodity dollars are used.
Provide training on correct inventory procedures.	Employees are now taking inventory correctly.
Bid on produce delivery.	SMSD now bids produce.
Join the Gulf-Coast Coop for commodity processing.	SMSD is now a member of the Gulf Coast Coop.
Train managers on work efficiency and use of work schedules.	Managers are now able to schedule labor hours and job duties.
Add a student-planned menu to the cycle.	The Child Nutrition Department implemented some student menu recommendations and plans to establish a student menu planning committee in 2004–05.
Implement use of safety equipment and training.	Child Nutrition now logs safety training.
Develop forms for evaluations, staff conferences, and communications.	Forms are now available for review.
Implement the departmental chain of command / Flow chart.	Employees are now following a chain of command.
Implement manager training program.	Eight employees were registered for June 4 training.
Use time clock punches instead of timesheets.	Child Nutrition now uses time clocks.
Attend seminar on personnel procedures.	Certificate of attendance available for review.
Participate on Campus Improvement Committee.	Attends Campus Improvement Committee meetings.
Add cafeteria to Student Withdrawal / Records Transfer check-off form.	Students check out with the cafeteria before withdrawing from school.
Focus on compliance issues – staff must recognize reimbursable meals.	Staff is able to recognize and explain a reimbursable meal.

SOURCE: SMSD director of Child Nutrition, March 2004.

EXHIBIT 4-5
CHANGES IMPLEMENTED BY SMSD'S DIRECTOR OF CHILD NUTRITION
2003–04

2002–03	2003–04
Eight full-time substitutes.	Three call-in substitutes are used only as needed.
No training for cafeteria employees.	New training manuals and weekly safety training.
No records, such as history of meal prices or free and reduced-price meal statistics.	File cabinets added and records are maintained.
Inadequate point-of-sale system.	New and effective point-of-sale system.
No calculations of meals-per-labor-hour.	Frequent calculations of meals-per-labor-hour.
Poor health inspection reports.	Significantly improved health inspections.
No free and reduced-price meal applications were completed for the start of 2003–04.	Applications were distributed, approved, and documented.
No customer surveys.	Surveys of teachers and student groups.
No time clocks for workers.	Currently using time clocks and moving to computerized time recording.
No newsletters to parents.	Three distributed this year and moving to six per year.
Fried foods in primary and intermediate school.	No fried food in primary and intermediate school.
High school offered Godfather's pizza and Chick fil A meals.	Neither Godfathers or Chick fil A meals are served.
The SMSD Child Nutrition Department's expenses exceeded revenues over $250,000 from 1999–2000 through 2002–03.	The director of Child Nutrition projects expenditures to exceed revenues by only $5,000 this year.
SMSD schools used disposable food trays and containers, which cost more than reusable plastic trays.	The schools switched from disposable to reusable plastic trays, saving the district over $28,000 per year.

SOURCE: SMSD director of Child Nutrition, March 2004.

EXHIBIT 4-6
SMSD CHILD NUTRITION REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES
1999–2000 THROUGH JUNE 2004

	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04, AS OF JUNE
Revenue	$823,008	$899,456	$1,022,001	$1,072,470	$884,388
Expenditures	$1,010,417	$916,787	$1,068,185	$1,220,170	$842,954
Operating profit/(loss)	($187,409)	($17,331)	($46,184)	($147,700)	$41,434

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS Ad Hoc Reporting Division, 1999–2000 through 2002–03, 2003–04 from SMSD director of Child Nutrition and WCL ENTERPRISES calculations.

EXHIBIT 4-7
SMSD CHILD NUTRITION GROWTH IN PARTICIPATION AND REVENUE
AUGUST 2003 – FEBRUARY 2004

CATEGORY	AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2003	FEBRUARY 2004	PERCENTAGE CHANGE
Average Daily Lunch Participation	1,512	1,782	17.9%
Average Daily Breakfast Participation	394	578	46.7%
Average Daily Program Income	$4,634	$5,518	19.1%

SOURCE: SMSD director of Child Nutrition and WCL Enterprises calculations.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

SMSD's School Resource Officer (SRO) Program, funded by the City of Stafford, provides a visible security presence to deter school crime and increase the safety of students and staff.

Many school districts use SRO programs. An SRO is defined by Part Q of Title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 as amended in 1998, (2) section 1709, as follows: "a school resource officer means a career law enforcement officer with sworn authority, deployed in community oriented policing, and assigned by the employing police department or agency to work in collaboration with school and community-based organizations."

The SRO program at SMSD provides the police with an opportunity to instill lasting and positive impressions on students and clarify any misconceptions they may have about law enforcement. By establishing a rapport with the officers, students gain a positive role model and develop an understanding of the SROs' roles as educators and counselors as well as law enforcement officers. **Exhibit 4-8** defines SMSD's SRO program.

The City of Stafford assigns two SROs to SMSD to provide coverage to the district. One officer is housed at Stafford High School and one at Stafford Intermediate School. Both are responsible for the entire campus. The SROs are employees of the Stafford Police Department (SPD) and are subject to the policies and supervision of SPD. In addition to salary, FICA and Medicare, retirement, medical insurance,

EXHIBIT 4-8
SMSD'S SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER PROGRAM

Category	Responsibilities
Goals and Objectives	To foster educational programs and activities that will increase student knowledge of an respect for the law and the function of law enforcement agencies.
	To act swiftly and cooperatively when responding to major disruptions and flagrant criminal offenses at school, such as: disorderly conduct by trespassers, the possession and use of weapons on campus, the illegal possession, sale and/or distribution of controlled substances, marijuana, dangerous drugs and riots.
	To report serious crimes that occur on campus and to cooperate with the law enforcement officials in their investigation of crimes that occur at school.
	To cooperate with law enforcement officials in their investigation of criminal offenses which occur off campus.
	To provide traffic control at school when deemed necessary for the safety and protection of students and the general public.
Duties	Protect lives and property for the citizens and public school students of the city.
	Enforce all state, federal and local laws on SMSD campuses.
	Provide the Assistant Chief of Police a daily worksheet and monthly report of his/her activities.
	Investigate criminal activity committed on or adjacent to school property, at SMSD authorized functions or committed by SMSD students.
	Counsel students in special situations, such as students suspected of engaging in criminal misconduct.
	Answer questions, coordinate, and conduct crime prevention / intervention classroom presentations for students.
	Act as a liaison between the law enforcement community, other governmental agencies and SMSD.
	Coordinate security for special school events.
	Maintain and display exemplary conduct.
	Provide traffic control as needed.

SOURCE: "Agreement for School Resource officers" between SMSD and the City of Stafford, prepared 2004, unsigned as of April 1, 2004.

worker's comp insurance, and uniforms, the city provides and maintains a motor vehicle for each SRO. The district supplies an office, computer, printer, and supplies. Gang officers come for site visits, and a Crime Stoppers program is available.

One SRO arrives early and stays until 3:00 p.m., another stays until 3:30 p.m., and a contract officer paid directly from the district works from 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. each day. That officer stands at the bus pick up location at 3 p.m. and at 5:15 p.m. and then patrols the parking lots. SROs walk the campus at varying times so that students never know where they will be and carry both police radios and district walkie talkies to communicate with principals and assistant principals.

Extracurricular sports and event coverage is coordinated by the two SROs for continuity. The athletics coordinator of each sport gives them a schedule with dates, times, and locations. Home games are always covered, and an escort is often needed to other schools.

One SRO explained he is there for "prevention, not reaction" and to be "visible, not just available." He is proud the students trust him enough to tell him about their concerns. SRO duties do not include the discipline of students and, to prevent this, teachers must request SRO intervention through the principal or assistant principal. Principals request SRO involvement when behavior becomes criminal. Officers

document their activities on a daily log and report specific incidents to the police dispatcher.

The assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel at SMSD and the assistant chief of the Stafford Police Department meet regularly to share information, ensure that the scheduling and assignment of officers is adequate, and discuss current district security issues. SMSD principals act as the immediate contact for the SROs within the district.

According to the "Agreement for School Resource Officers," the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel will conduct a semi-annual evaluation of the SROs' performance to determine the effectiveness of each officer and the SRO program.

SROs assigned to the district must first meet all of the following qualifications:

- Be a commissioned officer with two years of law enforcement experience;

- Possess a sufficient knowledge of the applicable federal and state laws and city ordinances;

- Be capable of conducting in-depth criminal investigations;

- Possess an even temperament and set a good example for students;

- Possess communications skills that would enable the officer to function effectively within the school environment; and

- Complete the School Resource Officer Leadership Program sponsored by the Office of Justice and Delinquency Prevention after appointment.

SROs are required to attend training and briefing sessions by the Stafford Police Department. The SRO program places law enforcement officers in schools as a proactive strategy designed to prevent misconduct and intervene in the schools when necessary.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

SMSD created a comprehensive Crisis Management Plan designed to provide clear procedures when dealing with severe weather, violent disruptions, and emergencies. As a result, SMSD has the basis for consistent performance when preparing and conducting practice drills for disasters affecting the schools, employees students, and, if appropriate, the community.

SMSD's crisis and emergency management procedures are outlined in a Crisis Management Plan and Emergency Procedures Handbook. The Crisis Management Plan is intended for school district and city use and has an index that provides an easy-to-read topics index, including community emergency phone numbers, communications procedures, media procedures, weather emergencies, hazardous spills (fire/chemical/toxic gases), bomb threat steps, bomb threat report, sexual assault, kidnapping, child left at school, custody laws, death, weapons, hostages, and disruptive intruders/students. It was approved by the

SMSD board and is updated with new phone numbers.

The Emergency Procedures Handbook is intended for school personnel use and includes the Campus Crisis Plan and procedures for severe weather, medical and disaster situations, and student emergencies. It contains emergency phone numbers for the district crisis management team, the community emergency phone list, guidelines for responding to a school emergency, site evacuation locations, lock down procedures, guidelines for specific crises such as fire and bomb threats and natural disasters, and emergency procedures and staff assignments for securing the building. Each teacher receives a copy of the plan and yearly training on plan implementation.

In case of an entire campus evacuation, the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel indicated that there is an unwritten reciprocal agreement with Alief ISD, Ft. Bend ISD, and Lamar Consolidated ISD to lend assistance, including providing buses. Representatives of each district attend meetings with the police departments of each other's district to keep communications open. The district conducts at least two districtwide drills each year on "shut down drills" and at least two districtwide tornado drills.

Review and comparison of each school's crisis plan showed that the information is consistent and complete. An index in each manual is clear and easy to understand. The review team questioned teachers in classrooms at each campus about their understanding of the plan and the location of their document. All teachers asked were aware of the plan and were able to locate their copies.

Exhibit 4-9 reflects the results of the review team's

EXHIBIT 4-9
SMSD DISTRICT AND CAMPUS CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN EVALUATION
2003–04

ACCEPTABLE CONTENT	DISTRICT	CAMPUS	OBSERVATIONS
PLANS			
Board approved; Chain of command; Communication; Public information/Media; Evacuation	Y	Y	Crisis Communication tree included. Two-way radios-located with administrators at each school; P.A. system uses red and green codes. Local evacuation sites are immediately known by all. Remote sites are not known. Responsibilities are defined for principals, teachers, secretarial staff, maintenance, and child nutrition.
COMMUNITY			
Civil defense	N	N	
Emergency medical and fire/law enforcement	Y	Y	Clear identification of when to call police is made.
Poison Control/Dept. of Health	Y	N	Appropriate internal and external contact numbers are cited.
SECURITY OPERATIONS			
Training/drills/ Relocation Security countermeasures Entry/Exit/Emergency routes	N	N	
Telephone notification system	Y	Y	
School physical plans Statistical information process	N	N	There are separate floor plans for each building. Forms do request information on specific incidents such as fire, bombs, etc.

EXHIBIT 4-9 (CONTINUED)
SMSD DISTRICT AND CAMPUS CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN EVALUATION
2003–04

ACCEPTABLE CONTENT	DISTRICT	CAMPUS	OBSERVATIONS
SECURITY OPERATIONS (CONTINUED)			
Utilities (water, electric, gas, phone)	Y	N	
Food service (emergency supplies)	N	Y	
Inventory	Y	N	School plans state that teachers need to carry class rosters.
Shelter Staffing	N	Y	
Evacuation plan On-site/Off-site	N	N	Verbally communicated to teachers.
Training	N	N	Annual training is conducted per assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel.
School crisis team	N	Y	
Technology/Mechanical plan	N	N	
SITUATIONAL			
Fire/gas leak/explosion/toxic fumes (chemical release)	Y	Y	
Train derailment	N	N	This is one area that should be identified due to the close proximity to a train line.
Chemical spill	N	Y	
Radiation	Y	N	
Airplane crash; HAZMAT	N	N	
Utility outages/lines down	N	Y	
MANMADE			
Hostage situation; Gang activity; Lost/ Runaway/ Child left at school; Custody Laws	Y	Y	Laws that affect the school for requests to release of see child at school.
Arson; Biological agent	N	Y	Biological is identified under toxic fumes.
Bomb/bomb threat; Weapons	Y	Y	Clearly defined including voice of caller and background sounds. Explains what to do if weapon is visible or not.
Theft	N	N	
Rioting/Sit-in/Shooting/sniper; Kidnapping; Assault/Sexual harassment; Intruder/Disruptive Visitor	Y	Y	
Suspected Child Abuse; Suicidal behavior; Vandalism/Violence	N	Y	Includes form for reporting Form to assess severity level of student behavior.
EMERGENCY MEDICAL:			
Sudden Illness/ Exposure to Communicable Diseases	N	Y	
Heart attack/stroke/ seizures/rape; Drug overdose	N	N	Both Pre and Post Emergencies are explained.
PLANT AND PROPERTY			
Mechanical/Boiler/ Heater/Air Conditioner	N	N	
Bus accident/breakdown	Y	Y	
Transportation accident/emergency	N	Y	
PRE/POST TRAUMA			
Monitors (off-site)	N	N	
Post event plan; Monitors (on-site)	Y	N	
WEATHER/ NATURAL:			
Tornado/Flood/Hurricane/ Winter warning/Severe Weather Conditions/Natural disasters	Y	Y	Safety Rules explained in great detail. Participates in joint gulf coast tornado drills. Ice Conditions noted.

SOURCE: Review of documents and interviews by TSPR audit team, March 2004.

findings about the Crisis Management Plan. Elements of an acceptable crisis management plan are listed in far left column. The second and third columns indicate whether the standard was identified or not and in which plan. Observations reflect the comments of the review team based upon a review of documents and interviews with SMSD personnel.

Early preparation and communication prior to an emergency creates the basis for confident and accurate implementation of plans should a crisis occur.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
SMSD's Character Development Program guides students through example and demonstration, with an encouraging approach to the development of respect, self-discipline, courage, kindness/fairness, honesty,

responsibility, bully prevention, staying drug free, and careers.

This program was developed by one of the district's school resource officers for the elementary school to show the difference between good and bad decisions and behaviors and the rewards and consequences associated with each. Teachers give positive feedback to this program. Class discussion centers on issues such as school rules, family rules, drugs, bullies, friends, goals, and dreams.

Counselors in the primary, elementary, middle, and intermediate schools conduct a full series of programs that highlight and encourage alcohol, drug, and violence prevention. The district's licensed specialist in school psychology (LSSP) provided some prevention training to the counselors who also attended the Texas Counselor's Association Conference. In addition, a former counselor provided Crisis Management Training. The prevention training began this year with the district's LSSP. The districtwide prevention training has been in effect for several years. The training occurs twice a year. This year, the counselors successfully demonstrated their prevention skills in an actual crisis. Monthly counselor meetings are held to discuss training and other pertinent guidance and counseling issues.

Exhibit 4-10 shows the prevention programs in various schools conducted by the counseling departments by topics covered, audience, and frequency of delivery.

At the end of the program, evaluations are conducted. Observations by teachers and staff are used to determine whether children exhibit positive behavior. For example, if a student turns in money found in the hallway immediately following a discussion regarding honesty, that would be considered one indication of positive behavior. Reinforcement of good decision-making at an early age provides the solid foundation for making more difficult decisions in later years.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

SMSD has a comprehensive student code of conduct for each campus that is distributed to parents, students, and staff each year. As a result, rules and disciplinary guidelines are communicated to students and parents with a clear identification of the consequences for misbehavior and the procedures for appeals.

Keeping Texas Children Safe in Schools states that the student code of conduct is only useful when used consistently for all students and at all locations. SMSD's Student Code of Conduct requires an annual acknowledgement from both parent and student stating: "I have read the Student Code of Conduct as presented by Stafford Municipal School District and mandated by the Texas Education Code. I understand its contents and acknowledge the responsibilities outlined in the Student Code of Conduct."

EXHIBIT 4-10
ALCOHOL, DRUG, AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAMS
2003-04

PROGRAM	TOPICS	AUDIENCE	FREQUENCY
Red Ribbon Week	Do the Write Thing; Sock it to drugs; put a cap on drugs; proud to be drug free pledge cards; flag raising ceremony; door decoration contest; Fort Bend Regional Council Poster Contest; students dress according to different themes each day.	Primary/Elementary Intermediate Middle High School	Annually
Character Education	Respect, self-discipline, courage, kindness/fairness, honesty, responsibility, bullying prevention, staying drug free, careers.	All schools	Intermediate focuses on the first 20 minutes of each day during announcements, assemblies, recognizing students for noteworthy activity.
Program Academic Career Education (PACE)	Specific character education…decision making skills.	Middle School	Home room lab
Play Power	Explore playing appropriately; students' ability to make positive contact with peers; resolve differences fairly; explore self-esteem' enhance communications; making positive choices.	Pre-Kinder	Six weeks in both Fall and Spring. It is conducted based on teacher recommendation.
Play Power	Positive self-esteem; making positive choices; supporting children who experience difficulties paying attention; motivating the child to participate in the learning process.	Kinder	Six weeks in both Fall and Spring. It is conducted based on teacher recommendation.
Skill Development	Positive self-esteem; getting along with others.	First Grade	As needed.

EXHIBIT 4–10 (CONTINUED)
ALCOHOL, DRUG, AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAMS
2003–04

PROGRAM	TOPICS	AUDIENCE	FREQUENCY
Peer Assistance and leadership Program (PALs)	Middle school/high school students, who have been interviewed, selected and trained, work with primary/elementary /intermediate students two to three times a week during the school day on reading or math skills.	Primary/Elementary Intermediate	2-3 times each week
Individual Counseling	Problem-solving, self-awareness, self-esteem, divorce, grief, behavior modification	Primary/Elementary Intermediate Middle	Ongoing
Group Counseling	Getting along, bullying, self-esteem, behavior modification, emotional control.	Primary/Elementary Intermediate Middle	Ongoing
Child Assistance and Resources for Educators (CARE Teams)	Special education pre-referral committee and assists teachers with any other student he/she may have concerns about including academics, behavior, etc.	Primary/Elementary Middle	As needed
Career Week	Community helpers' jeopardy game; career day fashion show; career dolls; classroom activities.	Primary/Elementary Intermediate Middle	Annual
Parent to Parent	Four part series focuses on the child, communications, and drugs.	Parents	Annual

SOURCE: SMSD Safe Schools Healthy Students Proposal, June 2002, SMSD assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, updated June 2004.

The SMSD Student Code of Conduct assigns a consequence to each violation. The district believes it enforces the consequences for misbehavior consistently. Each campus tracks the distribution and signing of the Student Code of Conduct form. The principals keep a copy of the individual acknowledgement forms that are found in the Student Code of Conduct. When parents refuse to sign the document for any reason, the campus notes on the sheet that the parents did receive a copy. There is detention for students after a certain time if they do not return the form. Signature from parents is not part of the punishment for the students if the student acknowledges receipt of the handbook. The district tracks this data as a violation for each infraction and uses this information to submit on its annual submission.

There are levels of student offenses with disciplinary options provided for each level, as follows:

- Teacher-Directed

- Administrator Intervention

- Suspension or Alternative Education Program (AEP)

- Mandatory AEP

- Expulsion

Clear communication of acceptable standards of behavior and consequences for violations assures that each student and parent understands and agrees to reasonable regulations necessary for a safe and secure environment conducive to productive learning.

DETAILED FINDINGS

FACILITY MASTER PLAN (REC. 56)
SMSD has not updated its Facility Master Plan since 1998, when the district planned its last bond program. Consequently, the district's Facility Master Plan does not allow the district to plan beyond the scope of the bond program or look at strategies other than new facilities or modernization.

For example, since 1996 the district has been paying $1,260 monthly plus utility and cleaning fees to lease the Stafford Alternative Campus facility for alternative education. The original lease term ended July 31, 2001. There has been no net student enrollment growth since 1999–2000. By utilizing an updated facilities master plan, the district may have been able to move a program like alternative education onto district-owned property and avoided two years of lease expense.

School facility needs are constantly changing. Enrollments fluctuate, schools conceive new program initiatives, the relationship between schools and their communities is constantly evolving, and technology has altered the delivery of education. It would be hard to find any school building over five years old with every space used as originally intended. The challenge for districts is that the taxpayers expect schools to last 40 years without a major retrofit, yet the programs provided by the school may change numerous times during that time period.

SMSD's informal enrollment projections indicate that the district is not growing, so the district has not seen the need to update its facility master plan. However, the district's current superintendent is successfully attracting students from other districts to help offset state recapture payment obligations. A facility master plan provides benefits to the district other than preparing for new construction and major renovations.

An effective long-range facility plan should do the following:

- Establish a policy and framework for long-range facility planning;

- Provide valid enrollment projections on which to base estimates of future needs for sites and facilities;

- Select and acquire proper school sites and time their acquisition to precede actual need, while avoiding wasting space;

- Determine the student capacity and educational adequacy of existing facilities and evaluate alternatives to new construction;

- Develop educational program specifications to ensure facilities meet the needs of curriculum while enhancing and reinforcing student education;

- Secure architectural services to assist in planning, constructing, and renovating district facilities;

- Develop a capital planning budget that balances facility needs with expenditures necessary to meet those needs, and provide solutions for financing those expenditures;

- Transform satisfactorily the approved architectural plans into a quality school building within budget and within the time scheduled, and

- Improve school cleanliness and safety, reduce operational costs, extend the useful life of the schools, and increase energy efficiency.

SMSD has not determined the capacity of its individual schools but estimates the overall capacity to be about 3,500 to 3,700 students. The district should determine the capacity of each school facility with standards that govern student-to-teacher ratios and the amount of square feet required per student in the classroom. These standards should also deal with the minimum size of core facilities, such as gyms, cafeterias, and libraries, so that schools do not overload these facilities or use too many portable classrooms.

SMSD has not contracted for an enrollment projection study. Effective planning requires accurate enrollment projections. These projections should be for at least five years in the future. Accurate projections require

planners to examine neighborhood demographics and track new construction activity. Projections showing stable or declining enrollment are just as important to the planning process as projections showing growth.

SMSD does not have a comprehensive inventory of its facilities. An accurate facility inventory is an essential tool in managing the usage of school facilities. Each school inventory should identify the use and size of each room. This enables planners to accurately set the maximum capacity of each school. The district should note modifications to schools in the inventory so the district can keep it up-to-date.

SMSD does not have a long-range facility maintenance plan. A facility maintenance plan includes identifying building systems, such as roofs, HVAC units, and plumbing systems and their components that require preventive maintenance. A second part of the maintenance plan is determining the present condition, level of maintenance required, and preventive maintenance tasks for each system or component. The facility maintenance plan also includes scheduling and budgeting the replacement of major building systems as they wear out.

As part of its long-range facilities master plan, Mount Pleasant ISD (MPISD) conducts periodic facilities needs assessments. They have been able to identify needed construction and facility improvements; identify potential code violations; ensure compliance with new and existing regulations, such as the American with Disabilities Act (ADA); and establish school educational space guidelines for classrooms and common areas, such as cafeterias and libraries, using minimum state standards as a starting point.

MPISD used two different contract sources to conduct its initial facilities needs assessment–a local architect and the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB). The district used the assessment data to prioritize renovation and maintenance project schedules and develop project budgets based on estimated cost by facility and project type.

The district should update the district's long-range facilities master plan to incorporate building capacities, building inventories, enrollment projections, and a facilities maintenance plan. Due to the time needed to perform a district facility review, and with the current workload of district administrators, SMSD could contract with an outside consultant or agency to provide this service.

The Texas Association of School Administrators offers a facility-planning service to Texas school districts that includes a thorough study of existing facilities and future building needs as well as demographic analysis and enrollment forecasts. Their facility study includes the following:

- An extensive evaluation of the condition and educational functionality of existing buildings and sites;

- A capacity analysis of all district educational facilities reflecting the district's instructional program;

- An evaluation of each school and facility to determine its best use, in light of local programs and state staffing and space requirements;

- A determination of technology capabilities within existing facilities;

- Information relative to school facilities conformance to state and federal mandates;

- A series of recommendations and options available to the district to meet current and projected facility needs;

- A 10-year enrollment forecast by grade, by school, and by district;

- Historic school enrollment for the previous 10 years; and

- Ethnic group enrollment forecasts for each year and each school.

One independent contractor includes the following tasks with the first phase of its facility evaluation services:

- Complete an overall evaluation of the general condition of each instructional facility using an instrument developed by the Council of Educational Facility Planners International or another instrument and conduct interviews with the board, staff, and community leaders about beliefs and expectations of the district for information to develop facility recommendations;

- Determine the student capacity for each school in terms of educational functionality and adequacy based on review of facilities, examination of current and future program offerings, and interviews with staff;

- Study the district's demographics and prepare a student enrollment forecast by grade for the next 10 years;

- Develop planning scenarios with recommendations for the use of current and future facilities based on enrollment projections for the next 10 years and program needs; and

- Prepare a preliminary facilities report with planning scenarios to include estimated cost of each planning scenario presented to the superintendent and Board of Trustees.

The cost to evaluate district facilities for use in a long-range Facilities Master Plan would be a one-time cost of approximately $9,000.

LAWN MAINTENANCE SERVICES (REC. 57)

SMSD does not perform an annual cost-benefit analysis of its contract with the City of Stafford for lawn maintenance. As a result, the district may not always get the best value for those services.

The district's contract with the city for lawn maintenance includes mowing, edging, fertilizing, outside pest management, trimming trees, dirt work, maintaining athletic fields, and sprinkler repair for almost 103 acres of land.

The city keeps time cards for the city workers assigned to SMSD lawn maintenance and bills the district for the time they actually work on school property. The district also reimburses the city, at cost, for any parts needed for repairs, such as sprinkler repairs.

Exhibit 4-11 shows that the cost of this lawn maintenance contract increased 24.4 percent from 2000–01 to 2001–02, while expenditures for 2001–02 and 2002–03 remained relatively constant. In 2000–01, the director of Maintenance and Operations thought lawn maintenance costs were too high, so he asked the City of Stafford for clarification of 2000–01 contract costs. As a result of the inquiry, the city discovered they failed to increase contract rates in 2000–01 to reflect their increase in labor rates for lawn maintenance workers. The city left the rates the same for the balance of the 2000–01 lawn maintenance contract, but raised the contract amount from $58,174 in 2000–01 to $72,388 in 2001–02.

In order to ensure SMSD was getting a fair value, the SMSD director of Maintenance and Operations contacted three lawn maintenance companies in

EXHIBIT 4–11
SMSD EXPENDITURES FOR LAWN MAINTENANCE CONTRACT
2000–01 THROUGH 2002–03

	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
Contract Cost	$58,174	$72,388	$72,062
Percentage Change from Previous Year	N/A	24.4%	(0.5%)

SOURCE: SMSD business manager, April 2004, and WCL Enterprises calculations.

December 2002 to compare the cost of outsourcing lawn maintenance to private companies, and the district received quotes of $137,975, $165,000, and $175,625, which are much higher than the contract with the City of Stafford.

The director of Maintenance and Operations also looked at the cost of providing the service in-house, including labor and equipment costs. The director found that if the district were to provide lawn maintenance in-house, they would need to hire two to four employees and purchase all equipment needed for lawn and grounds services, since the district owns no lawn or grounds equipment. Equipment needed by the district would include a tractor, truck, trailer, riding mower, walk-behind mower, aerator, pulverizer, brush cutter, weedeaters, chainsaws, hedge trimmers, blowers, edgers, fertilizer spreaders, shovels, rakes, and miscellaneous tools. The total cost of providing the service in-house would be $74,220 per year, including salaries, benefits, and an amortized portion of the equipment costs. This total is $2,158 more than the district is currently paying the City of Stafford for those services.

SMSD did not explore other options, such as leasing lawn equipment, hiring temporary employees as a trial, or outsourcing part of the function and keeping part of it in-house. In deciding whether to keep a service in-house, the district must evaluate all costs to the district, including direct and indirect personnel costs, materials

and supplies, equipment, maintenance and repairs on the equipment, utilities, insurance, travel, and general administrative overhead.

An effective approach to analyzing the cost-benefit of outsourcing district services normally includes these steps **(Exhibit 4-12)**.

SMSD should develop and implement a cost-benefit evaluation process for choosing the district's maintenance services provider. When evaluating the total cost of services, the district should be aware of costs that are often left out in the analysis, including the following:

- Failing to allocate overhead – Other departments often share indirect costs, such as insurance, utilities, facilities, and administration. A pro-rata share of these costs for the Maintenance Department should be included in the cost analysis.

- Excluding or underestimating costs – Key areas include district-paid benefits, legal costs, and administration costs. Underestimating costs is especially likely when making projections of future costs.

- Failing to account for higher service levels – Make sure the district is comparing "apples to apples" with what the district is asking the contractor to provide. It would not be fair to compare a higher

EXHIBIT 4–12
SAMPLE PROCESS TO DETERMINE COST BENEFIT OF OUTSOURCING DISTRICT SERVICES

STEP	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
1	Clearly define the component activity.	A clear definition of the component activity should include a description of its current budget and staffing, existing performance measurements, if they exist, the location of the function on the district's organization chart and a description of the product or service delivery standards that are currently demanded. This step should include the determination of specifications to be required of potential vendors, based on the expected levels of service needed to meet or exceed the district's standards.
2	Determine total in-house costs.	The district should use generally accepted accounting principles; maintain extensive documentation of all calculations and assumptions; include anticipated increases or decreases in future costs; include all costs, regardless of where they are located for budgeting or appropriation purposes; and include all costs whether or not the cost would be avoided if the service was outsourced. The total in-house cost equals direct costs plus department indirect costs plus district indirect costs. Direct costs include salaries and overtime, fringe benefits, supplies and materials, rent, utilities, equipment maintenance and repair and the depreciation of assets. Indirect costs include appropriate percentages of costs for items such as district central support services, personnel and legal services and percentage of costs for a department director with direct oversight of the staff performing the function.

EXHIBIT 4–12 (CONTINUED)
SAMPLE PROCESS TO DETERMINE COST BENEFIT OF OUTSOURCING DISTRICT SERVICES

STEP	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
3	Request proposals for alternative providers of service.	The component activities to be put up for competitive bidding should be advertised to the general public. While the district should create appropriate standards for a fair evaluation, a reasonable amount of creativity should be allowed so vendors can propose creative new methods for service delivery that meet or exceed current standards. In addition, existing employees should be allowed time and access to internal resources to prepare bids for alternative, more efficient and effective methods of delivering services.
4	Determine total cost to contract.	The total cost to contract is the contractor cost plus the contract administration cost plus any one-time conversion costs plus unavoidable district cost plus any loss on assets minus any gain on assets.

Contractor costs are the fees and expenses proposed by a qualified vendor to provide the service. Administration costs are the expenses involved in negotiating, executing, monitoring and evaluating the contract, including personnel costs, facility use and equipment charges. Unavoidable costs are those that will continue to be borne by the district even if a particular function has been outsourced. The gain or loss of assets includes buildings, vehicles, or equipment that is unnecessary after a successful outsourcing. |
| 5 | Request proposals from vendors. | RFP's should be prepared for component activities offering significant potential for savings or service improvements. All competitive cost review information about the specific service should be made public. |
| 6 | Determination of savings. | Savings are the difference between total in-house costs and the total cost to contract. |

SOURCE: WCL Enterprises summary of process described in Office of Management (OMB) Circular A-76.

level of service from a contractor with what the district might spend in-house for a lower quality of service.

- Failing to allocate contract management costs.

Prior to setting the maintenance budget each year, the director of Maintenance and Transportation (whose title changed from the director of Maintenance and Operations in July 2004) should prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP) to obtain the best pricing and best quality service for lawn maintenance. The specifications should define the scope of work required but allow for alternate proposals that might possibly offer better and less-costly ways to provide the service. The district should solicit proposals from the City of Stafford, private lawn-service vendors, and the SMSD Maintenance Department, which represents the district's cost to provide the service in-house. SMSD could also consider multi-year contracts as a way to keep costs from quickly escalating each year.

COMPUTERIZED MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (REC. 58)

While the SMSD Maintenance Department logs maintenance requests, they do not track preventive maintenance, labor costs, or materials costs by building or type of equipment. As a result, the district does not have the capability to establish cost control strategies and determine the optimum time for equipment replacement.

SMSD faculty and staff submit maintenance work orders on a manual form and send the forms to the office for principal or department head approval. According to the director of Maintenance and Transportation, this approval process takes an average of seven days. Once the Maintenance Department receives the work request, the director of Maintenance and Transportation evaluates and prioritizes the request, and assigns the work to the appropriate maintenance supervisor. If maintenance staff cannot perform the work, either due to lack of qualifications or lack of time, the director must decide whether to deny the work request or seek permission from the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel to contract out the work.

When the work order is complete, which averages two to three days, the maintenance secretary enters the work order information into a database that provides a historical listing of all work orders. The maintenance secretary can print reports for the director and sort the data by areas such as school and date. However, this database does not provide useful reports, such as incomplete work orders, work orders by craft, work orders by employee, labor costs per work order, parts costs per work order, or the number of monthly work orders compared to previous months or compared to the same month last year.

Software applications known as computerized maintenance management systems (CMMS) allow

districts to register and acknowledge maintenance work requests, assign tasks to staff, confirm that work was done, and track the cost of parts and labor. Such systems have become more affordable, are easier to use, and have more features than earlier versions. CMMS applications vary from single user versions that reside on one computer, to networked versions accessible by multiple users, or to web-based applications that do not require any additional hardware or software than found in most districts. Some vendors offer a minimal version of their software free of charge or at a low cost in hopes that the client will like the application enough to upgrade to a more full-featured version.

Districts, with technology staff trained in database applications such as Microsoft Access, can design their own work order database application. For example, Mount Pleasant Independent School District (MPISD) asked their technology staff to design an Access database to use to track labor and materials costs, historical maintenance records for each school, and each piece of equipment in the school. The MPISD Maintenance Department can automatically generate work orders for required preventive maintenance of equipment, such as changing belts and filters on HVAC units. The database also allows schools to submit their maintenance requests through the network and monitor the status of the work request as needed.

The district should implement a computerized maintenance management system. The district should install a system to track maintenance and preventive maintenance work orders and use the information to monitor costs and schedule equipment replacements. If the district chooses to purchase a CMMS application rather than design one in-house, they should select one that uses an industry-standard database, such as Microsoft Access, so the district's technology staff can modify the application to meet the needs of the district. Some CMMS applications offer a free version that may be ideal for small districts that have never used a CMMS application before. Enhanced versions of

CMMS applications have more features, are more secure, have more reporting options, and start around $400.

Many CMMS applications use Microsoft Access as their database and include source code with the application to ensure full customization control to the district. Since the SMSD technology staff has Microsoft Access experience, they could support and modify this type of application to meet district needs.

The SMSD technology staff can assist the director of Maintenance and Transportation in evaluating the CMMS applications available on the market and selecting one that fits the need of the Maintenance Department and one that the SMSD Technology Department can support.

The cost of a CMMS application can range from $0 to over $2,500, but the district can find one that meets its needs for about $400.

CUSTODIAL STAFFING (REC. 59)

SMSD's custodial staff assignment for the intermediate school is not appropriate because it exceeds the industry average recommended cleaning square footage standard by about 20 percent. The district employs 27 custodians to clean 555,239 square feet of facilities, which is down from 33 custodians in 2002–03. The Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO) bases custodial staffing on an expected average productivity of 2,500 square feet per staff-hour of work, for an 8-hour cleaning period, which equals 20,000 square feet per custodian. **Exhibit 4-13** presents the district's custodial staffing by assigned area.

Although the high school/middle school/support facilities group appears to be understaffed, the gyms account for about 30 percent of the square footage area assigned, which may not routinely require the same level of cleaning as classrooms and restrooms.

The district's overall custodial staffing-to-square footage cleaning ratio is on target with the average

EXHIBIT 4–13
SMSD CUSTODIAL STAFFING BY SCHOOL AREA
2003–04

NUMBER OF CUSTODIANS	FACILITY	SQUARE FEET IN FACILITY	SQUARE FEET PER CUSTODIAN
14	Gyms	96,091	22,874
	High School/Middle School	204,222	
	Transportation Building	1,652	
	Alternative School	2,040	
	Administration Building	7,737	
	Field House	8,500	
	Subtotal	320,242	
8	Primary / Elementary School	153,736	19,217
5	Intermediate School	81,261	16,252
27	**Total**	**555,239**	**20,564**

SOURCE: SMSD director of Maintenance and Operations, April 2004.

industry standard at 1:20,564. SMSD employees are very satisfied with the cleanliness of the schools. The review team's survey showed that 93 percent of teachers and 84 percent of administrators and support staff "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that the schools are kept clean.

The district should monitor custodial staffing and reassign one custodial position from the intermediate school to meet industry standards. Reassigning one custodial position from the intermediate school to the high school/middle school area would change the ratio of square feet per custodian from 16,252 to 20,315 for the intermediate school and from 22,874 to 21,349 for the high school/middle school area. Monitoring custodial staffing at the various facilities and comparing it to industry standards should occur on a continuous basis.

INDUSTRY STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL CAFETERIAS (REC. 60)

While the SMSD director of Child Nutrition has made significant progress in improving cafeteria worker productivity, the district still falls below industry standards by about seven hours per workday and is not maximizing its revenues.

One method to measure productivity rates in school child nutrition programs is the number of meals or meal equivalents served per labor hour (MPLH). Factors that affect MPLH include the following:

- Type of food production system – On-site production, bulk satellite, pre-plated satellite, or assembly-serve;

- Level of service – Self-service, vending machines, plates served on serving line, and made-to-order service;

- Menu – Number of choices, difficulty, or complexity;

- Degree of prepared foods purchased – Raw ingredients, some convenience foods, or all convenience foods;

- Type of equipment – Amount of automation or lack thereof;

- Layout and design of kitchen and serving area;

- Production planning – Work schedules;

- Staffing and scheduling;

- Training and skill levels of employees;

- Motivation of employees;

- Size of facility – Number of customers and volume of sales; and

- Serving schedules.

Exhibit 4-14 shows the industry staffing guidelines for on-site food production using a conventional system of preparing meals. A conventional system consists of preparing food on-site from scratch with raw vegetables and other ingredients and includes washing dishes after food is prepared and served.

SMSD has improved department productivity in 2003–04. **Exhibit 4-15** shows that from November 2003 to February 2004, SMSD reduced labor hours by 26.1 percent, which increased MPLH by 24.2 percent.

However, **Exhibit 4-16** shows that the intermediate school and the primary/elementary schools are still overstaffed for the number of meals served. Districtwide, SMSD cafeterias are overstaffed by about seven hours per day.

School districts often monitor and make adjustments in the number of cafeteria labor hours worked or the number of meals served in order to meet or exceed minimum MLPH standards.

EXHIBIT 4–14
MINIMUM STAFFING GUIDELINES FOR ON-SITE MEAL PRODUCTION CONVENTIONAL SYSTEM

NUMBER OF MEALS AND MEAL EQUIVALENTS	MINIMUM RECOMMENDED MEALS PER LABOR HOUR (MPLH)
Up to 100	8
101–150	9
151–200	10–11
201–250	12
251–300	13
301–400	14
401–500	14
501–600	15
601–700	16
701–800	17
801–900	18
901 +	19

SOURCE: "Managing Child Nutrition Programs," Josephine M. Martin and Martha T. Conklin, 1998.

EXHIBIT 4-15
SMSD IMPROVEMENTS IN MEALS PER LABOR HOUR (MPLH)
NOVEMBER 2003 COMPARED TO FEBRUARY 2004

	NOVEMBER 2003	FEBRUARY 2004	PERCENTAGE CHANGE
HIGH / MIDDLE SCHOOL			
Meal equivalents served	1,313	1,245	(5.2%)
Labor hours	92.83	64.25	(30.8%)
MPLH	14.14	19.38	37.1%
INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL			
Meal equivalents served	556	474	(14.7%)
Labor hours	48.60	37.52	(22.8%)
MPLH	11.44	12.63	10.4%
PRIMARY / ELEMENTARY SCHOOL			
Meal equivalents served	1,078	984	(8.7%)
Labor hours	69.86	54.3	(22.3%)
MPLH	15.43	18.12	17.4%
DISTRICTWIDE			
Meal equivalents served	2,947	2,703	(8.3%)
Labor hours	211.29	156.07	(26.1%)
MPLH	13.95	17.32	24.2%

SOURCE: SMSD director of Child Nutrition and WCL Enterprises calculations.

EXHIBIT 4-16
SMSD MEALS PER LABOR HOUR COMPARED TO INDUSTRY STANDARDS
FEBRUARY 2004

SCHOOL	ACTUAL MEAL EQUIVALENTS	ACTUAL LABOR HOURS	ACTUAL MPLH (1)	RECOMMENDED MINIMUM MPLH	VARIANCE IN MPLH (2)	RECOMMENDED LABOR HOURS (3)	VARIANCE IN HOURS (4)
High / Middle School	23,657	1,220.75	19.38	19	0.38	1,245.11	(24.36)
Intermediate School	9,000	712.80	12.62	15	(2.38)	600.00	112.80
Primary / Elementary School	18,687	1,031.75	18.11	19	(0.89)	983.53	48.22
Total	51,344	2,965.30	17.31	N/A	(2.89)	2,828.64	136.66
Daily Average (19 days)	2,702	156.07	N/A	N/A	N/A	148.88	7.19

SOURCE: SMSD director of Child Nutrition and WCL ENTERPRISES calculations.
(1) Actual MPLH = Actual Meal Equivalents divided by Actual Labor Hours.
(2) Variance in MPLH = Actual MPLH minus Recommended Minimum MPLH. A negative number indicates that a school's MPLH is below the recommended standard.
(3) Recommended Labor Hours = Actual Meal Equivalents divided by Recommended Minimum MPLH.
(4) Variance in Hours = Actual Labor Hours minus Recommended Labor Hours. A positive number indicates that the school is overstaffed by that number of hours per day.

The district should regularly track meals served per labor hour and increase MPLH to meet minimum industry standards for school cafeterias. SMSD can increase MPLH by reducing labor hours or increasing the number of meals served. For 2004–05, the SMSD director of Child Nutrition plans to reduce three employee's work schedules by one hour each, but reducing three hours of labor itself would not increase MPLH to industry standards.

The director of Child Nutrition should calculate MPLH on a monthly basis and adjust labor hours to ensure the district is meeting minimum industry standards. The director of Child Nutrition should submit a monthly report to the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel.

If the number of meals served in the cafeteria remains the same, SMSD would have to reduce labor by seven hours per day districtwide to meet minimum MPLH standards. Since the lowest paid cafeteria worker makes $6.60 per hour, cutting seven hours of labor per day

would save $46.20 per day ($6.60 X 7 = $46.20). Extending the daily savings for 175 days per year saves SMSD $8,085 per year ($46.20 X 175 = $8,085). Assuming the changes are in place by January 2005 and based on SMSD's calendar, the district would experience savings for 92.5 of the 175 days that meals are scheduled to be served, or 53 percent of the total annual meal days. Projected savings for 2004-05 are $4,285 ($8,085 X 0.53 = $4,285).

CHILD NUTRITION DEPARTMENT INFORMATION ON WEB PAGE (REC. 61)
The SMSD web page does not include a Child Nutrition Department web page. As a result, the Child Nutrition Department distributes information to the parents by mail or by sending home documents with the students. These materials include free and reduced-price meal applications and other related information, menus, newsletters, and nutrition information. According to the director of Child Nutrition, the department spends about $172 per month for postage,

which is $2,064 per year. Materials that the Child Nutrition Department sends home with students cost them about $500 per year.

Hays Consolidated ISD uses a school nutrition web page to inform parents about school meal prices, free and reduced-price meal applications, prepayment for student meals, menus, and school meal promotions.

McKinney ISD's web page includes items similar to HCISD plus information about nutrient standards, links to national and state sites that provide nutrition and health information, and online access for parents to prepay their child's meals and view their account balance.

Plano ISD's web page also includes employment opportunities, catering information, employee contact information, and department highlights.

SMSD should establish a Child Nutrition Department web page, as a part of the district web page, to communicate with parents and staff about child nutrition. According to the director of Child Nutrition, the district's Technology Department plans to contract with an outside technology vendor to create and implement a new district web site and include a web page for the Child Nutrition Department, which would include school menus, nutritional information, meal prices, free and reduced-price meal applications, and cafeteria employment opportunities.

The director of Child Nutrition should search the Internet for examples of child nutrition web sites from other school districts, then meet with the district's web designer to define the items needed for SMSD. After the contract web designer creates a preliminary page, the director of Child Nutrition should review the web page and suggest changes to the web designer. After review and approval by the superintendent, the web designer should add the finished Child Nutrition web page to the district web site and update as requested by the director of Child Nutrition.

Providing Child Nutrition Department information to parents through the web page would reduce postage and printing costs by 50 percent and save the district about $1,282 per year. Savings for 2004–05 are half of the annual amount because the web page would not start up until January 2005.

ALTERNATIVE BREAKFAST PROGRAMS (REC. 62)

SMSD does not currently offer alternative breakfasts programs. As of February 2004, only 33.8 percent of SMSD students who were approved for free and reduced-price meals ate a school breakfast, yet 79.3 percent ate a school lunch (**Exhibit 4-17**). As a result, SMSD is not ensuring all eligible children are receiving

a nutritional breakfast, and the district is not maximizing federal reimbursement revenues.

For each free, reduced-price, and full-price breakfast or lunch served, SMSD receives a reimbursement through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). **Exhibit 4-18** shows the federal reimbursement rates to participating districts for 2003–04.

Exhibit 4-19 shows that because these free and reduced-price meal students are not eating a school breakfast, the district is not recovering up to $135,000 in federal reimbursements.

Typically, school districts have lower breakfast participation due to one or more of the following:

- Not all school buses arrive early enough in the morning for students to eat breakfast before their first class;

- Not all parents who bring their children to school arrive early enough for their children to eat breakfast before their first class, and

- Not all high school students who drive to school arrive early enough to eat breakfast before their first class.

In SMSD, if buses are running late to school, the driver radios ahead and school cafeterias keep the breakfast lines open. However, free and reduced students who do not ride a bus and are late to school may not find the breakfast lines open.

Alternative breakfast programs that have proven successful in other districts include:

- Providing "grab-and-go" breakfast foods in the hallways or where buses unload students;

- Initiating a short, second period between first and second period dedicated to eating school breakfast;

- Allowing students to eat breakfast in homeroom;

- Allowing students to eat breakfast on the bus; and

- Rescheduling buses to arrive 10 to 15 minutes earlier so the students can eat breakfast before going to class.

El Paso Independent School District (EPISD) implemented several educational and promotional programs to increase the number of elementary school children eating breakfast at school by promoting the importance of healthy meals to academic success. EPISD's programs include the "Awesome Breakfast Challenge Club," offering incentives like toy prizes, guest appearances by a character called "Earl E. Bird," videos and special breakfast items, "5-a-Day" and "Nutrition Month" programs, and breakfast bags

EXHIBIT 4–17
SMSD AVERAGE DAILY STUDENT MEAL PARTICIPATION
FOR STUDENTS APPROVED FOR FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE MEALS
FEBRUARY 2004

	BREAKFAST	LUNCH
Total Students Approved for Free or Reduced-Price Meals	1,040	1,040
Total Free and Reduced-Price Meals Served	351	825
Percent of Approved Students Eating Free and Reduced-Price Meals	33.8%	79.3%

SOURCE: SMSD director of Child Nutrition, March 2004 and WCL Enterprises calculations.

EXHIBIT 4–18
SCHOOL LUNCH AND BREAKFAST REIMBURSEMENT RATES
2003–04

PROGRAM	FULL PRICE	REDUCED-PRICE	FREE
Reimbursable Lunches	$0.21	$1.79	$2.19
Reimbursable Breakfasts	$0.22	$0.90	$1.20

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency Child Nutrition web site, March 2004.

EXHIBIT 4–19
SMSD LOST REVENUE DUE TO SOME FREE AND REDUCED STUDENTS NOT EATING BREAKFAST
FEBRUARY 2004

	ELIGIBLE FREE AND REDUCED BREAKFASTS PER DAY	AVERAGE FREE AND REDUCED BREAKFASTS SERVED PER DAY	AVERAGE FREE AND REDUCED BREAKFASTS NOT SERVED PER DAY	2003–04 FREE AND REDUCED BREAKFAST REIMBURSEMENT RATE	POTENTIAL POTENTIAL DAILY LOST REVENUE (1)
BREAKFAST					
Free breakfast	801	285	516	$1.20	$619.20
Reduced-price breakfast	239	66	173	$0.90	$155.70
Total	1,040	351	689	N/A	$774.90
Annual Lost Breakfast Revenue (2)					$135,608

Source: SMSD director of Child Nutrition, March 2004 and WCL ENTERPRISES calculations.
(1) Potential daily lost revenue = breakfasts not served per day X breakfast reimbursement rate.
(2) Annual lost breakfast revenue = total daily lost breakfast revenue X 175 days per year.

distributed to classrooms on state test days. Using these promotional programs, the district increased breakfast participation by 50 percent over a four-year period. In a pilot test of a "grab and go" alternative breakfast program, EPISD increased breakfast participation in two elementary schools by as much as 90 percent in the first year.

The SMSD Child Nutrition Department recently received a $1,000 grant from a vendor to start up, provide initial marketing, and purchase equipment for a Breakfast-in-the-Classroom Program for Stafford Primary School for 2004–05.

The district should increase free and reduced-price breakfast participation by at least 50 percent by using alternative breakfast programs. Offering alternative breakfast programs would allow more free and reduced-price meal students to eat breakfast at school.

The director of Child Nutrition should contact other child nutrition directors to get ideas for increasing breakfast participation. The superintendent should form a child nutrition committee made up of Child Nutrition staff, principals, teachers, parents, students, and bus drivers to identify and evaluate ways to increase breakfast and lunch participation, especially for students eligible for free and reduced-price meals. The committee should recommend to the superintendent one or more alternatives for increasing breakfast participation. Once approved, the director of Child Nutrition should develop a plan of implementation and review it with the principals and Child Nutrition staff before implementation.

Increasing breakfast participation for free and reduced-price students from 351 to 526, an increase of 175 meals (or 50 percent), would provide SMSD with over $35,000 per year in additional reimbursement revenue (**Exhibit 4-20**).

According to the director of Child Nutrition, SMSD's food costs for breakfast average about $0.476 per meal, so 175 additional breakfast meals would cost the district about $14,578 per year ($0.476 per meal X 175 additional meals X 175 days per year = $14,578 per year). Subtracting the food costs from the additional revenue leaves the district with a net additional revenue of $20,440 per year ($35,018 – $14,578 = $20,440). The existing staff would be able to serve the extra breakfast meals, requiring no additional labor costs.

Since the Child Nutrition Department would not begin implementing the plan until January 2005 and based on

EXHIBIT 4-20
**SMSD IMPACT OF INCREASING BREAKFAST PARTICIPATION TO MATCH LUNCH
PARTICIPATION FOR FREE AND REDUCED STUDENTS.
2003–04**

	STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE OR REDUCED MEALS	CURRENT FREE OR REDUCED STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN BREAKFAST	IF 50 PERCENT MORE OF ELIGIBLE STUDENTS WERE PARTICIPATING IN BREAKFAST	PARTICIPATION DIFFERENCE	2003–04 BREAKFAST REIMBURSEMENT RATE	POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL DAILY BREAKFAST REVENUE
Free	801	285	427	142	$1.20	$170.40
Reduced	239	66	99	33	$0.90	$29.70
Total	1,040	351	526	175	N/A	$200.10
Total Annual Additional Breakfast Revenue (175 days)						$35,018

SOURCE: SMSD director of Child Nutrition, March 2004 and WCL Enterprises calculations.
NOTE: Potential daily lost revenue = participation difference X breakfast reimbursement rate.
Total annual additional breakfast revenue = total additional daily breakfast revenue X 175 days per year.

SMSD's calendar, the district would experience savings for 92.5 of the 175 days that meals are scheduled to be served, or 53 percent of the total annual meal days. Projected savings for 2004–05 are $10,833 ($20,440 X 0.53 = $10,833).

SAFETY AND SECURITY REPORTING (REC. 63)

There is no process in place to ensure that all aspects of safety and security are coordinated, controlled, and not duplicated. The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel, and campus principals all have major responsibilities for safety and security. This lack of a clear process and definition of roles results in confusion of accountability and several critical areas remaining unmonitored, such as the Safe and Drug Free Committee and campus wide coordination of campus improvement plans.

The Harris County Department of Education Center for Safe and Secure Schools conducted a "Facilities Safety Review" of SMSD in July 2001. The document was difficult to locate and upon review, it was evident that no one was aware of its contents or had taken ownership of ongoing recommendations. Consequences for lack of follow-up on issues raised in safety reviews include omission of critical improvements or corrections, which could cause unnecessary future losses, accidents, or expenses.

Since there are no recent, approved job descriptions for positions in the district and safety and security is not mentioned in written form, all information came from organization charts and interviews. **Exhibit 4-21** shows the position and responsibilities within the area of safety and security.

By designating one position to oversee and coordinate the district's safety planning and implementation

EXHIBIT 4-21
**SMSD SAFETY AND SECURITY SERVICES
RESPONSIBILITY BY AREA
2003–04**

POSITION	RESPONSIBILITY
Assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel	Supervision of direct staff
	Annual safety and security training
	Disciplinary Alternative Education Program
	Liaison with other districts on safety and security
	District Crisis Plan
	Hearing officer for student appeals and expulsions
	Coordinate SROs
	Address parent concerns for safety and security
	Develop student handbook and Discipline Management Plan
	Develop and update board policies, administrative procedures, and address concerns in these areas
	Code of Conduct
	Canine drug detection contract
	Drills and lockdowns
	Discipline management
	Liaison with police
	Nurses

EXHIBIT 4-21 (CONTINUED)
SMSD SAFETY AND SECURITY SERVICES
RESPONSIBILITY BY AREA
2003–04

POSITION	RESPONSIBILITY
Assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction	Principals – for instruction
	Counselors
Principals	Campus Crisis Plans
	SROs at their school
	Drills and lockdowns
	Discipline management
	Code of Conduct enforcement
	Approving keys and access to building
	Truancy
Director, Stafford Alternative Center	Disciplinary Alternative Education Program.
SROs*	Scheduling SROs at extracurricular events
Counselors	Prevention and awareness classes
Nurses	Wellness programs
Maintenance	Repair of safety and security equipment
	Fire extinguisher inspection
	Copying keys

SOURCE: SMSD interviews, March 2004.
* SROs are school resource officers.

process, Cedar Hill Independent School District (CHISD) was able to locate gaps and duplication of effort regarding safety and security. According to the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel, the primary purpose of the safety and security coordinator function includes the following responsibilities:

- Plan, implement, and monitor the district's safety efforts.

- Identify and appraise accident producing conditions and practices.

- Develop accident prevention procedures and program.

- Ensure compliance with all state and federal statutes relating to safety.

This coordinated plan avoids redundancy and provides clear communication in times of crisis.

SMSD should consolidate all safety and security reporting under one position. The district should review its safety and security programs and designate one position to oversee and coordinate the district's safety planning and implementation process. Assigning this responsibility to one employee does not require creating a new position.

REGULAR SECURITY REVIEWS
(REC. 64)
SMSD does not have a regular, uniform method for reviewing and improving the physical security in its schools. As a result, the district may not identify a problem until a security breach occurs, which could place the district in a potentially vulnerable position.

Exhibit 4-22 shows the results of the external security assessment conducted by the review team of SMSD's schools.

EXHIBIT 4-22
SMSD SCHOOLS EXTERNAL SECURITY ASSESSMENT RESULTS
APRIL 2004

AREA	STAFFORD HIGH SCHOOL	STAFFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL	STAFFORD INTER-MEDIATE SCHOOL	STAFFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	STAFFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL	STAFFORD ADJUSTMENT CENTER
EXTERNAL SECURITY – GENERAL						
Exterior lighting	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Grounds, student common areas, sports or play areas	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A
Portable buildings	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SURVEILLANCE – PARKING AREAS						
Student Parking: Individual (e.g., attendant), Cameras, Fenced, Gated, ID card entry, Security – patrol constantly or periodically	N	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

EXHIBIT 4-22 (CONTINUED)
SMSD SCHOOLS EXTERNAL SECURITY ASSESSMENT RESULTS
APRIL 2004

AREA	STAFFORD HIGH SCHOOL	STAFFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL	STAFFORD INTER-MEDIATE SCHOOL	STAFFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	STAFFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL	STAFFORD ADJUSTMENT CENTER
SURVEILLANCE – PARKING AREAS						
Staff and Visitor Parking: Individual (e.g., attendant), Cameras, Fenced, Gated, ID card entry, Security – patrol constantly or periodically	N	N	N	N	N	N
DELIVERIES						
School office and individual departments (e.g., band, athletics)	*	*	*	*	*	*
Kitchen	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
PARKING ROADS AND SIGNS						
Entrance/Exit, Visitor, Buses, Fire lane(s), Safety lines for students riding buses	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Access restricted to other vehicles during loading and unloading	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A
Signage states Drug Free Zone and Gun-Free Zone	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
PLAYGROUND/SPORTS AREAS						
Fenced, visibility of all equipment, pedestrian access restricted, vehicle access restricted, signage clearly states no trespassing	N	N	N	N	N	N/A
Equipment securely installed	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A

SOURCE: WCL Enterprises physical evaluation of each school, April 2004.
Codes: Y=yes; N=no; N/A=not applicable at this location.
* To Maintenance Department

The entire campus is open and accessible and playgrounds around the perimeter of the schools are accessible to pedestrian and auto traffic. There are no signs indicating playground use for students during school times. Only Stafford Intermediate School is fenced. External lighting on the buildings, with the exception of Stafford Elementary, was adequate for night coverage. Parking areas and roads were well lighted at night.

Exhibit 4-23 shows the results of the internal security assessment conducted by the review team of SMSD's secondary schools.

Portable fire extinguishers throughout the district were checked. Only one unit was missing in the hallways and all had their yearly inspection tags clearly visible. Both fire extinguishers in the library were missing. All units were accessible and visible, the operating tags of the extinguishers were facing out, the tamper seals were

EXHIBIT 4-23
SMSD SCHOOLS INTERNAL SECURITY ASSESSMENT RESULTS
MARCH 2004

AREA	STAFFORD HIGH SCHOOL	STAFFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL	STAFFORD INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL	STAFFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	STAFFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL	STAFFORD ADJUSTMENT CENTER
IDENTIFICATION						
Staff badges	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Visitor badges	Y-Paper	Y-Paper	Y-Paper	Y-Paper	Y-Paper	N
Student badges	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y
Substitutes badges	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N
Student uniforms	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y/N-depends upon school of origin

EXHIBIT 4-23 (CONTINUED)
SMSD SCHOOLS INTERNAL SECURITY ASSESSMENT RESULTS
MARCH 2004

AREA	STAFFORD HIGH SCHOOL	STAFFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL	STAFFORD INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL	STAFFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	STAFFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL	STAFFORD ADJUSTMENT CENTER
FIRE						
Extinguishers – location/inspections up-to-date & tagged	Y- missing 2 in library & 1 in hall	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Drills – held on periodic basis	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Stairway access control	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Monitors assigned						
Maps in classrooms showing evacuation routes	S	S	Y	Y	Y	
Fire alarm boxes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CONTROLLED AREAS – EVACUATION						
Alternate site evacuation	N	N	N	N	N	N
Weather/Fire/Hostage	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Bomb	Y	Y	N	N	N	N
BUILDING SIGNS/LOCATIONS						
Entrances – signs denote primary entrance or where primary entrance is located	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Exits clearly visible, alarms present	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Visitors – tells where to report, etc.	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Buses	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A
PROPERTY						
Inventory current	U	U	U	U	U	U
Secure file storage for records	N	N	N	N	N	N
BUILDING SECURITY						
Access control to hallways- gates, Moveable partitions to seal off unused hallways or prevent access by facility users after school hours or on days when school is not open (e.g., YMCA, church groups)	Y	Y	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Keys restricted	Y-classroom only	Y-classroom only	Y-classroom only	N-all need keys to building	N-all need keys to building	N
Keys/access codes changed regularly and when employee leaves	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Doors – automatic or manual lock	B	B	B	B	B	B
Doors – locked when room not in use	S	S	S	S	S	U
Entrance visible from main office	S-if someone is in office	S-if someone is in principal's office	N	S-if someone is in office	S-if someone is in office	Y

EXHIBIT 4-23 (CONTINUED)
SMSD SCHOOLS INTERNAL SECURITY ASSESSMENT RESULTS
MARCH 2004

AREA	STAFFORD HIGH SCHOOL	STAFFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL	STAFFORD INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL	STAFFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	STAFFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL	STAFFORD ADJUSTMENT CENTER
BUILDING SECURITY (CXONTINUED)						
Access to courtyards secured	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N/A
Storage rooms – locked when room not in use	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Classrooms with dangerous machinery locked when not in use.	N – power equipment left in open room	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mechanical rooms and custodial locations and supplies – locked and access restricted; Kitchen – locked and access restricted	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Rest rooms – locked when room not in use	N	N	N	N	N	N
ALARM SYSTEM						
Automatic/manual	Y-auto	Y-auto	Y-auto	Y-auto	Y-auto	Y-auto
Centrally located	N	N	N	N	N	N
Fire/smoke detector(s)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Burglar detector	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Maintenance/ testing of system periodically	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A
LIGHTS						
Emergency battery backup	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Alternative electrical supply	N	N	N	N	N	N
Ceiling	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	S
COMMUNICATION						
Two-way system in all class rooms, Panic buttons in classrooms	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Two-way system in gymnasium	N	N	N	N	N	N/A
Public address system	**Y-not in library	**Y -not in library	Y	Y	Y	N
Telephones in classrooms	Y	Y	S	*Y-some do not work	Y	N
Hand held radios	Y-principal & assistant principal	Y-principal & assistant principal	Y-principal	Y-principal & assistant principal	Y-principal	N-old equipment
SURVEILLANCE						
Video camera- data/camera-monitored/motion detectors	N	N	N	N	N	N
STUDENT SUPERVISION						
Corridors/Hallways	S	S	S	Y	Y	Y
Stairwells	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gathering places	Y-on one occasion students seen in gym without an adult	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

SOURCE: WCL ENTERPRISES physical evaluation of each school, March 2004.
Codes: Y=yes; N=no; S=some; B=both; P=permit required; M=manual; A/D=during student arrival and dismissal time; N/A=not applicable at this location; U=unknown.
*District notes these rooms are not assigned to classroom teachers. **Public address system cannot be heard clearly in library.

intact, the extinguishers felt full, the shells were in good condition, and the discharge nozzle was free of clogging. The hand held radio at the alternative center has been on the shelf unused for many years. In case of an emergency requiring contact with that facility should telephones be unusable, there would be no backup communications.

The public address system does not work in the middle/high school library. There is no rear exit in the library. Should a problem develop at the front of the library, students could not exit. The middle/high school building is open to the street from many doors that are left unlocked.

Doors at entrances to the buildings are not always visible from the offices. Intermediate, middle, and high school teachers have keys only for their classroom doors. Weekend and after hour access is by request. Primary/elementary teachers need building keys to re-enter from recess. Some rooms in the primary and elementary school have two telephones, but only one is operational. The district states that those classrooms are not assigned to classroom teachers. Teachers who are regularly in those rooms are aware of the fact, but substitutes might not be. Maintenance stated that some fire extinguishers are stolen so often they don't get replaced. The teachers' room with valuables was left open to the public. There is a campus policy requiring doors to be kept closed, but during the physical evaluation of the campuses, one door was left propped open with a rug.

Dallas ISD uses a standard inspection checklist to evaluate and improve the status of physical security at district schools and facilities. A team of security staff employees have been selected and trained in police crime prevention and physical security methods to conduct physical security assessments to strengthen the

safety environment of schools and facilities. Although Dallas ISD is a larger district, this type of approach can be effective in mid-sized districts as well.

SMSD should conduct security reviews on an annual basis and make necessary improvements.

The district should develop a system to conduct physical security assessments to strengthen the safety environment of schools and facilities and follow up on recommended improvements on a timely basis.

COORDINATING SAFETY AND SECURTIY INITIATIVES (REC. 65)

SMSD does not centrally coordinate or monitor the information it emphasizes in safety and security initiatives in both the district improvement plan (DIP) and campus improvement plans (CIPs). When there is no coordinated effort and ongoing monitoring, completing objectives is at risk.

When asked at the end of March 2004 how the district was doing in achieving their timelines regarding safety and security issues listed by both the DIP and CIPs, the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel stated that there was no update and that information was unknown. Many of the goals and objectives in the DIP are aggressive, such as objective B: "Reduce (1) by 10 percent the overall number of discipline referrals, (2) by 20 percent the violence offenses, by 5 percent drug and tobacco offenses and by 5 percent PEIMS reported offenses."

SMSD's DIP links board-approved district goals with key activities for each school to perform. **Exhibit 4-24** shows the specific safety and security-related initiatives and activities of SMSD's 2003–04 District Improvement Plan.

EXHIBIT 4-24
DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLAN
2003–04

GOAL	OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES	TIMELINE END DATE
III. Provide a Safe and Supportive School Environment Conducive to Learning	A. Establish systems of support that will focus on student success and growth as evidenced by activities provided through the counseling and guidance program.	1. Implement recommendations from HCDE program audit.	May 2004
		2. Conduct monthly meetings with counseling staff.	May 2004
		3. Provide Training for counseling staff on the following: ▪ Suicide prevention ▪ Alternative lifestyles ▪ Homosexuality ▪ Grief and crisis ▪ Drug education ▪ CARE teaming ▪ Community resources ▪ WinSchool	
		4. Consider guidance curriculum options available for purchase.	May 2004
		5. Continue utilizing out-sourced counseling for special situations.	May 2004

EXHIBIT 4-24 (CONTINUED)
DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLAN
2003–04

GOAL	OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES	TIMELINE END DATE
	B. Reduce (1) by 10% the overall number of discipline referrals, (2) by 20% the violence offenses, by 5% drug and tobacco offenses and by 5% PEIMS reported offenses.	1. Evaluate effective campus-wide behavior management expectations for classroom and campus conduct.	May 2004
		2. Evaluate traditionally used consequences for inappropriate behavior to determine the impact on modifying the behavior; if no positive impact is being achieved, seek approval for alternative methods.	May 2004
		3. Implement effective prevention counseling and other programs that will enable students to stop engaging in inappropriate behavior, as well as drug and violent offenses.	May 2004
	C. Consider programs and activities that encourage students to come to school, stay in school and participate in school activities as evidenced by increased attendance rate, decreased dropout rates, and an increase in school spirit.	1. Contact parents by telephone the day students are absent.	May 2004
		2. Send parent notification letters home when students reach three absences.	May 2004
	D. Correct safety-related issued found within the SMSD facilities and surrounding grounds.	1. Place crosswalks between the student parking lot and the student drop-off access.	Complete
		2. Install speed bumps by the stadium and the entrances to the student park lot.	November 2003
		3. Relocate the shot put, discus area used for track and field events.	December 2003
		4. Correct health and sanitary conditions of the preparations areas.	May 2004
		5. Protect electronic records by storing information in an alternative location.	November 2003
		6. Protect student records and official documentation in fire-protected storage.	May 2004
		7. Enhance security on buses by installing additional cameras.	February 2004
		8. Review and make necessary modifications to the District Crisis Management plan.	April 2004
		9. Design a district security plan.	December 2004
		10 Reduce workers Compensation claims by 10%.	June 2004
		11. Enjoy an accident free year.	June 2004

SOURCE: SMSD District Needs Assessment Improvement Goals and Objectives, District Improvement Plan, 2003–04.

Stafford Primary/Elementary School's CIP for 2003–04 indicates that all strategies are currently in progress. This statement is made in this document but is not centrally reported or independently verified. Their goals, objectives, strategies, and resources are outlined in Exhibit **4-25**.

Stafford Intermediate School's CIP for 2003–04 indicates that all strategies are currently in progress. Their goals, objectives, strategies, and resources are outlined in **Exhibit 4-26**. This statement is made in this document but is not centrally reported or independently verified.

Stafford Middle School's CIP for 2003–04 indicates that all strategies are currently in progress. Their goals, objectives, strategies, and resources are outlined in **Exhibit 4-27**. This statement is made in this document but is not centrally reported or independently verified.

Stafford High School's CIP for 2003–04 indicates that all strategies are currently in progress. Their goals, objectives, strategies, and resources are outlined in **Exhibit 4-28**. The overall goal, listed as "5," is to "Promote a positive, safe and orderly school environment."

EXHIBIT 4-25
STAFFORD PRIMARY/ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
CAMPUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN
2003–04

GOAL	OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES	RESOURCES
3. Safe and Supportive Schools	(a) Implement a comprehensive safety program.	Continue to update and utilize the Campus Crisis Management.	Principal, campus crisis team
		Monitor all visitors on campus.	Principal, campus staff SRO
		Install mirrors to enable the front office personnel to monitor entrance of visitors to the campus.	Maintenance Director, Principal
		Continue age-appropriate implementation of conflict resolution, stress management, peer resistance and character education program, cultural sensitivity. (Individual and small group counseling, classroom guidance, PALS.)	Principal, Assistant Principal, counselor, campus staff, SRO officers
		Review and update campus discipline management plan.	Principal, Assistant Principal, discipline committee
		Continue to require staff to wear a picture I.D. daily.	Principal
		Conduct at least 2 Red-Alert drills in addition to fire drills/severe weather drills.	Principal, assistant principal, campus crisis team.
	(b) Establish and maintain systems of support that will focus on student success and growth as evidence by activities provided through guidance and counseling programs.	1. Develop a vertically aligned guidance and counseling program.	Principal, counselors, teachers
		1. a. Facilitate a plan of action for special education pre-referral process (Care Teams) and other programs of service.	Counselors. CARE Team
		1. b. implement Tobacco Prevention program	Ft. Bend Council on Drug and Alcohol Abuse.

SOURCE: *SMSD Primary/Elementary School Campus Improvement Plan, 2003–04.*

EXHIBIT 4-26
STAFFORD INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL
CAMPUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN
2003–04

GOAL	OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES	RESOURCES
5. Provide and promote an effective, safe, and healthy learning environment	Continue maintenance of the mandatory dress code that promotes school spirit, educational purpose, and equality.	Review appropriate dress code as outlined tin the Student and parent handbook during parent orientation night.	Teachers
		Send home a written reminder of appropriate dress code standards as outlined in the Student and Parent handbook at the beginning and end of school to serve as a guide to help parents make purchases for the upcoming school year.	Principal, secretary
		Clarify and enforce dress code expectation s on a consistent basis	Principal, teachers
		Send a note home and make parent phone calls regarding dress code violations.	Teachers, principal
		Take disciplinary action for chronic dress code violations	Teachers, principal

SOURCE: *SMSD Intermediate School Campus Improvement Plan, 2003–04.*

EXHIBIT 4-27
STAFFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL
CAMPUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN
2003–04

GOAL	OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES	RESOURCES
2. Student Success and Development	All students will increase their physical mental, emotional and social well-being to achieve and maintain an optimal level of wellness and learning.	Continue to provide lessons that strengthen character and honor cultural diversity	SMS staff
		Maintain a safe and drug free environment	SMS staff, Stafford Police Department
		Continue with Crime Stoppers program	Resource officers, administrators, staff
		Provide Students and parents opportunities to participate in support groups hosted by SMS (i.e. Student skills, gang awareness, drug/alcohol abuse.)	Fort Bend Regional Council, MHMR representative, administrators, teachers
		Implement a school wide student skills program	SMS staff
		Design and implement a variety of activities, which encompasses personal fitness, hygiene and daily living skills to be utilized in the PACE/Venture classes.	SMS staff
		Provide awards for students who have earned honor roll and perfect attendance.	Administrators
4. Promote a positive school climate that encourages the development of responsible behavior, self-esteem, and respect for others.	Increase violence prevention and intervention	Participate in state and national drug and alcohol prevention events	SMS staff, Fr. Bend Regional Council Representative
		Host a parent and student information meeting that addresses gangs, drug awareness, and student skills	Counselors, administrators, resource officers
		Teachers will be encouraged to be proactive in their classes and in the hallways to prevent acts of violence	SMS staff

SOURCE: SMSD Middle School Campus Improvement Plan, 2003–04.

EXHIBIT 4-28
STAFFORD HIGH SCHOOL
CAMPUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN
2003–04

GOAL	OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES	RESOURCES
5. Promote a positive, safe and orderly school environment.	Reduce by 25% incidents involving drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.	Provide training for all personnel on drug awareness.	Youth Counselor, police dept, counselor
		Participate in State and National drug and alcohol prevention events.	Staff, students, counselors
		Place more anti-drug posters around campus.	Counselors, administrators
		Increase the visibility of staff/administrators/police officer.	Staff, administrators, police officers
		Increase Crime Stoppers awareness.	Stafford PD, administrators
		Provide training for the public and parents.	Youth counselor, S.P.O.
		Provide anti-drug programs and speakers.	Administrators, counselors
5.	Reduce by 5% PEIMS reportable discipline referrals.	Provide programs for students on proper behavior.	SHS Staff
		Provide classroom management training for staff	Principal, assistant principals
		Post classroom rules and procedures in classrooms for discipline.	Teachers
		Notify parent on 3rd tardy/behavior incident	Teachers
		Call parent on all PEIMS related incidents.	Principal, assistant principals

EXHIBIT 4-28 (CONTINUED)
STAFFORD HIGH SCHOOL
CAMPUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN
2003–04

GOAL	OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES	RESOURCES
5.	Increase Violence Prevention and Intervention	Provide violence prevention training for entire staff.	Administrators, youth counselor, assistant principals
		Participate in state and national drug and alcohol prevention events.	Staff, counselors, youth counselor
		Implement Peer Mediation.	Students, teachers
		Providing training for parents on violence prevention	Youth counselor, assistant principals, MHMR
		Have teachers, police, assistant principals be more visible in hallways to deter incidents.	Teachers, S.P.O., assistant principals

SOURCE: *SMSD High School Campus Improvement Plan, 2003–04.*

The Texas Education Code identifies certain guidelines for campus and district plans. Section 11.251 "Planning and Decision-Making Process" indicates that "The board shall annually approve district and campus performance objectives and shall ensure that the district and campus plans are mutually supportive to accomplish the identified objectives." Section 3 Subsection (d), Section 11.253, notes that each campus improvement plan must set timelines for reaching the goals and measure progress toward the performance objectives periodically. This positive result can only occur through coordination.

The district should centrally monitor and update improvement plans throughout the district. The superintendent must direct all staff members responsible for either the CIPs or the DIP to work together to ensure coordination and periodically report progress toward goals and objectives. This update should begin with an immediate review of the current plans.

IDENTIFICATION AND SIGN-IN PROGRAMS (REC. 66)

SMSD does not consistently enforce its identification program for staff and high school students and its sign-in rule for visitors at the high school and middle school, permitting unauthorized visitors to enter the premises. Inconsistent enforcement could foster an atmosphere of disorder where students and staff would not know if the visitor has entered the premises for a legitimate purpose or not.

Teachers, staff, and high school students are required to wear school-furnished identification badges that must be clearly visible at all times. Substitute teachers also receive badges. Badges are to be worn around the neck with the front visible and displaying the photograph. Students purchase new badges at a cost of $5.00 to cover those damaged or lost. Failure to wear a badge is a dress code violation for students.

The review team witnessed the high school assistant principal repeatedly trying to enforce the wearing of badges in the cafeteria, but all students, staff, and teachers were not wearing badges.

Signage at all buildings requires visitors to the sign-in at main office. During several visits to the middle school and high school, it was evident that there was no enforcement of the requirement to do so, nor enforcement to wear identification stickers issued at the office if a person were issued one. Also, with the exception of one librarian, no one questioned unknown visitors, asked if they required assistance, or reported their presence.

The middle school and high school have an open campus accessible from multiple directions, requiring diligence on the part of the staff and teachers to remind strangers that they are required to report to the office. Several teachers questioned about identification badges knew the regulations but permitted students in their classes without badges.

"Some schools want to make sure everyone on campus has a legitimate purpose," said Ronald Stephens, executive director of the National School Safety Center, a school safety-consulting firm. "If people don't have badges, they don't belong in school. Badges are another management tool for campus access and control."

Cedar Hill ISD began a program in 2001 to encourage staff and students to wear picture identification badges to help identify individuals who should be on campus. Student badges have names and student identification numbers. During 2002–03, Cedar Hill High School students who did not wear their badges were subject to a Level II safety violation that includes a conference with the principal or designee.

Rockwall High School's picture identification (ID) badges enhance student and staff awareness of unauthorized adults or students, which improves school security. The ID badges are not just used for

security purposes. Since the ID badge contains a bar code, students can use the badge to check out library books and track student meal purchases and debit pre-paid meal plans.

The district should enforce the visitor sign-in rule and the wearing of identification badges by teachers and high school students. SMSD has a policy that should be enforced through diligence on the part of all teachers and staff to help improve school security and identify any individuals who should not be on campus.

BULLYING AWARENESS PROGRAM (REC. 67)

SMSD does not have a coordinated program to address bullying so that student compliance is reinforced on a repetitive basis. The assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel has the responsibility for the SRO program, and the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction has the responsibility for the counselors. Both groups offer limited programs on bullying prevention geared primarily toward classroom discussions and are not aware of the program delivered by the other.

Focus group comments included the following: "Bullying is a problem, which caused my daughter to go to another school." "My child has not been in trouble in school; however, he did have an incident of bullying and verbal abuse by other students." Another parent stated in a letter: "I've begged our school district to adopt and implement an anti-bullying curriculum as well as put in place stricter sanctions for this type of behavior."

The district improvement plan lists one strategy in its goal to provide a safe and supportive school environment: "Implement effective prevention counseling and other programs that will enable students to stop engaging in inappropriate behavior, as well as drug and violent offenses." As yet, there has been no coordinated effort to establish a program to address bullying.

The Cedar Hill ISD community resource officers create and conduct programs during the school day to build trust with students, including Bullying Prevention,

Honesty, and Telling the Truth. The officers work with the students on a more social basis at sporting events. When the time comes for serious conversations with the students, the students are more comfortable with speaking candidly with the officers.

The counseling department at the middle school of Rockwall Independent School District created a program for bullying intervention. Staff and student education raises the level of awareness, considers the root causes of bullying, communicates intervention strategies, and teaches steps to take when one sees bullying. Also, the administration has established consequences for bullying offenses. Parents are called in every instance. Evaluation of the effectiveness of this program and analysis of the discipline data are ongoing.

SMSD should create a bullying awareness and prevention program. The counselors and school resource officers should use their available resources to evaluate various programs and implement one that increases student awareness, informs students of the harmful effects of bullying, teaches steps to take when students witness bullying, encourages students to report bullying incidents, and establishes consequences for bullying offenses.

DISCIPLINE INCIDENTS (REC. 68)

The number of discipline incidents at SMSD schools, except for the high school, increased from 2000–01 to 2003–04. In addition, survey responses to the following statement, "Drugs are not a problem in this district," showed that 62.5 percent of the students disagreed and 58 percent of the teachers disagreed. During a review team visit, a middle school student was alleged to be selling drugs, and both the principal and school resource officer agreed that drugs were a challenge that required constant vigilance.

Exhibit 4-29 shows the comparison by peer district based on the report to TEA for Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Program annual evaluation report part III: Program Performance Measures LEA Program Specific Indicators Incident Counts for 2002–03. SMSD's total incident count for its schools was higher than all of the peers.

EXHIBIT 4-29
INCIDENT COUNTS BY PEER DISTRICT
2002–03

	PRIMARY/ELEMENTARY MIDDLE/ INTERMEDIATE	HIGH	TOTAL
Decatur	566	199	765
Fredericksburg	275	447	722
Bandera	489	745	1,234
SMSD	662	841	1,503
Sweeny	514	689	1,203

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 2002–03.

Data reported to TEA through PEIMS in **Exhibit 4-30** shows the location and total number of offenses within SMSD High School from 2000–01 to 2003–04. Total incidents decreased by 33 percent during this period.

The conduct report generated by Stafford High School shows that during the period from August 19, 2002 to May 29, 2003, the majority of incidents at the high school are in code 21 violation of student code of conduct, followed by failure to comply, repeated tardiness, and dress code violations. There were 1,407 after school detentions given and 864 in-school suspensions.

Data reported to TEA through PEIMS in **Exhibit 4-31** shows the location and number of offenses within SMSD Middle and Intermediate Schools (reported as middle/junior high schools) from 2000–01 to 2003–04. Total incidents increased 98.6 percent during this period.

According to the Stafford Middle School conduct report, there were 2,514 after school detentions given during the period from August 19, 2002 to May 29, 2003.

Data reported to TEA through PEIMS in **Exhibit 4-32** shows the location and number of offenses within

EXHIBIT 4-30
LOCATION OF OFFENSES BY NUMBER OF SMSD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AT SMSD
BY CATEGORY OF OFFENSE
2000–01 TO 2003–04

NUMBER	TYPE OF OFFENSE	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	CHANGE + OR- %
01	Disruptive Classroom Behavior	0	0	0	0	N/A
02	Conduct punishable as a felony	1	0	0	0	-100.0%
04	Possess, sold or used marijuana or other controlled substance	2	5	6	18	800%
05	Possess. sold, used or was under the influence of an alcoholic beverage	0	0	2	0	N/A
06	Abuse of glue or aerosol paint	1	0	0	0	-100.0%
07	Public lewdness or indecent exposure	2	0	0	0	-100.0%
08	Retaliation against school employee	0	0	0	0	N/A
09	Conduct occurring off campus/in Title 5	0	0	0	0	N/A
10	Conduct off campus/not in Title 5	0	0	0	0	N/A
11	Used/exhibited or possessed a firearm	0	0	0	0	N/A
12	Used/exhibited or possessed an illegal knife	0	0	0	0	N/A
13	Used/exhibited or possessed a club	0	0	0	0	N/A
14	Used/exhibited or possessed prohibited weapon	0	0	0	0	N/A
16	Arson	0	0	0	0	N/A
17	Murder, capital murder, criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder	0	0	0	0	N/A
18	Indecency with a child	0	0	0	0	N/A
19	Aggravate kidnapping	0	0	0	0	N/A
20	Violation of C of Conduct while in AEP (Alternative Education Program)	0	0	11	13	N/A
21	Violation of student code of conduct	1,285	1,128	819	827	-35.6%
22	Criminal mischief	3	0	0	1	-66.7%
23	Emergency Placement/Expulsion	0	0	0	0	N/A
26	Terrorist threat	0	0	3	2	N/A
27	Assault against employee/ volunteer	0	0	0	0	N/A
28	Assault not employee/volunteer	0	0	0	0	N/A
29	Aggravated assault against employee/ volunteer	0	0	0	0	N/A
30	Aggravated assault not employee/volunteer	0	0	0	0	N/A
31	Sexual assault or aggravated assault against a school district employee or volunteer	0	0	0	0	N/A
32	Sexual assault or aggravated assault against someone other than a school district employee or volunteer	0	0	0	0	N/A
33	Cigarette or tobacco product	3	11	0	8	166.7%
34	School-related gang violence (Code 34)	0	0	0	0	N/A
	Total incidents	1,297	1,144	841	869	-33%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 2000–01 through 2002–03 and SMSD Student Disciplinary Action Summary 2003–04.

EXHIBIT 4-31
LOCATION OF OFFENSES BY NUMBER OF STUDENTS WITHIN
SMSD MIDDLE/INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL BY CATEGORY
2000–01 TO 2003–04

NUMBER	TYPE OF OFFENSE	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	CHANGE + OR- %
01	Disruptive Classroom Behavior	13	0	0	0	-100%
02	Conduct punishable as a felony	0	0	0	1	N/A
04	Possess, sold or used marijuana or other controlled substance	0	0	10	6	N/A
05	Possess. sold, used or was under the influence of an alcoholic beverage	0	0	1	0	N/A
06	Abuse of glue or aerosol paint	0	0	0	0	N/A
07	Public lewdness or indecent exposure	0	0	0	2	N/A
08	Retaliation against school employee	1	0	0	0	-100%
09	Conduct occurring off campus/in Title 5	0	0	0	0	N/A
10	Conduct off campus/not in Title 5	0	0	0	0	N/A
11	Used/exhibited or possessed a firearm	0	0	0	0	N/A
12	Used/exhibited or possessed an illegal knife	0	0	0	0	N/A
13	Used/exhibited or possessed a club	0	0	0	0	N/A
14	Used/exhibited or possessed prohibited weapon	0	0	0	0	N/A
16	Arson	0	0	2	1	N/A
17	Murder, capital murder, criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder	0	0	0	0	N/A
18	Indecency with a child	0	0	0	0	N/A
19	Aggravate kidnapping	0	0	0	0	N/A
20	Violation of C of Conduct while in AEP (Alternative Education Program)	2	0	11	9	350.0%
21	Violation of student code of conduct	276	451	492	562	103.6%
22	Criminal mischief	3	0	0	0	-100.0%
23	Emergency Placement/Expulsion	0	0	0	0	N/A
26	Terrorist threat	0	0	0	0	N/A
27	Assault against employee/ volunteer	0	0	0	0	N/A
28	Assault not employee/volunteer	0	0	0	0	N/A
29	Aggravated assault against employee/ volunteer	0	0	0	0	N/A
30	Aggravated assault not employee/volunteer	0	0	0	0	N/A
31	Sexual assault or aggravated assault against a school district employee or volunteer	0	0	0	0	N/A
32	Sexual assault or aggravated assault against someone other than a school district employee or volunteer	0	0	0	0	N/A
33	Cigarette or tobacco product	1	2	1	7	600.0%
34	School-related gang violence (Code 34)	0	0	27	0	N/A
	Total incidents	296	453	544	588	98.6%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 2000–01 through 2002–03 and SMSD Student Disciplinary Action Summary 2003–04.

SMSD Elementary School from 2000–01 to 2003–04. Total incidents decreased by 8.7 percent during this period. Total incidents increased significantly from 2000–01 to 2002–03 but dropped dramatically in 2003–04.

San Angelo ISD targeted problem discipline areas with innovative prevention, intervention, and communications programs. These include programs to help prevent disciplinary problems, including drug and gang resistance programs. The district also supports Positive Role Models in Drug Education (PRIDE) for students in grades 6 through 12. This program sponsors school wide events that showcase role models. Volunteer teachers serve as PRIDE sponsors, and a substance abuse counselor is involved in training peer mediators on elementary and junior high campuses.

Fort Bend ISD implements a variety of innovative programs to help prevent drug, alcohol, violence, and discipline problems. The "Before It's Too Late Program" trains high school peer counselors to teach middle school children about the dangers of drug and alcohol use. Operation Kick-It selects inmates from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice to share their experiences with drugs, alcohol, and violence.

The district should create a program to address discipline incidents with an aggressive focus at the middle school. The superintendent should direct the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction

EXHIBIT 4-32
LOCATION OF OFFENSES BY NUMBER OF STUDENTS WITHIN
SMSD PRIMARY/ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BY CATEGORY
2000–01 TO 2003–04

NUMBER	TYPE OF OFFENSE	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	CHANGE + OR- %
01	Disruptive Classroom Behavior	10	0	1	0	-100%
02	Conduct punishable as a felony	0	0	0	0	N/A
04	Possess, sold or used marijuana or other controlled substance	0	0	0	0	N/A
05	Possess. sold, used or was under the influence of an alcoholic beverage	0	0	0	0	N/A
06	Abuse of glue or aerosol paint	0	0	0	0	N/A
07	Public lewdness or indecent exposure	0	0	0	0	N/A
08	Retaliation against school employee	0	0	0	0	N/A
09	Conduct occurring off campus/in Title 5	0	0	0	0	N/A
10	Conduct off campus/not in Title 5	0	0	0	0	N/A
11	Used/exhibited or possessed a firearm	0	0	0	0	N/A
12	Used/exhibited or possessed an illegal knife	1	0	0	0	-100%
13	Used/exhibited or possessed a club	0	0	0	0	N/A
14	Used/exhibited or possessed prohibited weapon	0	0	0	0	N/A
16	Arson	0	0	0	0	N/A
17	Murder, capital murder, criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder	0	0	0	0	N/A
18	Indecency with a child	0	0	0	0	N/A
19	Aggravate kidnapping	0	0	0	0	N/A
20	Violation of C of Conduct while in AEP (Alternative Education Program)	0	0	6	0	N/A
21	Violation of student code of conduct	7	114	110	21	200.0%
22	Criminal mischief	0	0	0	0	N/A
23	Emergency Placement/Expulsion	0	0	0	0	N/A
26	Terrorist threat	1	0	0	0	-100%
27	Assault against employee/ volunteer	2	0	0	0	-100%
28	Assault not employee/volunteer	0	0	0	0	N/A
29	Aggravated assault against employee/ volunteer	2	0	0	0	-100%
30	Aggravated assault not employee/volunteer	0	0	0	0	N/A
31	Sexual assault or aggravated assault against a school district employee or volunteer	0	0	0	0	N/A
32	Sexual assault or aggravated assault against someone other than a school district employee or volunteer	0	0	0	0	N/A
33	Cigarette or tobacco product	0	0	0	0	N/A
34	School-related gang violence (Code 34)	0	0	1	0	N/A
	Total incidents	23	114	118	21	-8.7%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 2000–01 through 2002–03 and SMSD Student Disciplinary Action Summary 2003–04.

to analyze programs in other districts and implement a program to reduce discipline incidents.

MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY SAFETY CONCERNS (REC. 69)

The library located at the middle and high school building has some safety concerns. It lacks an accessible rear exit, alarms, and fire extinguishers and links some computers together improperly, creating a potentially hazardous environment for students during an emergency.

Fire alarms do not ring in the library and cannot be heard unless an entrance door is open. The only two fire extinguishers inside the library were removed for inspection and never returned, and the nearest hallway extinguisher is missing. Several small conference rooms

at the end of the library have no exit doors. The one rear exit door is reachable only through a counselor's office that remains locked at all times. For access to that counselor's room, a campus administrator must be called to first open that door, and then open the exit door. Entrance cannot be made from the outside since the door is locked from the interior. The fire marshal cautioned that this counselor's room should be open at all times.

When librarians were questioned regarding how they would evacuate children if an emergency existed at the front door, they did not know a way. In case of a fire elsewhere in the building requiring evacuation, they would not hear an alarm. In case of a problem in the library, there would be no fire extinguisher to use.

This library has computers connected by multiple power cords that hang in midair from each computer that do not meet the City of Stafford's fire code. Not only is this unsightly, but it also creates a potential tripping hazard for students who could get their feet caught in the wires.

Four computers are located near the front entrance of the library on computer tables set up adjacent to each other. Wires come down the back of the computers both to the floor and along the top of the tables. The wires are tangled and also wrap around the legs of the tables and chairs. One student was witnessed picking up a bag under the computer and inadvertently pulling the wires with it.

The City of Stafford uses the 2003 International Fire Code Section 605.5 that states "extension cords shall be plugged directly into an approved receptacle, power tap or multiplug adapter and, except for approved multiplug extensions cords, shall serve only one portable appliance." According to the Stafford fire marshal, the stringing of computers is not permitted. This is a fire safety compliance issue that has not been addressed.

SMSD should install an emergency release door in the library, replace the fire extinguishers, bring the library computers up to code, and remove or contain unnecessary extension cords. The district should have qualified personnel complete all design, layout, and installation. Testing of computer cabling and electrical wiring must ensure that the installation conforms to applicable building, fire, and electrical code.

To implement this recommendation, there are several costs involved. A maximum of $200 would replace the fire extinguisher units if they cannot be located. To change the door would cost $175, staining the door to the color of choice would cost $50, hardware for the emergency release would cost $250, labor to hang the door would cost $50, and other hardware for the door would cost $50, for a total of $575.

The simplest method to eliminate the wire hazard is to move the computers to areas near existing outlets or nearer to walls where the cords could be moved out of pathways. This course of action may mean separating the computers or containing the wires in a conduit three-quarter inches in diameter or larger. An electrician should have a permit if they are moving lines, which would cost approximately $150.

The electrician would then catch the line and run exposed conduits along the wall. For an estimated 25 feet of conduit, the cost should be less than $500. This process should be relatively simple unless there are other code violations found. (Emergency release door [$575], fire extinguisher replacement [$200], computers to code [$500], and extension cord containment [$150], totaling $1,425).

STAFFORD INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL EXIT PATHWAYS (REC. 70)

The exit pathways at Stafford Intermediate School contain non-fire rated glass that violates the City of Stafford Building Code and could result in injury during a fire emergency.

The City of Stafford fire marshal uses the 2003 International Fire Code section concerning building codes for fire resistant construction in educational facilities that states that there needs to be at least a one hour rating on the glass when classrooms and exit pathways are more than 50 feet apart. This is designed to provide safe evacuation.

Some buildings use wired glass in its doors. A study by an Emory University professor found most of the 2,500 annual glass door injuries in schools involve wired glass. Others use tempered glass that is one hour fire resistant, but replacement of the large quantity of glass at this location would not be cost effective.

According to the Stafford fire marshal, the high school had a similar problem that was resolved by installing a water sprinkling system for the inside and outside of the back office area. He said that the intermediate school has been written up several times on this issue and has failed to make changes, and he noted that an acceptable alternative to replacement of all glass is installation of sprinklers in the common areas. This violation had not been resolved at the time of the review.

When discussing the benefits of sprinklers, The National Association of State Fire Marshals states "The longer that a fire is contained the greater chances exist that people will be able to escape or be rescued from harm and that firefighters will be able to avoid injury or death from building collapse."

The district should install sprinklers in the interior common areas at Stafford Intermediate School. The superintendent should direct the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel to obtain bids on this installation to resolve the non-fire rated glass issue and ensure that the work meets the specification of the city fire marshal.

To implement this recommendation, the district would need 85 sprinkler heads to cover the interior common areas, costing around $17,300. Providing water to the building is an additional $16,000, for a total one-time cost of around $33,300.

TRANSPORTATION REPORTS (REC. 71)

SMSD does not have a documented process for completing required transportation functions or

successfully submitting state-required reports on time. At the time of the data gathering for the review in March – May 2004, SMSD had not successfully submitted information for the 2001–02 and 2002–03 School Transportation Route Services Report nor identified why submissions for those two years had been rejected. As a result, when the Transportation director position experienced turnover, no one at the district assumed responsibility or knew how to complete the required delinquent state reports.

The review team's transportation expert discussed the situation with TEA staff responsible for transportation reporting and identified that the district had miscalculated its mileage on submission the School Transportation Operations Report. According to TEA staff, the vast majority of the mileage of the district's transportation fleet should be included in this report because not only does it include all the funded programs but also unfunded mileage areas that have usually large total mileage: deadhead, co-curricular, extracurricular, and training. These unfunded areas are not included in the School Transportation Route Services Report, which means this report should have a lower mileage total than the operations report. However, in SMSD's 2001–02 submission, the situation was reversed, and TEA rejected the report.

Another consequence of not having current and correct transportation data is that valid SMSD transportation facts were not available for trend analysis or comparison with chosen peer districts. During the course of the review, the review team's transportation expert assisted the district in completing both the 2001–02 and 2002–03 School Transportation Route Services Report. The 2001–02 report has been submitted by the district and accepted by TEA. The 2002–03 School Transportation Route Services Report was submitted to TEA in April 2004 and the district was awaiting approval.

The newly hired (June 2004) director of Transportation, with nine years of direct responsibility for school transportation programs, is aware of the problem and has begun creating and documenting the process to ensure functions are handled properly and future reports are filed correctly and timely, regardless of the district's transportation staffing status. With the recently acquired customized bus routing software, the district's transportation report filings should improve because they now have easy access to accurate information for the required state transportation report annual filings.

The district should implement a documented process for completing all required transportation reports and functions to ensure successful submission of all state-required forms on time.

COMPUTERIZED BUS ROUTING (REC. 72)

In 2003–04, the district had inefficient bus routes and schedules because these processes were managed manually. SMSD is now in the process of updating its manual bus routing and scheduling process. The district approved entering into an interlocal agreement with Round Rock ISD (RRISD) in August 2003 for bus route creation and optimization using interactive computerized bus routing software. This agreement was necessary because the district did not have the expertise or computer hardware capabilities necessary to create the computerized routes or apply the chosen bus routing software for route optimization. The district completed its bus routing software purchase in early November 2003.

Since Round Rock ISD owns and uses the same bus routing software as purchased by SMSD, the district could have forwarded the map and street information, routes, loading and unloading information, site maps, and school bell times needed for route development to RRISD in September 2003, once the interlocal agreement was approved by RRISD's board. However, the required transportation information was not provided to RRISD until late June 2004.

According to the assistant superintendent, the director of Transportation was to be the point person at SMSD for supplying the needed information; however, the Transportation director position experienced turnover during 2003–04. With no process in place to keep the information request moving, the required task remained unfinished until the current (newly hired June 2004) director of Transportation gathered the information and sent it to RRISD in late June 2004.

As a result of the delay, SMSD continued to operate its bus routes less efficiently throughout 2003–04. If the routing information had been provided in September 2003 and recommended optimization been implemented in November 2003 instead of at the beginning of 2004–05, the district could have saved funds that it could have directed to other district priorities. In addition, the software purchase included the first year of maintenance, which the district has not been able to use because both the required computer hardware and customized software product were missing. Instead, Round Rock ISD produced the bus routing software optimization by the end of July and uploaded the information to the software vendor for future installation at SMSD.

Even though the district was unable to receive the bus routing product electronically, they reviewed a printed copy of the recommended routing changes and decided to implement the recommendations for 2004–05. In order to receive the software product and training on the software purchased from the vendor, the district

ordered computer hardware upgrades in late July. As of early August 2004, the customized bus routing information had not been installed at the district.

According to the director of Transportation just prior to the beginning of 2004–05, the district transferred an experienced and certified bus driver, whose position was no longer needed after optimizing the number of bus routes, to become the new transportation dispatcher. Adding the dispatcher position also allows the district's transportation office to remain open from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. by staggering the dispatcher and secretary's work schedules, providing expanded service to SMSD's riders and parents without additional cost.

SMSD should install the computerized bus routing software and monitor the recommended bus routing changes for efficiency. The district should complete the workstation hardware set up to receive the customized software from the vendor and schedule vendor training for district staff. Once trained, staff can then monitor bus routes and adapt for the ongoing planned road construction or other occurrences that affect maintaining safe and efficient bus routing and scheduling.

Implementing the bus routing recommendations reduces the total number of SMSD bus routes from 24 to 18, without eliminating any bus stops and maintaining a consistent time schedule. Round Rock ISD's Transportation director conservatively estimates the average total operations cost (maintenance, operations and staffing) of one annual bus route is $15,000. Therefore, the total annual savings would be $15,000 per route times 2 routes per day times the 6 routes eliminated equals $180,000 annual savings before the $2,250 annual software maintenance cost, resulting in a savings of about $177,750 annually. Since SMSD has started manually implementing the routing changes, annual savings will begin in 2004–05.

BUS REPLACEMENT SCHEDULE (REC. 73)

SMSD does not have a bus replacement schedule. Since the district was designated as a Chapter 41 district, they have not received a state transportation allocation, and the district has not budgeted other funds to replace buses. School bus replacement is important because the useful life and condition of a bus impacts safety, efficiency, and emissions improvements, and it reduces the operating costs over the anticipated lifetime of the bus. These same factors are involved in making decisions related to bus replacements schedules.

The district's bus fleet consists of 36 buses, including three special education buses. SMSD's fleet age ranges from 2 to 15 years old (**Exhibit 4-33**). Sixty-four percent of the buses are 9 years or older. SMSD has one bus that is 14 years old, two that are 13 years old,

three that are 12 years old, seven that are 11 years old, and 25 buses that are 10 years old or less. No buses have been purchased or sold since 2001–02.

According to the assistant superintendent for Operations and Personnel, SMSD did have an informal bus replacement schedule from 1982–83 to 2001–02, during which time the district averaged replacing two buses each year.

A replacement plan is designed to maintain the necessary fleet size and concurrently reduce bus hazards by replacing buses once they reach the end of their life cycle. The plan also allows staggering replacement cost.

The National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services suggests that under normal operating conditions, the anticipated lifetime of a bus is 12 to 15 years.

The district should develop a 15-year bus replacement schedule. By establishing a regular bus procurement program based on a 15-year bus replacement cycle, the district will save the cost of unnecessary new buses. While buses represent a large capital investment for districts, districts benefit from replacement plans. The recommendation of a 15-year replacement cycle is based upon the relatively small district area of seven square miles, low bus mileage, and a good bus maintenance repair rate with the City of Stafford.

The replacement plan should be reevaluated annually to determine which vehicles should be sold depending on their mileage/condition. The district should immediately rotate the buses from the longest routes to the shortest/spare capacity in order to extend the life of the vehicles.

Currently the district has 36 buses: 33 regular education buses and three wheel chair special education buses. If the district permanently reduces six routes as recommended, then only 18 regular education buses would be required.

The industry standard recommends having spare buses for vehicles that are out of service for scheduled preventive maintenance or unscheduled maintenance. The number of spares should be equivalent to 10 percent of the regular route needs, or two buses in SMSD. The remainder of the buses would be used for field trips or as spares. One of the problems many districts face with providing extracurricular trips during the morning and afternoon peak hours is that they take resources away from routes. The extra buses provide additional resources for the district to operate peak hour extracurricular trips without interfering with routes.

Two of the wheel chair buses are route buses, and the third is a spare. Of the remaining 13 buses in the fleet

EXHIBIT 4-33
SMSD BUS FLEET
2002–03

BUS NUMBER	YEAR	MILEAGE	PASSENGERS	MAKE	ENGINE
85	1990	68554	61	International	Diesel
86	1991	96570	26+4 WC	Chevrolet	Diesel
89	1991	70322	61	Chevrolet	Diesel
150	1992	3552	61	GMC	Diesel
151	1992	38427	61	International	Diesel
152	1992	1335	61	International	Diesel
158	1993	87829	61	International	Diesel
159	1993	82428	61	Oshkosh	Diesel
160	1993	79948	61	Oshkosh	Diesel
161	1993	72411	61	Oshkosh	Diesel
162	1993	75640	61	Oshkosh	Diesel
163	1993	75153	61	Oshkosh	Diesel
164	1993	2444	61	Oshkosh	Diesel
166	1994	36645	61	Oshkosh	Diesel
167	1994	71429	61	Oshkosh	Diesel
168	1994	68261	61	Oshkosh	Diesel
169	1994	65755	61	Oshkosh	Diesel
170	1994	90498	61	Oshkosh	Diesel
196	1995	76739	61	Thomas	Diesel
197	1995	68802	61	Thomas	Diesel
198	1995	3030	61	Thomas	Diesel
199	1995	68411	61	Thomas	Diesel
200	1995	100009	61	Thomas	Diesel
201	1996	74065	61	Thomas	Diesel
202	1996	69639	61	Thomas	Diesel
203	1996	57790	61	Thomas	Diesel
204	1996	56590	61	Thomas	Diesel
205	1996	3217	61	Thomas	Diesel
171	1998	42128	78	Thomas	Diesel
175	1998	67076	78	Thomas	Diesel
80	1998	52043	24+3 WC	Thomas	Diesel
81	1999	34670	24+3 WC	Thomas	Diesel
176	2000	36177	78	Thomas	Diesel
177	2000	38385	78	Thomas	Diesel
154	2002	15183	78	Thomas	Diesel
13	2002	11465	78	Thomas	Diesel

SOURCE: *SMSD Transportation staff, March 2003.*

(36 total buses – 18 for regular routes – two spares – three for special needs students = 13 remaining buses), six could be sold and the rest assigned to a surplus fleet. The district would still have a total of 30 buses.

In a 15-year replacement plan, the first four years SMSD will not need to purchase any buses with the elimination of six routes (**Exhibit 4-34**). One-time savings of $3,000 are estimated from the sale of the surplus six buses at $500 per bus. In the fifth year of the replacement cycle, the district would have to replace seven buses at a total cost of $455,000 (seven buses x $65,000 for each bus = $455,000)

FLEET MAINTENANCE (REC. 74)
The SMSD Transportation Department keeps manual fleet maintenance records instead of computerized records, which limits their ability to schedule and track preventive maintenance on buses, such as oil changes, brake checks, and tire inspections.

The service manager keeps a spreadsheet file on each bus regarding its maintenance history. However, the spreadsheet does not include costs from outside contract work or fuel costs, so the total maintenance cost per bus is not accurately calculated. This data is important in making management decisions, such as rotating high use vehicles in order to minimize wear and tear and contain costs. According to the director, however, preventive maintenance is not scheduled for buses, and buses can unknowingly go beyond the bus manufacturer's recommended maintenance cycles, which can result in untimely breakdowns and potentially affect student safety. The Transportation Department also keeps fueling records manually, which could result in inaccurate accounting and loss of fuel inventory.

Frisco ISD Transportation Department uses the Ron Turley Association (RTA) Fleet Management System. RTA has modules available to track fuel usage, preventive maintenance, tire usage, parts inventory

EXHIBIT 4-34
RECOMMENDED SMSD BUS FLEET 15-YEAR REPLACEMENT SCHEDULE
2004–05 THROUGH 2018-19

BUS PURCHASE YEAR	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19
1990															
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1996								X							
1998										X					
1998										X					
1998										X					
1999											X				
2000												X			
2000												X			
2002														X	
2002														X	
Total Replaced	0	0	0	0	7	5	5	5	0	3	1	2	0	2	0

SOURCE: WCL Enterprises.

control, and work order creation. Updates are received via e-mail on a regular basis. Major updates containing ideas received from individual users for a more user friendly or faster method of storing and retrieving information about the fleet are implemented once a year via CD-ROM. Overall, this system functions well but would be more helpful with the report writer module, the bar code module, the electronic fuel interface, and the paperless shop option. The system can be implemented for a cost of $1,995 plus $25 shipping and handling and accommodates 75 vehicles. The first year of support is free, and the package comes with a certificate for three days of training to use the system. After the first year, a $700 maintenance and upgrade fee will ensure that the system is performing the task as needed.

In addition to tracking and scheduling preventive maintenance, an effective automated fleet maintenance program can be used to do the following:

- Track and schedule preventative maintenance;
- Maintain records of work orders;
- Track parts inventories and vendor history;
- Track warranties;
- Track fuel usage and fuel inventory;
- Track cost-per-mile;
- Maintain personnel records; and
- Generate management reports, which allow districts to measure and monitor different

performance measures to determine if changes are needed in department operations.

The district should purchase and implement an automated fleet maintenance system. SMSD should make sure the cost of the software includes adequate training and support.

The cost of the fleet maintenance software with a single-user license is $1,995 plus $25 shipping and handling ($2,020 total), including one year of software maintenance and support. The annual maintenance and support fee for future years is $700.

For more background on Chapter 4, Operations, see page 179 in the General Information section of the Appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 4: OPERATIONS							
56. Update the district's long-range facilities master plan to incorporate building capacities, building inventories, enrollment projections, and a facilities maintenance plan.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($9,000)
57. Develop and implement a cost-benefit evaluation process for choosing the district's maintenance services provider.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
58. Implement a computerized maintenance management system.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($400)
59. Monitor custodial staffing and reassign one custodial position from the intermediate school to meet industry-staffing standards.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
60. Regularly track meals served per labor hour (MPLH) and increase MPLH to meet minimum industry standards for school cafeterias.	$4,285	$8,085	$8,085	$8,085	$8,085	$36,625	$0
61. Establish a Child Nutrition Department web page, as a part of the district web page, to communicate with parents and staff about child nutrition.	$641	$1,282	$1,282	$1,282	$1,282	$5,769	$0
62. Increase free and reduced-price breakfast participation by at least 50 percent by using alternative breakfast programs.	$10,833	$20,440	$20,440	$20,440	$20,440	$92,593	$0
63. Consolidate all safety and security reporting under one position.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
64. Conduct security reviews on an annual basis and make necessary improvements.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
65. Centrally monitor and update improvement plans throughout the district.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
66. Enforce the visitor sign-in rule and the wearing of identification badges by teachers and high school students.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0

FISCAL IMPACT (CONTINUED)

RECOMMENDATION	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 4: OPERATIONS							
67. Create a bullying awareness and prevention program.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
68. Create a program to address discipline incidents with an aggressive focus at the middle school.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
69. Install an emergency release door in the library, replace the fire extinguishers, bring the library computers up to code, and remove or contain unnecessary extension cords.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($1,425)
70. Install sprinklers in the interior common areas at Stafford Intermediate School.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($33,300)
71. Implement a documented process for completing all required transportation reports and functions.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
72. Install the computerized bus routing software and monitor the recommended bus routing changes for efficiency.	$177,750	$177,750	$177,750	$177,750	$177,750	$888,750	$0
73. Develop a 15-year bus replacement schedule.	$0	$0	$0	$0	($455,000)	($455,000)	$3,000
74. Purchase and implement an automated fleet maintenance system.	$0	($700)	($700)	($700)	($700)	($2,800)	($2,020)
Totals-Chapter 4	$193,509	$206,857	$206,857	$206,857	($248,143)	$565,937	($43,145)

GENERAL INFORMATION

CHAPTER 1
EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

The key purpose of any school system is to educate children. The effective and efficient use of a district's financial and human resources and a well-designed instructional program determine how well a district meets this goal. Student performance on standardized tests, student mastery of learning objectives, and fluctuating student enrollment affect the development and modification of programs and services provided by a district.

The ethnic composition of the students in Stafford MSD (SMSD) changed from 1999–2000 through 2003–04 **(Exhibit A-1)**. SMSD's African American student population grew from 22 percent to 29 percent of all district students; Asian/Pacific Islander student population remained at 20 percent; Hispanic student population increased from 33 percent to 34 percent; and Anglo student population decreased from 24 percent to 17 percent.

Exhibit A-2 compares SMSD's student enrollment growth rates from 1999–2000 through 2003–04 to Region 4 and the state. SMSD's total student population decreased by 1.0 percent.

Exhibit A-3 compares 2003–04 student enrollment and the demographics of SMSD with its peer districts, Region 4, and the state. SMSD's Asian/Pacific Islander student population is about seven times the state average and almost four times the region average, and African American student population is more than double the state average. SMSD's number of economically disadvantaged students is much less than both the state and region averages, and is also lower than Bandera,

Fredericksburg, and Sweeny.

SMSD overall student attendance rates from 1998–99 through 2002–03 were in the middle compared to peer districts, but higher than regional and state averages **(Exhibit A-4)**.

The attendance rate for SMSD students in 2003–04 increased to 96.4 percent.

SMSD reduced its dropout rate from 1998–99 through 2002–03 **(Exhibit A-5)**. SMSD's dropout rate was around the state and regional averages for 1998–99 but below the state and regional averages for 2002–03. In both years, all peer districts had a dropout rate lower than SMSD.

The dropout rate for SMSD students in 2003–04 has lowered further to 0.4 percent.

SMSD spent $18,899,901 in total expenditures in 2003–04. Of that total, $11,617,277, or 61.5 percent, was spent on direct classroom instruction and other activities that deliver, enhance, or direct the delivery of learning situations to students **(Exhibit A-6)**. The state average was 58.1 percent.

All peer districts spent a smaller percentage of total expenditures on classroom teaching than did SMSD.

Instructional program funding increased in SMSD by 30.6 percent from 1999–2000 through 2003–04, with the largest percentage increases coming in gifted and talented education (69.8 percent) and special education (57.0 percent). Career and Technology Education (CATE) funding increased by 52.7 percent **(Exhibit A-7)**.

EXHIBIT A-1
CHANGES IN ETHNICITY OF SMSD STUDENT POPULATION
1999–2000 AND 2003–04

ETHNIC GROUP	1999–2000	2003–04
African American	22%	29%
Hispanic	33%	34%
Anglo	24%	17%
Asian/Pacific Islander	20%	20%
Native American	0%	0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 1999–2000 and 2003–04.
NOTE: Percentages are rounded off.

EXHIBIT A-2
STUDENT ENROLLMENT GROWTH RATES
SMSD, REGION 4, AND STATE AVERAGES
1999–2000 THROUGH 2003–04

ENTITY	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	PERCENT CHANGE
SMSD	2,868	2,874	2,898	2,812	2,838	(1.0%)
Region 4	861,594	879,574	903,257	928,460	947,443	9.9%
State	4,002,227	4,071,433	4,165,101	4,259,864	4,328,028	8.1%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 1999–2000 through 2003–04.

EXHIBIT A-3
STUDENT ENROLLMENT DEMOGRAPHICS
SMSD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 4, AND THE STATE
2003–04

DISTRICT	AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC	ANGLO	ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	NATIVE AMERICAN	ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED
SMSD	29.0%	34.0%	17.0%	20.0%	0.2%	36.0%
Bandera	1.0%	21.0%	77.0%	0.5%	0.6%	40.4%
Decatur	1.7%	25.0%	71.0%	1.1%	0.6%	33.0%
Fredericksburg	0.6%	36.0%	63.0%	0.2%	0.2%	41.4%
Sweeny	19.0%	15.0%	67.0%	0.2%	0.1%	36.1%
Region 4	21.0%	40.0%	33.0%	5.4%	0.2%	51.3 %
State	14.0%	44.0%	39.0%	2.9%	0.3%	52.7%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 2003–2004.
NOTE: Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

EXHIBIT A-4
ATTENDANCE RATE OF SMSD STUDENTS COMPARED TO PEER DISTRICTS,
REGION 4, AND THE STATE
1998–99 AND 2002–03

ENTITY	1998–99	2002–03	PERCENT CHANGE
Fredericksburg	96.6%	96.3%	(0.3%)
Decatur	96.5%	96.5%	0%
SMSD	96.0%	96.1%	0.1%
Bandera	95.8%	95.6%	(0.2%)
Sweeny	95.8%	95.5%	(0.3%)
Region 4	95.1%	95.6%	0.5%
State	95.3%	95.6%	0.3%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) 1998–99 and 2002–03.

EXHIBIT A-5
DROPOUT RATE FOR SMSD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 4, AND THE STATE
1998–99 AND 2002–03

ENTITY	1998–99	2002–03	PERCENT CHANGE
SMSD	1.8%	0.8%	(1.0%)
Bandera	0.8%	0.1%	(0.7%)
Decatur	0.8%	0.2%	(0.6%)
Fredericksburg	0.5%	0.4%	(0.1%)
Sweeny	0.1%	0.3%	0.2%
Region 4	1.8%	1.6%	(0.2%)
State	1.6%	0.9%	(0.7%)

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 1998–99 and 2002–03.

EXHIBIT A-6
SMSD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE BUDGETED CLASSROOM TEACHING
EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL EXPENDITURES
2003–04

ENTITY	CLASSROOM TEACHING EXPENDITURES	TOTAL EXPENDITURES	TOTAL EXPENDITURES PER STUDENT	CLASSROOM TEACHING EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL EXPENDITURES
SMSD	$11,617,277	$18,899,901	$6,659	61.5%
Decatur	$10,674,093	$18,207,949	$6,402	58.6%
Bandera	$8,880,241	$16,001,634	$6,032	55.5%
Sweeny	$7,835,393	$14,179,684	$6,778	55.3%
Fredericksburg	$10,343,055	$19,119,565	$6,732	54.1%
State	$15,587,342,290	$26,831,299,024	$6,199	58.1%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 2003–04.

EXHIBIT A-7
SMSD BUDGETED INSTRUCTIONAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES BY PROGRAM
1999–2000 AND 2003–04

PROGRAM	1999–2000	2003–04	PERCENT CHANGE 1999–2000 – 2003–04
Special education	$858,106	$1,347,333	57.0%
Gifted and talented education	$159,412	$270,623	69.8%
Regular education	$9,737,545	$10,399,060	6.8%
Compensatory education	$759,570	$588,721	(22.5%)
CATE	$399,473	$609,867	52.7%
Bilingual/ESL education	$623,502	$785,728	26.0%
Athletics/related activities	$385,053	$314,500	(18.3%)
Total	$10,964,546	$14,315,832	30.6%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 1999–2000 and 2003–04.

Exhibit A-8 displays the student-teacher ratio in SMSD, the peer districts, Region 4, and the state in 1999–2000 and 2003–04. SMSD's 2003–04 student-teacher ratio is higher than all but one peer district but lower than regional and state averages.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION
Exhibit A-9 displays the SMSD instructional organization for 2003–04.

According to the superintendent, beginning in 2004–05, the district will shift some responsibilities from the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. These changes are included in the discussion of job responsibilities for staff in the Curriculum and Instruction Department, as shown in **Exhibit A-10.**

EXHIBIT A-8
SMSD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 4, AND STATE STUDENT-TEACHER RATIO
1999–2000 AND 2003–04

ENTITY	1999–2000	2003–04
Sweeny	15.1	15.3
Decatur	14.5	13.7
SMSD	**14.6**	**14.3**
Fredericksburg	13.7	13.4
Bandera	13.2	13.3
Region 4	16.2	15.9
State	14.9	14.9

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 1999–2000 and PEIMS 2003–04.

EXHIBIT A-9
SMSD CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
2003–2004

Assistant Superintendent Curriculum and Instruction

Director Federal and State Programs

Principals

Director Instructional Support Services
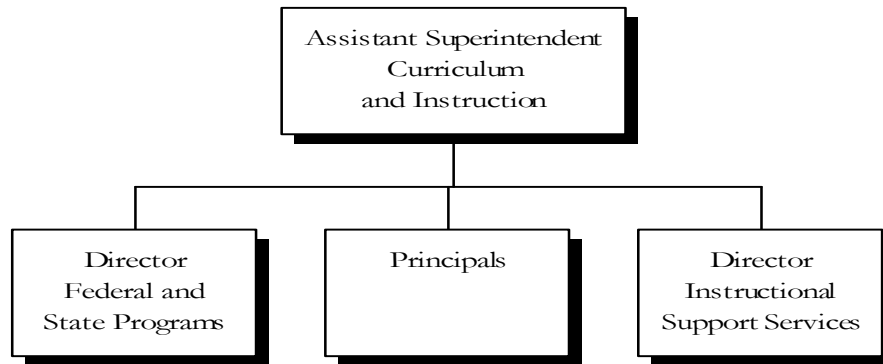
SOURCE: SMSD superintendent.

EXHIBIT A-10
EXAMPLES OF JOB RESPONSIBILITIES OF SMSD CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION DEPARTMENT STAFF
2004-05

POSITION	KEY AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY
Assistant superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction	Supervise principals and directors of federal and state programs and Instructional Support Services.
	Work with principals in the planning and development of campus improvement plans for instructional program improvement and increased student achievement.
	Monitor application of regular education curriculum.
	Serve as Level II hearing officer for parent and student complaints.
Director, Federal and State Programs	Supervise special education, state compensatory education, federal title programs, CATE, and bilingual/ESL programs to ensure effective delivery models for students.
	Work on campuses with teams to improve and develop curriculum based programs and support campus level staff in carrying out the individual educational plan of students.
	Ensure program compliance with state and federal regulations.
	Develop and oversee budgets for all programs.
Director, Instructional Support Services	Supervise instructional technology, alternative education programs, summer school, gifted and talented education, PEIMS, testing, and the education foundation.
	Disaggregate student test data and provide to principals and teachers to use in designing effective programs.

SOURCE: SMSD superintendent.

GUIDANCE, COUNSELING, AND SOCIAL SERVICES

The 1996–2000 Long Range Plan of the State Board of Education for Public School Education includes the State Board of Education's goal to provide all Texas students with equal access to developmental guidance and counseling. The Texas Education Code, Chapter 21.356, requires the commissioner of Education to develop and periodically update a counselor job description in consultation with the state guidance association.

SMSD employs a full staff of certified counselors to serve their campuses. **Exhibit A-11** lists the numbers of counselors and the populations they serve.

The Texas Education Code Section 33.002 requires school districts with 500 or more enrolled elementary students to employ a certified counselor for each 500 students. Counselor-to-student ratios at individual SMSD schools vary from 1 counselor per 253 students at the high school to 1 counselor per 501 students at Stafford Primary School. The overall ratio is 355 students per counselor.

In November 2003 the Harris County Department of Education (HCDE) conducted a review of Stafford MSD Guidance and Counseling Programs. The report contains a number of commendations and recommendations. **Exhibit A-12** presents a status report on SMSD's implementation of each of those recommendations at the time the review team was doing on-site data collection in March and April 2004.

Based on recommendations included in the HCDE report, a new at-risk counselor was hired, a part-time counselor was hired to assist with personal graduation plans at the secondary campuses, and an intern was hired to help alleviate administrative burdens placed on counselors.

BILINGUAL/ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) PROGRAM

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 requires that states report progress annually by poverty, race, disability, and limited English proficiency to ensure that no group of students is overlooked. Title III, Part A of NCLB addresses English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement. Title III,

EXHIBIT A-11
SMSD COUNSELORS BY CAMPUS
2003–04

CAMPUS	ENROLLMENT	COUNSELORS	STUDENTS PER COUNSELOR
Primary School	501	1	1:501
Elementary School	457	1	1:457
Intermediate	449	1	1:449
Middle School	668	2.0	1:334
High School	759	3.0	1:253
SMSD	2,838*	8.0	1:355

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 2003–04 and SMSD Job Descriptions 2003–2004.
*Includes students in juvenile justice alternative education program.

EXHIBIT A-12
SMSD IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF HCDE GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING STUDY
APRIL 2004

RECOMMENDATION	POSITION RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
Create a committee to develop an action plan with elements similar to a district improvement plan, including profiles of success and needs for improvement, specific goals, measurable indicators, resources, timelines, and person (s) accountable.	Assistant superintendent(s), principals, director of Special Programs, director of Instructional Services, community members, and parents	(P) Currently preparing meeting schedules, which will begin June 2004.
Adopt a policy on the appropriate use of counselor time, outline the counselors' role in administering state tests, and assess exactly how counselor time is to be used to ensure students' guidance needs are met.	Assistant superintendent(s), principals, counselors	(P) Monthly guidance counselor meetings are held to discuss roles and responsibilities of counselors. Policy to be written summer 2004.
Develop a district counseling plan to identify, support, and articulate a comprehensive Pre-K–12 developmental guidance and counseling program.	Assistant superintendent(s), principals, counselors	(P) Currently reviewing several Guidance Curriculum Plans. The guidance counselors have made the decision to follow general format of FBISD's guidance curriculum as a guide for SMSD guidance curriculum. To be completed July 2004.
Reflect the following initiatives in the district improvement plan and individual campus improvement plans:	Assistant superintendent, campus administrators	(P) ESC IV will conduct in-district training session on the development of district and campus improvements plans June 2004.
▪ Place emphasis on improving student attendance.	Assistant superintendent, campus administrators	(C) Completed 2003–2004 District and Campus Improvement Plans
▪ Encourage more students to participate in advanced courses.	Assistant superintendent, campus administrators	(C) As evidenced in 2003–2004 District and Campus Improvement Plans and number of students participating in Pre-AP and AP courses and exams. (P) In addition, number of students enrolled in dual credit courses at high school level as of July 2004.
▪ Advise students and their parents about the importance of higher education and the coursework designed to prepare students for higher education.	Campus administrators and counselors	(C) As evidenced in development and implementation of Personal Graduation Plans, as well as Parent/Student Conferences conducted to advise in the area of Personal Graduation Plans aligned with Career Interest Inventory results. Completed April 2004.
▪ Inform students and parents regarding financial aid availability.	Counselors	(C) Several Financial Aid Parent/Student workshops hosted at Stafford High School in 2003–04.
Develop an annual, systemic staff development program for counselors.	Assistant superintendent(s), counselors	(P) Currently preparing staff development sessions for 2004–05.
Develop a comprehensive induction and orientation process, including a full-year mentoring component for counselors new to the profession.	Assistant superintendent	(P) July 2004
Select one counselor to serve as counselor-coordinator for the district.	Assistant superintendent(s), counselors	(P) The selection of an SMSD counselor-coordinator has been discussed and a decision will be made by July 1, 2004 to begin August 2004.
Design and implement for a systemic process appropriate training in the technology programs and software appropriate for guidance and counseling.	Assistant superintendent(s), counselors, Instructional Technology director, Network administrator	(D) To be completed by October 2004.
Adopt a six-year planning process.	Assistant superintendent(s), counselors	(C) Six-year plan has been completed.
Track graduates as they enter and proceed through college and/or the work place.	Counselors	(D) Will begin development of a tracking system August 2004.
Revise current job descriptions for counselors.	Assistant superintendent(s), Personnel director	(P) To be completed by August 2004.
Assign completion of the master schedule to the building administration with input from the counselor.	Assistant superintendent, principals, counselors	(P) Master schedule will be completed Friday, May 7, 2004, to be presented Monday, May 10, 2004.
Have representative counselors, on a rotating basis, attend the regional and state counseling conferences.	Assistant superintendent, principals, counselors	(C) As evidenced by counselor's attendance at this years Texas Counselor's Association Conference.

SOURCE: SMSD superintendent, 2004.
STATUS CODES: (C) Completed (D) Delayed (R) Rejected (P) In process.

Part A states that the purpose of the NCLB Act is to help ensure that (1) children who are limited English proficient, including immigrant children and youth, attain English proficiency, develop high levels of academic attainment in English, and meet the same challenging state academic content and student academic achievement standards as all children are expected to meet; (2) these children achieve at high levels in the core academic subjects; (3) that districts develop high-quality language instruction educational programs; and (4) to promote parental and community participation in language instruction educational programs for the parents and communities of limited English proficient children.

SMSD received $33,230 under Title III, Part A. SMSD's proposed program for these funds included a consultant to review the existing program and provide program recommendations; payment for substitutes for teachers to visit other programs and develop activities for SMSD's program; instructional supplies and materials; and professional development activities.

The number of SMSD students enrolled in the bilingual/ESL program in 2003–04 totaled 317. One hundred seventeen students were in the bilingual program and 200 students in ESL **(Exhibit A-13)**. All SMSD teachers in the bilingual/ESL program

possess appropriate certification. SMSD employed eight teachers for the bilingual program and nine teachers for ESL. In addition to the bilingual/ESL teachers, SMSD employs three bilingual/ESL aides at the primary school, and one each at the elementary and intermediate schools.

SMSD bilingual/ESL expenditures as a percentage of total budgeted instructional operating expenditures are higher than all peer districts and the state average. SMSD spends more per student for bilingual/ESL education than all its peer districts, and less per student than the state average **(Exhibit A-14)**.

Each student enrolling in SMSD completes a home language survey during registration. The district assesses any student, pre-kindergarten through grade 12, whose home language is not English with the IDEA Oral Language Proficiency Test (IPT). SMSD also gives students in grades 2 through 12 a reading and writing proficiency test.

The Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) determines student placement, monitors progress, and oversees program exit. At the primary and elementary schools, LPAC committee members include the campus administrator, counselor, bilingual teachers, ESL teachers, and a parent of an ESL student who is not a district employee. The secondary committees include a campus

EXHIBIT A-13
SMSD BILINGUAL/ESL STUDENTS AND TEACHERS BY GRADE LEVEL
2003–04

	BILINGUAL		ESL	
GRADE LEVELS	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	NUMBER OF TEACHERS	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	NUMBER OF TEACHERS
Primary/ (Pre-K–grade 1)	62	5	99	2
Elementary school (grades 2–3)	34	2	32	3
Intermediate school (grades 4–5)	21	1	15	1
Middle school (grades 6–8)	0	0	23	2
High School (grades 9–12)	0	0	31	1
Total	**117**	**8**	**200**	**9**

SOURCE: SMSD PEIMS specialist, fall 2003–04 submission, and SMSD director of Personnel.

EXHIBIT A-14
SMSD, PEER DISTRICT, AND STATE BILINGUAL/ESL BUDGETED
EDUCATION EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL
BUDGETED INSTRUCTIONAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES
2003–04

	BUDGETED TOTAL INSTRUCTIONAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	BUDGETED BILINGUAL/ESL EXPENDITURES	BILINGUAL/ESL AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL INSTRUCTIONAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED	NUMBER OF BILINGUAL/ESL STUDENTS	BILINGUAL/ ESL AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ENROLLMENT	BUDGETED BILINGUAL/ESL EXPENDITURES PER STUDENT
SMSD	$14,315,832	$785,728	5.5%	2,838	317	11.2%	$2,479
Sweeny	$10,394,614	$10,189	0.1%	2,098	51	2.4%	$200
Bandera	$11,925,112	$143,327	1.2%	2,655	65	2.4%	$2,205
Fredericksburg	$13,808,933	$131,732	1.0%	2,848	217	7.6%	$607
Decatur	$14,004,715	$271,611	1.9%	2,846	324	11.4%	$838
State	**$20,388,433,853**	**$892,823,704**	**4.4%**	**4,311,502**	**338,532**	**7.9%**	**$2,637**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 2003–04.

administrator, one or more counselors, one or two ESL teachers, and a parent of an ESL student who is not a district employee.

CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

The Texas State Plan for Career and Technology Education (CATE) 2003–05 outlines guidelines to assist school districts in their effort to offer effective career and technology education programs that prepare students for further education and eventual employment in a technology-intensive world. The plan includes two goals that each public school student shall master the basic skills and knowledge necessary for: (1) managing the dual roles of family member and wage earner; (2) gaining entry-level employment in a high-skill, high-wage job or continuing the student's education at the postsecondary level.

The Texas Administrative Code (TAC) chapter 74, subchapter A requires school districts to offer career and technology education courses selected from at least three of the eight career and technology areas: (1) agricultural science and technology, (2) business education, (3) career orientation, (4) health science technology, (5) family and consumer sciences education/home economics education, (6) technology education/industrial technology, (7) marketing, and (8) trade and industrial education.

The Course Selection Guide for Stafford High School lists 47 different CATE course offerings. The total number of students enrolled in CATE courses includes students who are counted more than once if they are enrolled in more than one CATE course. Students enrolled in 32 of the 47 courses offered in 2003–04 **(Exhibit A-15)**.

Exhibit A-16 displays SMSD enrollment and expenditures in CATE programs over the past five years.

For 2003–04, the percentage of SMSD students enrolled in one or more CATE classes was the second highest among the peer districts, and it exceeded the state average **(Exhibit A-17)**. SMSD expended less per student for the CATE program than the state average and less than three of the four peer districts. SMSD's CATE expenditures as a percentage of total instructional operating expenditures are lower than three of the four peer districts but higher than the state average.

STATE COMPENSATORY EDUCATION/FEDERAL TITLE PROGRAMS

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.

The U.S. Department of Education reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Act of 2002, called the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which challenges all public schools "to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and state academic assessments."

The criteria for identifying students at risk of dropping out of school can include local criteria approved by the local board of trustees. The number of students served using local criteria is limited. TEA's January 2002 Financial Accountability System Resource Guide State Compensatory Education module lists the current criteria for identifying students at risk of dropping out of school as each student who is under 21 years of age and who:

- Is in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, or grades 1, 2, or 3 and did not perform satisfactorily on a readiness test of 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 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 11 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;

EXHIBIT A-15
SMSD CATE ENROLLMENT BY COURSE
2003–04

COURSE	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	AFRICAN-AMERICAN	ASIAN	ANGLO	HISPANIC
Family and Consumer Science					
Child Development	49	19	6	11	13
Family Consumer Science Career Preparation	17	1	2	4	10
Food Science Technology	45	14	4	7	20
Housing	12	2	4	2	4
Interior Design	23	8	6	3	6
Nutrition and Food Science	45	14	4	7	20
Personal and Family Development	45	17	4	2	22
Preparation for Parenting	43	12	8	9	14
Total Family and Consumer	**279**	**87**	**38**	**45**	**109**
Agricultural Science					
Ag Metal Fabrication	19	5	0	6	8
Ag Power 323	15	3	1	9	2
Ag Structures 321	18	2	0	6	10
Applied Ag Science 102	16	0	1	10	5
Intro Ag Mechanics	19	6	1	7	5
Into Horticulture Science	8*	2	0	5	1
Horticulture Plan Production	8*	0	0	7	1
Wildlife and Recreation	19	5	0	6	8
Total Agricultural Science	**122**	**23**	**3**	**56**	**40**
Business and Marketing					
Accounting 1	15	3	6	4	2
Business Computer Information Systems 1 (BCIS I)	115	26	27	25	37
BCIS II	61	27	18	6	10
Business Management	25	10	6	5	3
Business Career Preparation	12	3	5	2	2
Internetworking 1&2	14	3	6	3	3
International Marketing	21	4	5	7	5
Introduction to Business	17	2	3	1	11
Keyboarding Dual Credit	13	4	3	3	3
Keyboarding	204	48	40	40	76
Marketing Career Preparation	15	1	5	5	4
Recordkeeping	18	4	2	3	9
Sports and Entertainment Mkt.	12	8	1	2	1
Total Business and Marketing	**542**	**143**	**127**	**106**	**166**
Trade and Industrial					
Automotive Technology 1	44	9	9	7	19
Automotive Technology 2	11	2	1	2	6
Fire Science Technology	15	0	2	6	7
Total Trade and Industrial	**70**	**11**	**12**	**15**	**32**
Grand Total	**1,013**	**264**	**180**	**222**	**347**

SOURCE: SMSD CATE department chair.
* A minimum of 10 students must select a course for SMSD to include the course in the master schedule of classes at the high school. Mobility of students after the start of the school year causes enrollment to fall below that minimum, as in the case of the two horticulture classes.

EXHIBIT A-16
SMSD CATE EXPENDITURES
1999–2000 THROUGH 2003–04

CATEGORY	1999–2000 ACTUAL	2000-01 ACTUAL	2001-02 ACTUAL	2002-03 ACTUAL	2003–04 BUDGETED
CATE expenditures	$481,543	$543,812	$461,381	$499,815	$609,867
CATE enrollment	679	605	644	629	787
CATE expenditures per student	$709	$899	$716	$795	$775

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 1999–2000 to 2002-03 and PEIMS 2003–04.

- 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 the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvement Act of 2001 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.

The number of students classified either as economically disadvantaged or eligible for receiving free-or-reduced price meals in SMSD is 1,023, or about 36 percent districtwide. Of the $583,498 in 2003–04 state compensatory funds, SMSD budgeted $581,343, or 99.6 percent, for use at the schools **(Exhibit A-18)**. The discipline alternative education program (DAEP) received SCE funds but has no long-term enrollment of students; therefore, no enrollment information or expenditures per student are included in **Exhibit A-18**.

Districts receive Federal Title funds through noncompetitive grants under the NCLB Act. **Exhibit A-19** lists the Federal Title grants and the amounts that SMSD received for 2003–04.

SMSD uses Title I funds to employ a parent-school liaison who makes home visits to check on student

EXHIBIT A-17
SMSD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE CATE BUDGETED EDUCATION EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL BUDGETED INSTRUCTIONAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES 2003–04

	TOTAL BUDGETED INSTRUCTIONAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	BUDGETED CATE EXPENDITURES	CATE EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL INSTRUCTIONAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED	NUMBER OF CATE STUDENTS	CATE AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ENROLLMENT	BUDGETED CATE EXPENDITURES PER STUDENT
Sweeny	$10,394,614	$682,075	6.6%	2,092	635	30.3%	$1,074
Fredericksburg	$13,808,933	$757,599	5.5%	2,840	747	26.2%	$1,014
Bandera	$11,925,112	$551,682	4.6%	2,653	657	24.7%	$840
SMSD	$14,315,832	$609,867	4.3%	2,838	787	27.7%	$775
Decatur	$14,004,715	$526,600	3.8%	2,844	778	27.3%	$677
State	$20,388,433,853	$795,428,157	3.9%	4,311,502	867,300	20.1%	$917

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 2003–04.

EXHIBIT A-18
NUMBER OF STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE OR REDUCED PRICE MEALS, NUMBER OF AT-RISK STUDENTS, AND COMPENSATORY FUNDING AT SMSD CAMPUSES 2003–04

CAMPUS	NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE FREE- OR REDUCED- LUNCH STUDENTS	NUMBER OF STUDENTS IDENTIFIED AS BEING AT-RISK OF NOT GRADUATING ON TIME	BUDGETED COMPENSATORY FUNDING	COMPENSATORY EXPENDITURES PER ELIGIBLE STUDENT	TOTAL BUDGETED INSTRUCTIONAL FUNDING	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	TOTAL BUDGETED INSTRUCTIONAL EXPENDITURES PER STUDENT
Primary School	253	226	$52,950	$234	$1,818,960	501	$3,631
Elementary School	158	239	$66,880	$280	$1,420,925	457	$3,109
Intermediate School	151	109	$75,615	$694	$1,756,605	449	$3,912
Middle School	231	226	$93,745	$415	$2,494,425	668	$3,734
High School	229	304	$203,865	$671	$3,779,388	759	$4,979
DAEP *	N/A	N/A	$88,288	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Not allocated to a campus			$2,155				

SOURCE: SMSD PEIMS specialist and SMSD business manager.
NOTE: Students assigned to the DAEP are still tracked by their home school; however, some compensatory education funds are allocated for support of staff and programs that serve the students at the DAEP.

EXHIBIT A-19
SMSD FEDERAL TITLE GRANTS AND AMOUNTS
2003–04

TITLE	AMOUNT
Title I, Part A–Academically At-Risk (Reading and Math)	$261,858
Title II, Part A–Teacher and Principal Training (English Language Arts, Reading, Science, Social Studies)	$92,901
Title II, Part D–Technology in the Classroom	$7,638
Title III–Bilingual/ESL	$33,230
Title IV, Part A–Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities	$10,671
Total V, Part A–Innovative programs	$11,440

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Notice of Grant Award, 2003–04.

attendance, holds literacy groups for parents to teach them how to read, provides parenting classes for parents on how to help their children, and administers a take home computer program for students in grade 1 through 8. The district allocates 45 computers for this program. The parent-school liaison ranks the students by achievement and provides the computers to the students who are achieving at the lowest level. The computers contain a reading and a mathematics program with a system that records the performance of the student. The students keep the computers for three to four weeks. Upon the return of the computers, the liaison checks and records the performance of each student, provides the information to the teachers, and then checks the computers out to another group.

According to TEC 29.081, school districts are required to use student performance data to design and implement appropriate compensatory, intensive, or accelerated instructional services that 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. **Exhibit A-20** lists the compensatory programs provided by SMSD at each campus.

Districts are required to have written policies and procedures addressing specific aspects of the SCE program, and the program must be described in the district improvement plan if it is implemented districtwide, and in the campus improvement plans 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.

GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION PROGRAM

TEA issues guidelines for the identification of gifted and talented students in an effort to ensure that all of these students receive a quality education. The

process must include quantitative as well as qualitative evaluation tools and instruments. Funding for the identification of gifted and talented students and programs is available through the Texas Foundation School Program. Gifted and talented (G/T) programs should provide more challenging curriculum for qualified students from various cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

SMSD's G/T program, called PEAK (Promoting the Enrichment and Advancement of Knowledge) clusters identified G/T students in primary through intermediate school with G/T certified teachers within a mixed student population during the major portion of the day. Additionally, identified G/T students meet as a group to work with a G/T teacher on advanced-level skills and projects weekly.

Instructional staff with G/T certification totals seven at the primary school, six at the elementary school, and 10 at the intermediate school.

The middle school clusters identified students in pre-advanced placement (Pre-AP) courses in reading, language arts, science, Texas history, and United States history. Some students qualify for algebra in grade 7 and geometry in grade 8; others qualify for algebra in grade 8. Middle school G/T students also attend a 30 minute daily enrichment class where G/T certified teachers rotate through the class and provide instruction in several areas such as student heritage, mythology, art history, careers, budgeting, scientific method, interpretation of mathematical data, and learning styles. Thirty-six teachers at the middle school possess G/T certification.

At the high school, SMSD clusters identified G/T students with advanced level students. SMSD counsels G/T students to enroll in Pre-AP and advanced placement (AP) courses in the four core areas and in visual arts. Seventeen teachers at the high school have completed requirements for GT certification. **Exhibit A-21** lists the Pre-AP and AP courses offered.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires all public school districts that receive federal funds to provide a free and

EXHIBIT A-20
SMSD COMPENSATORY PROGRAMS
2003–04

SCHOOL	COMPENSATORY EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
Primary/Elementary School	Reading Recovery for first grade students.
	Literacy groups for students in grades K–3 whose level on the Texas Primary Reading Inventory is "Still Developing" or whose reading level is more than one year below grade level.
	Compass software program – computer assisted instruction in a lab.
	Tutorials during school hours.
	Counselor from Fort Bend Council sees at-risk students once per week.
Intermediate School	Tutorials during school hours.
	Reading and/or math clubs after school.
	Tutorials on Saturday mornings.
	Individual or group counseling.
	Reinforcement of math or reading skills through the Compass computer lab.
	Counselor from Fort Bend Council sees at-risk students once per week.
Middle School	Academic Instruction Services lab and in an additional computer lab students receive extra help in class work. The software is prescriptive and meets each student's academic needs. Teachers schedule students in the lab at least once weekly.
	Summer school.
	Counselor from Fort Bend Council sees at-risk students once per week.
High School	Hired districtwide at-risk counselor subsequent to Harris County Department of Education review of counseling program.
	Individual student counseling provided by Texana Mental Health Services.
	Pregnancy related services program to provide counseling and necessary services for students.
	Summer school course offerings include credit recovery program.
	Counselor from Fort Bend Council sees at-risk students once per week.
	TAKS enrichment period included in high school schedule.
	Training provided for administrative on identification of students in at-risk situations.
	Articulation agreement with Houston Community College System to offer dual credit course program to high school students beginning 2004-05.
	Comprehensive assessment to better identify students' academic strengths and weaknesses (ITBS, CogAT, Career Interest Inventory).
	Preliminary SAT preparation course to assist students in at-risk situations to be adequately prepared for the SAT.
	Provide transportation for after-school tutorials.

SOURCE: SMSD principals and assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.

EXHIBIT A-21
SMSD HIGH SCHOOL PRE-AP AND AP COURSES
2003–04

GRADE	PRE-AP COURSES OFFERED	AP COURSES OFFERED
Grade 9	Pre-AP English I Pre-AP Algebra I Pre-AP Geometry Pre-AP Biology I Pre-AP World Geography	
Grades 10-12	Pre-AP Geometry Pre-AP Algebra II Pre-AP Calculus Pre-AP English II Pre-AP World History Pre-AP United States History Pre-AP Biology I Pre-AP Chemistry I Pre-AP Physics I Pre-AP Spanish III	AP Art AP Art History AP Biology II AP Calculus AB and BC AP Chemistry AP Computer Science II AP Economics AP English III and IV AP Government AP Spanish IV and V AP Statistics

SOURCE: SMSD High School Course Selection Guide.

appropriate education for all children with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities, in the least restrictive environment. The act also requires that students with disabilities be included in state and district assessment programs. Districts must develop an individual educational plan (IEP) for each child receiving special education services. The plan must include input from regular education teachers and must provide special education students with the greatest possible access to the regular curriculum and regular education classes.

In 2003–04, SMSD's special education staff included a director of Special Education, an administrative assistant to the director, 17 teachers, three

diagnosticians, two speech/language pathologists, three speech assistants, a licensed social service professional (LSSP), and 10 aides. In 2004–05, the director of Federal and State Programs will administer the program.

In October 2003, SMSD had 271 students in special education across all its campuses. **Exhibit A-22** shows the number of students enrolled in each special education disability category and the percentage of the total special education enrollment for 2003–04.

For 2003–04, SMSD special education enrollment was 9.5 percent of total enrollment. This percentage was lower than all of its peer districts and the state average. SMSD's special education expenditures as a percentage of budgeted total instructional expenditures were less than all of the peer districts and the state average. SMSD special education per student expenditures were lower than two of the four peer districts and lower than the state average **(Exhibit A-23)**.

SMSD provides an educational program to special education students through a variety of instructional settings: mainstream, resource, vocational adjustment class, life skills classes, self-contained classes, behavior improvement classes, adaptive PE, homebound, and early childhood **(Exhibit A-24)**.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The Texas Education Code prescribes certain criteria for staff development in a Texas school district (Subchapter J. Staff Development, Section 21.451). The key requirements are that staff development include the following:

- Must be conducted in accordance with standards developed by the district;

- Must be designed to improve education in the district;

- Must be predominantly campus-based, related to achieving performance objectives, and be developed and approved by the campus site-based decision-making committee;

- May include training in technology, conflict resolution strategies, discipline strategies, and training that relates to instruction of students with disabilities; and

EXHIBIT A-22
SMSD SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS BY DISABILITY CATEGORY
2003–04

DISABILITY CATEGORY	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE OF SMSD SPECIAL EDUCATION ENROLLMENT
Orthopedic Impaired, Traumatic Brain Injury, and Non-categorical Early Childhood	6	2.2%
Other Health Impaired	34	12.5%
Hearing Impaired	0	0%
Visually Impaired	0	0%
Mentally Retarded	15	5.5%
Emotionally Disturbed	14	5.2%
Learning Disabled	120	44.3%
Speech	73	26.9%
Autism	9	3.3%

SOURCE: SMSD PEIMS specialist.

EXHIBIT A-23
SMSD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE SPECIAL EDUCATION
BUDGETED EDUCATION EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENTAGE OF
TOTAL BUDGETED INSTRUCTIONAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES
2003–04

ENTITY	TOTAL BUDGETED INSTRUCTIONAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	BUDGETED SPECIAL EDUCATION EXPENDITURES	SPECIAL EDUCATION EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL INSTRUCTIONAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED	NUMBER OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS	SPECIAL EDUCATION AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL STUDENTS	SPECIAL EDUCATION EXPENDITURES PER STUDENT
Decatur	$14,004,715	$1,915,623	13.7%	2,846	309	10.9%	$6,199
Fredericksburg	$13,808,933	$1,750,790	12.7%	2,848	311	10.9%	$5,630
SMSD	$14,315,832	$1,347,333	9.4%	2,838	271	9.5%	$4,972
Bandera	$11,925,112	$1,966,401	16.5%	2,655	406	15.3%	$4,843
Sweeny	$10,394,614	$1,152,889	11.1%	2,098	247	11.8%	$4,668
State	$20,388,433,853	$2,983,294,082	14.6%	4,311,502	499,587	11.6%	$5,972

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 2003–04.

EXHIBIT A-24
SMSD SPECIAL EDUCATION INSTRUCTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS
AND CAMPUS LOCATION
2003–04

INSTRUCTIONAL ARRANGEMENT	DESCRIPTION	CAMPUS
Mainstream	Students are served in regular classes with modifications and adaptations to meet individual needs. Always the first choice if possible.	All
Resource	Class for students who are removed from the general education program for intensive assistance with areas where students are identified as working significantly below their grade level; they continue to be served in mainstream for all areas where they are working near their grade level and/or where modifications can meet individual needs.	All
Vocational Adjustment Class	A high school program where students work in the community with a Career and Technology Educator, checking on progress and working cooperatively with the employer to teach the skills that are needed for student success in the work world.	High School
Life Skills Classes	Classes for students needing skills to succeed as much as possible within the community as adults; perhaps in a sheltered environment such as a group home.	All
Self-Contained Classes	Class for students who, per an evaluation, are not able to function in the mainstream environment and need the structure of one classroom for the entire instructional day.	All
Behavior Improvement Classes	Class for students who are not able to function in the mainstream environment due to behavior issues and need the structure of one classroom for the entire instructional day.	Middle school with plans for high school for 2004-05
Adaptive PE	Classes for students who cannot endure the stress of the general education physical education program and must have the program adapted to meet their specific needs.	All
Homebound	Students are not able to attend school due to health issues and are served in the home by an itinerant teacher.	All
Early Childhood	Students are identified as needing educational services from birth to age 4 and are served in an educational setting per developed IEPs.	Primary

SOURCE: SMSD director of Federal and State Programs.

- May include instruction as to what is permissible under law.

Campus staff development may include activities that enable the campus staff to plan together to enhance existing skills, share effective strategies, reflect on curricular and instructional issues, analyze student achievement results, reflect on means of increasing student achievement, study research, practice new methods, identify students' strengths and needs, develop meaningful programs for students, appropriately implement site-based decision-making, and conduct action research.

In 2003–04, SMSD staff development included one district planned day at the beginning of the year, one district day that staff did not report to work if they previously attended principal approved training on non-work days, and six campus planned staff development days. Staff members attend training during the summer and on weekends at their own expense to be eligible to not report to work on the designated staff development day.

HEALTH SERVICES
SMSD's Health Services program provides services designed to support the medical needs of its students. SMSD's Health Services comprehensive procedures manual includes job descriptions for registered nurses and licensed vocational nurses, and detailed procedures for providing health related services.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION
There are generally three types of alternative programs: academic alternative education program (AEP); disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP); and juvenile justice alternative education programs (JJAEPs) for students who have been adjudicated. AEPs typically deal strictly with a population of students that need an alternative academic setting to be successful, such as a program for pregnant teens.

The district's DAEP is called the Stafford Alternative Campus (SAC). SMSD operates SAC in a strip shopping center. SAC serves students in grades 6 through 12. The DAEP generally deals with disciplinary problems and students that are restricted to an alternative education setting due to violations of the student code of conduct, such as fighting, bringing a weapon to school, or missing class. The number of students in the DAEP varies at any time.

SMSD provides a JJAEP in conjunction with the Fort Bend County Commissioners Court, Juvenile Board, Juvenile Probation Department, and other school districts in Fort Bend County. This program is called the Fort Bend County Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program. In 2003–04, four students were assigned to the JJAEP.

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY
To achieve its technology-related goals, a school district must have an organizational structure that

creates an environment for using and supporting new technologies. A school district is properly organized if it uses and supports existing and new technologies in its curriculum, learning activities, scholarship, research, and district management. The Texas Education Code, Section 11.252, 3 (D), requires each school district's improvement plan to include provisions for integrating technology into instructional and administrative programs.

SMSD has distributed its computers in the following manner:

- All classrooms have one teacher computer, two student computers, a 32" bracketed television, and a printer.

- All computer labs are equipped with 25 computers and printers.

- The primary and elementary campus has two computer labs; the intermediate campus has two computer labs; the middle school campus has four computer labs; and the high school campus has five computer labs.

- The 13 computer labs have been designated with the following purposes and staffing: 6 labs with a certified teacher in each lab are used to teach middle school students and high school Technology Applications and Career and Technology courses; four labs with two lab managers are used to teach students Compass and Sleek reading and math tutorial software at the elementary and middle school campuses; and four labs with no staffing are used to teach students Internet research and technology applications skills at the elementary and middle school campuses.

- The library computer deployment varies by campus from 9 to 15 computers.

- Each campus has a distance learning/video conferencing lab.

- There are two Computers on Wheels (COW) carts with a total of 31 laptops.

Exhibit A-25 compares the student-to-computer ratio staffing of SMSD with that of peer districts. SMSD's student-to-computer ratio for 2003–04 ranked second lowest among the five districts.

EXHIBIT A-25
STUDENT-TO-COMPUTER RATIO SMSD AND PEER DISTRICTS
2003–04

	SMSD	BANDERA	DECATUR	SWEENY	FREDERICKSBURG
Enrollment	2,838	2,653	2,844	2,092	2,840
Number of student computers	1,050	1,450	950	670	650
Student-to-computer ratio	2.7:1	1.8:1	3.0:1	3.1:1	4.4:1

SOURCE: WCL telephone survey of peer districts, Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 2003–04, and SMSD interview notes.

CHAPTER 2
DISTRICT MANAGEMENT

SMSD's mission statement reflects the close relationship of the district with the City of Stafford and Stafford business: "The formation of the Stafford Municipal School District, the partnership with the City of Stafford, and the involvement of businesses reinforce the feeling in Stafford, Texas, Where Children Are Important!"

A board of trustees, which sets policies and oversees the management of the schools, governs each Texas school district. Each board derives its legal status from the Texas Constitution and the Texas Legislature. The board must function in accordance with applicable state and federal statutes, controlling court decisions and applicable regulations pursuant to state and federal law. Under Section 11.151 of the Texas Education Code (TEC), each board has specific statutory powers and duties, including the following:

- Govern and oversee the management of the public schools in the district;

- Adopt such rules, regulations, and bylaws as the board may deem proper;

- Approve a district-developed plan for site-based decision-making and provide for its implementation;

- Levy and collect taxes and issue bonds;

- Select tax officials, as appropriate to the district's need;

- Prepare, adopt, and file a budget for the succeeding fiscal year and file a report of disbursements and receipts for the preceding fiscal year;

- Have district fiscal accounts audited at district expense by a Texas certified public accountant holding a permit from the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy following the close of each fiscal year;

- Publish an annual report describing the district's educational performance, including campus performance objectives and the progress of each campus toward meeting those objectives;

- Receive bequests and donations or other money coming legally into the district;

- Select a depository for district funds;

- Order elections, canvass the returns, declare results, and issue certificates of election as required by law;

- Dispose of property no longer necessary for the operation of the school district;

- Acquire and hold real and personal property in the name of the district; and

- Hold all powers and duties not specifically delegated by statute to the Texas Education Agency or the State Board of Education.

The SMSD board consists of seven members, all of whom are elected at large. All positions serve three-year terms **(Exhibit A-26)**.

Elections are held each year in May. Candidates for board elections are provided training through workshops conducted by the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB), which are held at all regional education service centers throughout the state. The sessions last approximately two hours.

The board meets the third Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the administration building. Each year following installation of newly elected board members, the board elects officers.

SMSD uses the policy service provided by TASB to update local and legal policies and provide online maintenance of the policies. The district also uses TASB for legal assistance, legislative summary information, human resources support, and purchasing cooperative.

Walsh, Anderson, Brown, Schulze, and Aldridge, P.C. and Bracewell & Patterson, L.L.P. provide legal

EXHIBIT A-26
SMSD BOARD MEMBERS
JUNE 2004

BOARD MEMBER	BOARD POSITION	TERM EXPIRES	OCCUPATION
Azalia Tennis	President	2007	Transportation sales director
Greg Holsapple	Vice president	2006	Systems administrator
Michael Cropper	Secretary	2006	Attorney
Mike Guerra	Assistant secretary	2005	Sales
Hector Acevado	Trustee	2007	Water district administrator
Claudia Vasquez	Trustee	2006	Financial advisor
Ettienne Zak	Trustee	2005	Sales/marketing

SOURCE: SMSD secretary to the superintendent and results of the May 15, 2004 elections.

services to SMSD regarding employee issues, pending legislation, correspondence, contracts, and student issues such as special education requirements.

The district also contracts with Linebarger, Goggan, Blair, Pena & Sampson, L.L.P. for delinquent tax services. The firm collects the full amount of property tax owed to the district and then charges the delinquent taxpayer directly for the cost of collection. As a result, the district receives its full tax payment and does not have to compensate the law firm.

SMSD also contracted with Perdue, Brandon, Fielder, Collins & Mott, L.L.P. to evaluate the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts' property value study. Compensation is 10 percent of the reduction in the amount the district must pay to the state. Vinson & Elkins, the district's bond counsel, provided arbitrage calculation services on a one-time basis in 2003–04.

HISTORY OF SMSD

Prior to creating their own municipal school district, residents of the City of Stafford (City) were located in either Ft. Bend ISD (FBISD) or Houston ISD (HISD). In spring 1976 FBISD, where most City of Stafford children attended school, announced the elimination of bus transportation to and from school for the large majority of these students.

In July 1976, the Stafford City Council announced it would study the viability of a municipal school district, which would include the areas of FBISD and HISD that were within the City's boundaries.

After months of study, a committee of citizens and educational experts announced the proposal as feasible. A petition was presented to City Council to call an election. Following an unsuccessful FBISD challenge to the election, voters in the City overwhelmingly voted to create the new district on January 15, 1977. The commissioner of Education gave SMSD his approval.

A seven-member school board was appointed by City Council, and elections to levy property taxes and build the school were called for August 1977. Both elections passed by substantial margins.

FBISD challenged the creation of the district in federal court in Houston. The federal district judge enjoined the new district and its board from proceeding, pending trial. After a trial in early 1978, the judge issued an opinion prohibiting the further pursuit of the SMSD. The City appealed to the Fifth Circuit Court in New Orleans. The Fifth Circuit Court's opinion sent the case back to the Houston federal judge for another hearing.

The Houston federal judge again prohibited the creation and operation of the SMSD. Again, the City appealed to the Fifth Circuit Court in New Orleans.

In early 1981, a new panel of appellate judges heard the legal arguments. On July 30, 1981, the Fifth Circuit Court issued an opinion that not only ruled SMSD had the right to exist, but instructed the Houston federal judge to dissolve his prohibiting orders and allow its creation.

The City bought an old homebuilder's warehouse and converted it into an elementary school. The City also acquired a 100-acre tract on Staffordshire Road for a municipal school/complex for the permanent school buildings, which is where the SMSD administration and schools are currently located.

The first day of school in SMSD was August 28, 1982, and school opened with 547 students in kindergarten through grade 5. Grades 6 through 11 were added in 1983, and seniors in 1984.

GOVERNANCE

As the only municipal school district in the state, SMSD has a governance structure that is unique among Texas school districts. Section 11.303 of the Texas Education Code provides that a municipal school district may operate "under state law generally applicable to school districts that does not conflict with that chapter." The key distinctions in the operation of a municipal school district that are contained in Section 11.303 are as follows:

- The governing body of the municipality may participate in annual hearings or work sessions held by the board of trustees of the municipal school district on the budget and ad valorem tax rate for the coming year.

- The board of trustees of a municipal school district and the governing body of the municipality shall jointly hold any hearing required by law as a condition for the adoption of an annual budget and imposition of an ad valorem tax.

- Neither an annual budget for a municipal school district nor an ad valorem tax to be imposed for the district may be adopted without the affirmative vote of:

    (1) a majority of the members of the board of trustees of the municipal school district present and voting; and

    (2) at least three-quarters of the total of the voting members of the board of trustees and the governing body of the municipality that are present and voting.

- If a quorum of the members of the governing body of the municipality is not present at a meeting required as a condition for the adoption of an annual budget and imposition of an ad valorem tax, the board of trustees may adopt a budget or an ad valorem tax rate.

- The governing body of the municipality shall adopt an ordinance providing for the levy and assessment of the ad valorem tax.

- After adopting an ordinance levying a tax for the municipal school district, the governing body of the municipality shall provide a certified copy of the ordinance to the district's board of trustees.

The governing body of the City is the City Council. The adoption of a home rule charter by the citizens of Stafford on May 15, 2004 increased the size of the City Council to six council members and included the mayor as voting member of the governing body.

ORGANIZATION, MANAGEMENT, AND STAFFING

As specified in Section 11.201 of the TEC, the superintendent is the chief executive officer of the district and is responsible for the following:

- 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 personnel other than the superintendent, as provided by Section 11.163 of the TEC;

- 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 TEC;

- Preparing recommendations for policies to be adopted by the board and overseeing the implementation of adopted policies;

- Developing or causing to be developed appropriate administrative regulations to implement policies established by the board;

- Providing leadership for the attainment of student performance in the district based on indicators adopted under Section 39.051 of the TEC and other indicators adopted by the State Board of Education or the district's board;

- Organizing the district's central administration; and

- Performing any other duties assigned by the board.

Exhibit A-27 presents the district's organization at the time of the management and performance review.

EXHIBIT A-27
SMSD ORGANIZATION 2003–04
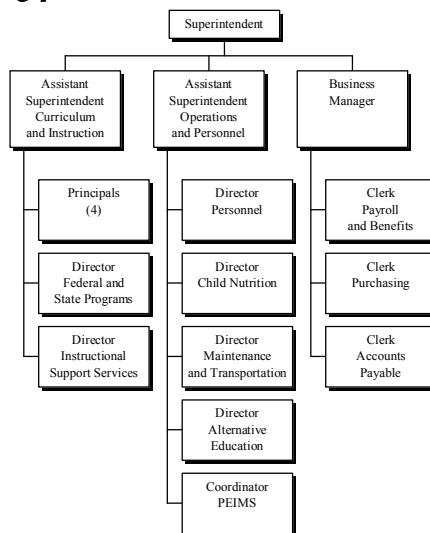
SOURCE: SMSD superintendent.
NOTE: Director of Maintenance was given responsibility for Transportation when director of Transportation left.

Exhibit A-28 presents the key responsibilities of the two assistant superintendents and the business manager.

The positions of director of Instructional Support Services and director of Federal and State Programs were created toward the end of the data-gathering portion of the management and performance review. Also, the superintendent indicated during an interview with the review team that responsibility for the alternative education program and PEIMS would be moved from the assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel to the director of Instructional Support Services at the beginning of 2004–05.

From the beginning of his service with the district in April 2003, the superintendent assessed the personnel in management positions within SMSD and began to make changes to improve the effectiveness of the district's programs and operations. **Exhibit A-29** shows the changes made in the management positions during the current superintendent's first year.

When the current superintendent began work in SMSD in April 2003, the final report of a management study of the district conducted by the Harris County Department of Education (HCDE) was presented to the board and superintendent. The recommendations and status of their implementation are included in **Exhibit A-30**.

Based upon the results of that study and the superintendent's preliminary assessment of the district, the following actions were taken:

- The Texas Education Agency (TEA) conducted a district evaluation and compliance (DEC) review at the request of the district.

- HCDE conducted reviews of several functional areas: child nutrition, athletics, guidance and counseling, and the operations of the high school.

- Region 4 conducted an efficiency and effectiveness review of the district's special education program.

PLANNING AND SITE-BASED DECISION-MAKING

In Texas, Sections 11.251, 11.252, and 11.253 of the Texas Education Code provide the requirements for district-level planning and decision-making. The TEC sets out the following minimum requirements for district and campus planning and decision-making that all school districts must satisfy:

- A comprehensive needs assessment addressing student performance on the standardized tests and any local assessments.

- Measurable school system performance objectives for all student populations.

- Strategies for improvement of student performance.

- Resources needed to implement identified strategies.

EXHIBIT A-28
RESPONSIBILITIES OF SMSD SENIOR MANAGEMENT
2003–04

POSITION	KEY RESPONSIBILITIES
Assistant superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction	Supervise the four principals: primary/elementary, intermediate, middle, and high schools.
	Supervise the director of Federal Programs, which includes: special education, federal Title programs, bilingual/ESL education, career and technology education, and compensatory education.
	Supervise the director of Instructional Support Services, which includes: gifted and talented education, technology, summer school, TAKS testing, and the education foundation.
	Monitor application of the regular curriculum.
	Serve as Level Two hearing officer for student and parent complaints.
Assistant superintendent, Operations and Personnel	Supervise directors of: Personnel, Child Nutrition, Athletics, Alternative Education, and Maintenance and Operations (which includes Transportation).
	Supervise PEIMS coordinator.
	Oversee renovation and construction projects.
	Serve as Level Two hearing officer for employee complaints.
	Serve as primary recruiter.
Business manager	Supervise clerks of: Payroll and Benefits, Purchasing, and Accounts Payable.
	Oversee, coordinate, and monitor financial reporting and the annual financial audit, fixed assets, contracts, bid, and proposals.

SOURCE: SMSD superintendent.

EXHIBIT A-29
CHANGES IN KEY SMSD MANAGEMENT POSITIONS
APRIL 2003–MAY 2004

POSITION	CHANGE IN INCUMBENT (Y/N)
Superintendent	Y
Assistant superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction	Y
Assistant superintendent, Operations and Personnel	N
Business manager	Y
Director, Federal and State Programs	New position
Director, Instructional Support Services	New position
PRINCIPALS:	
▪ High school	Y
▪ Middle school	Y
▪ Intermediate school	Y
▪ Primary/elementary school	N
ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS:	
▪ High school	Two positions: one changed and one remained the same
▪ Middle school	Y
▪ Intermediate school	N/A
▪ Primary/elementary school	Y
DEPARTMENTS:	
▪ Special Education	Y
▪ Maintenance and Operations	Y
▪ Athletics	Y
▪ Child Nutrition	Y
▪ Alternative Education	To be eliminated at the end of 2003–04 and consolidated within the responsibilities of the director of Instructional Support Services
▪ Instructional Technology	Eliminated and consolidated within the responsibilities of the director of Instructional Support Services
▪ Transportation	Director resigned in spring 2004 and responsibilities have been consolidated under the director of Maintenance and Operations

SOURCE: SMSD superintendent.

EXHIBIT A-30
HCDE MANAGEMENT STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STATUS
JUNE 2004

RECOMMENDATION	POSITION RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
Arrange the middle and high school instructional day into seven periods.	Assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; middle and high school principals and counselors	Traditional seven period day schedules are now in place for 2004-2005.
Explore more efficient plans for conducting the alternative education program.	Assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; director of Instructional Support Services.	In March 2004 the position of director of Instructional Support Services was created by combining the positions of director of Instructional Technology and alternative campus principal. One of the primary duties of the new position is the complete restructuring of Student Adjustment Center (SAC).
		SAC did not have LAN or WAN capabilities and no non-traditional instructional constructs were available. PLATO proprietary credit recovery software has been purchased and is installed and running for summer school at the main high school campus. Purchase orders for servers and other hardware for implementation at SAC have been issued and quotes obtained from PHONOSCOPE for T1 service to SAC. These software, hardware, and internet access capacities will be completed before fall 2004. These new technological capabilities coupled with new strong instructional leadership will allow for non-traditional credit recovery and acceleration as well as afford on-campus regular classroom teachers the ability to electronically deliver and monitor student progress.

EXHIBIT A-30 (CONTINUED)
HCDE MANAGEMENT STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STATUS
JUNE 2004

RECOMMENDATION	POSITION RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
Design, implement, and monitor a six-year planning system for students and parents.	Assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; middle and high school principals and counselors.	For school year 2004-2005 completed, to include parent and guardian conferences, spring of 2004.
Consider more efficient use of staff.	All stakeholders.	With the superintendent change in April 2003, all non-essential, non-exempt temporary employees were released, as well as all non-essential substitutes. Overtime practices were altered. Average monthly payroll for February-April 2003 was $1,330,857. May 2003 payroll was $1,287,688, an immediate monthly reduction of $43,169. The following are actual monthly payroll reductions: ▪ February 2003 to February 2004 - $114,116 ▪ March 2003 to March 2004 - $117,987 ▪ April 2003 to April 2004 - $138,591
Have a dietician perform a review of the district's Food Service operations.	The Board of Trustees contracted with the Harris County Department of Education for a departmental review. Assistant superintendent for Operations and Personnel; Food Service director.	Completed. An experienced registered dietician was hired summer 2003. The review was completed in fall 2003. For 2002-2003, the Food Service Department's cash on cash loss was $237,000. The director and staff have made marked progress. Although there have been $50,000 in capital investments, i.e. hardware, software, kitchen equipment, etc., the expectation is that the cash on cash loss for 2003–2004 after absorption of the capital investments will be less than $5,000. Participation rates are up, while food and labor costs are down.
Reduce the number of custodians.	Assistant superintendent for Operations and Personnel; director of Maintenance and Transportation.	Completed summer 2003 for 2003–04 school year.
Reduce energy usage.	Board of Trustees, superintendent, assistant superintendent for Operations and Personnel, director of Maintenance and Transportation.	Summer of 2003 joined political subdivision of the state, Energy for Schools. Contracted through Energy for Schools with Strategic Energy at a strike price of $.0495 for three years beginning in January of 2004, the earliest date our prior commitments allowed. Current market appears to be $0.062 and increasing. New contract arrangements provides for energy management training at all levels. This training is taking place in the summer of 2004. SMSD is also working in partnership with these entities to develop a comprehensive energy and utility management plan for 2004-2005.
Eliminate the optional local 20 percent homestead tax exemption.	Board of Trustees, superintendent	Not implemented.
Reduce cost for substitute teachers.	Campus principals and departmental directors.	With the superintendent change in April 2003, all non-essential, non-exempt temporary employees were released, as well as all non-essential substitutes. Overtime practices were altered. From April 2003 to April 2004, there were reductions in substitute costs for teachers, maintenance, food service, and transportation employees.
Reduce professional service cost.	Superintendent, assistant-superintendents, principals, and directors.	In progress. New directors in key positions, including federal and state programs, food service, and maintenance and transportation. Consolidation of several functions into one position, including instructional technology and alternative education and maintenance and transportation. Increasing the professional capacities of faculty, staff, and administration coupled with focused professional training and appropriate needs-based professional development should work to reduce these costs.

EXHIBIT A-30 (CONTINUED)
HCDE MANAGEMENT STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION STATUS
JUNE 2004

RECOMMENDATION	POSITION RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
Reduce cost of employee instructional travel.	Assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, principals, and directors.	Assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction altered this long-standing practice. A comprehensive needs based in-house professional development program is in place and operating for summer 2004. Excepting particular and acute needs, instructional staff development has been limited to our in-house summer program and those available at Region 4.
Allocate one of the counseling positions at the high school for a social worker.	Superintendent, assistant superintendent for Operations and Personnel, high school principal.	An at-risk counselor was hired in December of 2003.
Reduce cost for plant maintenance.	Superintendent, assistant superintendent for Operations and Personnel, director of Maintenance and Transportation, all maintenance and custodial staff.	Other than the aforementioned personnel reductions and contract for energy costs, there is none that can be currently ascertained. New maintenance concerns, i.e., chillers and two condemned boilers, and athletic facility floor replacement and fencing, will show an overall increase in this area when compared to the immediate prior year.

SOURCE: SMSD superintendent, June 2004.

- Staff responsible for ensuring the accomplishment of each strategy.

- Timelines for monitoring implementation.

- Evaluation criteria for determining whether the strategies are improving student performance.

Each school district must develop, evaluate, and annually revise a district improvement plan (DIP). State statute specifically designates the components that must be addressed in district and campus plans: mission statement; comprehensive needs assessment; long-range goals; performance objectives; strategies for improvement of student performance; resources needed to implement identified strategies; provisions for implementation, such as staff and timelines; formative evaluation, such as criteria for determining whether the strategies are working; and summative or cumulative evaluation.

A districtwide committee which includes district staff, principals, teachers, and citizens must develop the DIP. The district committee in SMSD is called the District Wide Education Improvement Committee (DWEIC), which included 25 members in 2003–04: 19 SMSD staff, two parents, two business representatives, and two community members.

The superintendent appoints the chairperson of the DWEIC from among the committee's members. According to SMSD Board Policy BQA (Local), the committee must be composed of campus-based professional staff, district-level professional staff, parents, businesses, and the community.

Exhibit A-31 describes the composition and selection of representatives from each group.

Representatives serve staggered two-year terms and are limited to two consecutive terms on the committee.

Campus-level committees must be involved in decisions in the areas of planning, budgeting, curriculum, staffing patterns, staff development, and school organization. The campus-level committees must approve the portions of the campus plan addressing campus staff development needs.

Campus improvement plans (CIP) are developed by Campus Improvement Teams (CIT), which also serve as the site-based decision-making committee on each campus and identify what each school will do in a given year to help achieve district and school objectives.

Sections 11 and 21 of the TEC describe certain requirements associated with implementing site-based decision-making in Texas school districts. The major theme of site-based decision-making is the empowerment of students, parents, teachers, principals, and schools. The code describes requirements for annual district and campus improvement plans, composition of district and campus decision-making councils, election of representatives to each council, terms of office, meetings, and general responsibilities.

SMSD adopted a policy in 1992–93 to create district and school-based collaborative decision-making committees in compliance with state law and has updated the original policy several times since then, most recently in 2003. These policies provide

EXHIBIT A-31
SMSD DWEIC MEMBERSHIP AND SELECTION PROCESS
2003–04

GROUP	MEMBERSHIP	SELECTION PROCESS
Teachers	At least two-thirds of the district and campus professional staff must be classroom teachers.	Elected by teachers on each campus.
Professional non-teaching district- and campus-level staff (Nurses, librarians, counselors and principals)	Three or four representatives from each campus.	Two or three representatives shall be nominated by and elected from classroom teachers assigned to that campus. One representative shall be nominated by and elected from non-teaching professional employees assigned to that campus. At least one district-level professional staff, other than the superintendent, shall be elected by the district-level professional staff. *
Parents	At least two parents of students currently enrolled in SMSD	Volunteer
Community members	At least two community members who must reside in SMSD	Volunteer
Business representatives	At least two business representatives who do not have to reside nor operate businesses in SMSD.	Volunteer

SOURCE: SMSD Board Policy BQA (Local), Planning and Decision-Making Process: District-Level.
* District-level professional staff is defined as professionals who have responsibilities at more than one campus, including, but not limited to, central office staff.

authorization, scope of responsibility, composition of committees, and electoral processes for membership selection and approval processes.

According to SMSD Board Policy BQB (Local), each CIT is chaired by the principal and must be composed of campus-based professional staff, parents, businesses, and the community. **Exhibit A–32** describes the composition and selection of representatives from each group for each CIT.

Each CIT must include at least two parents of a student currently enrolled in the district, two community members who must reside in the district, and two business representatives who do not need to live or work in the district. Representatives are elected or selected annually and may not serve more than two consecutive terms.

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Elementary and secondary education is a labor-intensive undertaking. Labor costs consume approximately 80 percent of the average school district budget. The management and placement of people is a vital part of school district operations. In many public school districts, a Human Resources (HR) Department manages employee-related tasks, which include the following:

- Development of competitive wage and salary schedules to attract and retain skilled employees;
- Administration of salary systems;
- Classification of all positions;
- Development of job descriptions for all positions and the periodic update/modification of job descriptions to reflect changes in responsibilities;

EXHIBIT A-32
SMSD CIT MEMBERSHIP AND SELECTION PROCESS
2003–04

GROUP	MEMBERSHIP	SELECTION PROCESS
District and campus professional staff	At least two-thirds of the district and campus professional staff must be classroom teachers.	Nominated and elected by classroom teachers assigned to that campus.
Professional non-teaching district- and campus-level staff (Nurses, librarians, counselors, and principals)	The remaining one-third of district and campus professional staff must be professional non-teaching district- and campus-level staff. *	Nominated by and elected from the District- and campus-level non-teaching professional staff assigned to that campus.
Parents	At least two	Volunteer
Community members	At least two	Volunteer
Business representatives	At least two	Volunteer

SOURCE: SMSD Board Policy BQB (Local), Planning and Decision-Making Process: Campus-Level.
* District-level professional staff is defined as professionals who have responsibilities at more than one campus including, but not limited to, central office staff.

- Development and administration of professional development programs for some or all district personnel;
- Development of personnel staffing tables and review of staff allocation formulas;
- Administration of an employee grievance process;
- Recruitment and selection of qualified candidates for employment;
- Maintenance of required employee records;
- Efficient processing of personnel actions and changes;
- Administration of certification and permit processes;
- Issuance of contracts or nonrenewal notices;
- Placement and training of substitutes;
- Development of board policies regarding personnel issues;
- Compliance with federal and state regulations;
- Development and administration of an employee benefits program; and
- Preparation of periodic reports to address local board and state reporting requirements.

SMSD's District Improvement Plan (DIP) for 2003–04 includes strategies related to HR management. **Exhibit A-33** shows the HR related goals and strategies in the DIP.

Exhibit A-34 compares staffing ratios and shows that SMSD has a slightly higher staffing ratio than the peer districts but the same ratio as the state.

Exhibit A-35 breaks down staffing for SMSD and peer districts. SMSD has more professional support staff than all of the peers. Professional support includes counselors, educational diagnosticians, librarians, nurses, therapists, and other support staff. The district has more auxiliary staff than three of the four peer districts. Auxiliary staff includes all non-instructional, nonprofessional employees such as secretaries/clerks and food service, custodial, and maintenance employees. The district has fewer educational aides than any other peer district and falls near the middle for staffing at most other positions compared to the peer districts.

Exhibit A-36 shows SMSD and peer district HR Department staffing. SMSD is the only school district to assign HR responsibilities to an assistant superintendent. All peer districts have either a director or executive director in the head HR position. Two of the peer districts assign curriculum responsibilities to the head position along with HR responsibilities. SMSD is in the middle range as far as

total FTE per HR staff compared to the peer districts.

Compensation plans not only set up a system for equitable salaries and hourly wages for employees currently on the payroll, but also provide a system for placing new hires on a pay scale based on years of experience, promotions, transfers, and merit pay for performance. While there is sometimes a variance in pay between large and small, urban and rural districts, each district must know what businesses or school districts are in competition with them for employees. Districts must be prepared to adopt a compensation plan that recognizes the competition and contains strategies to ensure that the district is able to recruit and retain good employees at all levels.

SMSD contracted with the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) in the fall of 2003 to conduct a salary survey for all pay groups and recommend a comprehensive pay plan. The report was presented to the Board of Trustees at the April 2004 monthly meeting and reviewed during preparation of the 2004–05 budget.

In addition, SMSD has a formal grievance process that provides all employees with an orderly process for a prompt and equitable resolution of grievances. Initiation of a grievance begins at Level One and continues on if not resolved. **Exhibit A-37** shows the multiple levels in the grievance process.

If the grievance concerns the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of the employee bringing the grievance, the SMSD board may hear it in a closed meeting.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

SMSD had a director of School and Community Services with community involvement responsibilities through 2001–02. After 2001–02, the director retired and the School and Community Services functions were not continued. The secretary to the director was transferred to the position of secretary to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. The secretary to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction continues to support the district's quarterly community newsletter and forwards school news material to the area newspapers.

The district's primary contact for community relations is the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. The hiring of a new director of Federal and State Programs is expected to divert work from the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, which will allow the assistant superintendent more time for community involvement activities.

EXHIBIT A-33
SMSD DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLAN
2003–04

DISTRICT GOAL V. MAINTAIN A QUALITY, HIGHLY MOTIVATED AND ACHIEVEMENT-ORIENTED STAFF	
OBJECTIVE	**STRATEGY**
A. Recruit and retain certified, result-based faculty and staff.	▪ Meet No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements by recruiting and retaining certified and quality teachers and coaches. ▪ Meet NCLB requirements by recruiting and retaining highly qualified paraprofessionals. ▪ Reduce the teacher turnover rate by 3%. ▪ Assess the operational needs of the District and recruit and retain qualified managers and staff. ▪ Recruit degreed and quality applicants for substitute teaching. ▪ Maintain qualified substitute bus drivers.
B. Provide quality staff development that meets the needs of all employees.	▪ Provide special training for the coaching staff in team building and diversity. ▪ Provide leadership programs for operations directors to improve relationships among each other, student, parents, and administrators. ▪ Continue to support the Stafford-University of Houston-Victoria Cohort educators as they complete a program in Curriculum and Instruction. ▪ Provide training to interested faculty and staff on business topics to include: budgeting, travel, contracts and agreements, payroll, and purchasing. ▪ Provide training to Child Nutrition staff in: safety and sanitation, culinary quality, cash and inventory control and manager training. ▪ Provide hands-on WinSchool and PEIMS training to administrators, counselors and support staff in: academic achievement records, scheduling, leavers, discipline coding, general student program coding district procedures ▪ Provide awareness training to teachers on the importance of accurate enrollment and attendance accounting. ▪ Provide training to Transportation staff on working with students with disabilities and their parents. ▪ Provide training to Maintenance and Operations staff on safety and related issues.
C. Conduct studies of pay equity for non-contract personnel and stipend positions.	▪ Complete a time analysis and responsibility study for all coaches and assess equity of associated stipends. ▪ Establish salary guidelines for non-contract personnel that are reflective of job descriptions, qualifications, years of experience and degree, if applicable. ▪ Establish salary schedules that will be competitive in the Region 4 market.
D. Conduct reviews of programs, stipends and departmental job expectations and employment practices.	▪ Develop job descriptions for all stipend positions including academic and athletic responsibilities. ▪ Develop a monitoring and evaluation process unique to the athletic department to access progress and growth of staff and the athletic director. ▪ Eliminate excessive hiring and labor hours by filing Child Nutrition staffing needs based on time requirements of job tasks. ▪ Eliminate excessive hiring practices by retaining quality Maintenance and Operations staff. ▪ Monitor the accuracy of labor hours, absences, and injuries of Maintenance and Operations staff.
E. Professionalize office operations throughout the district.	▪ Define office staff job responsibilities and communicate job expectations to all. ▪ Establish uniform office practices, procedures, and standards that will improve accuracy and efficiency. ▪ Affirm the importance of office staff in the overall operations of the district. ▪ Welcome visitors in a warm, caring way. ▪ Unite office personnel through team-building activities and sensitivity training. ▪ Answer phones promptly by an adult. ▪ Participate in computer training that will improve productivity.
F. Encourage staff to become confident, independent problem-solvers.	▪ Align central office job responsibilities among the departments of business, operations, and instruction. ▪ Encourage staff to utilize written PEIMS reference materials and professional websites to research answers to questions.

SOURCE: SMSD District Improvement Plan 2003–04.

EXHIBIT A-34
SMSD, PEER DISTRICT, REGION 4, AND STATE STAFFING COMPARISON
2003–04

ENTITY	STUDENT POPULATION	TOTAL STAFF	RATIO OF TOTAL STAFF TO STUDENTS
Fredericksburg	2,848	422.0	1:6.7
Bandera	2,665	383.2	1:7.0
Decatur	2,846	388.8	1:7.3
Sweeny	2,098	283.4	1:7.4
SMSD	2,838	376.2	1:7.5
Region 4	947,443	117,631.7	1:8.1
State	4,328,028	575,291.4	1:7.5

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 2003–04.

EXHIBIT A-35
COMPARISON OF SMSD AND PEER DISTRICT STAFFING
2003–04

	SMSD	BANDERA	DECATUR	FREDERICKSBURG	SWEENY
Total students	2,838	2,665	2,846	2,848	2,098
Teachers	197.6	199.4	207.5	212.4	137.0
Professional support	28.6	26.6	19.4	23.9	16.6
Campus administration	8.0	9.7	11.1	8.1	7.0
Central administration	4.0	8.0	3.6	7.0	3.5
Educational aides	25.8	37.9	53.7	44.8	36.5
Auxiliary staff	112.2	101.6	93.5	125.9	83.0
Total staff	376.2	383.2	388.8	422.0	283.4

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 2003–04.

EXHIBIT A-36
SMSD AND PEER DISTRICT HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENT STAFFING
2003–04

DISTRICT	TOTAL STAFF FTE	NUMBER OF HR DEPARTMENT STAFF				FTE PER HR STAFF TOTAL
		HR HEAD	PROFESSIONAL	PARAPROFESSIONAL	TOTAL	
Bandera	383	Executive director of Curriculum and Personnel	0.5	0.5	1.0	1:383
Fredericksburg	422	Director of Human Resources	1.0	1.0	2.0	1:211
SMSD	376	Assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel	0.8	1.0	1.8	1:209
Decatur	389	Director of Personnel	1.0	1.0	2.0	1:195
Sweeny	284	Director, Curriculum and Personnel	0.5	1.0	1.5	1:189

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 2003–04 and survey conducted by WCL ENTERPRISES, April 2004.

EXHIBIT A-37
SMSD GRIEVANCE PROCESS
2003–04

LEVEL	PARTICIPANTS	PROCESS	CONFERENCE TIMING	RESPONSE DEADLINE
Level One	Employee and principal or immediate supervisor	Employee submits the grievance in writing on a specified form that must be filed within 15 days to the time the employee first knew or should have known of the event or series of events about which the employee is complaining.	Conference is held within seven days after receipt of written request.	Seven days following the conference.
Level Two	Employee and superintendent or designee	Employee requests meeting in writing on a District provided form within seven days following receipt of a response.	Conference is held within seven days after receipt of written request.	Seven days following the conference.
Level Three	Employee and board	Employee requests meeting in writing on a District provided form within seven days following receipt of a response.	Superintendent or designee informs employee of date, time, and place and makes an audiotape record of the proceedings.	Up to and including the next regularly scheduled board meeting.

SOURCE: SMSD board policy DGBL (L).

CHAPTER 3
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

All Texas school districts must comply with state financial reporting guidelines as contained in the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide* (FASRG). The guide includes the accounting and financial reporting requirements of recognized and generally accepted accounting principles, federally mandated auditing and financial reporting requirements, specific accounting, and the financial reporting requirements of TEA. A district's annual audited financial statements must include all necessary financial information and related disclosures as prescribed by FASRG.

In 1999, the Seventy-sixth Legislature enacted House Bill (HB) 98, which allows school districts to change the start date for the fiscal year for financial management activities. According to HB 98, school districts may choose a fiscal year that begins on either July 1st or September 1st of each year. SMSD's fiscal year begins on September 1st.

SMSD relies heavily on revenue from local property taxes. Local property tax revenues have ranged from 86.9 percent in 1999–2000 to 85.2 percent budgeted for 2003–04. State revenue has only accounted for 7.3 percent of the budget in 1999–2000 and 8.9 percent budgeted in 2003–04. State revenue is decreased in districts with high property values. From 1999–2000 through 2003–04, the revenue distribution has remained fairly constant **(Exhibit A-38)**. All funds include the general, debt service, and

food service funds. Capital project and special revenue funds are not included.

The Fort Bend County Tax Office performs SMSD's tax billing and collection function. The county began collecting taxes in 1991 when the City of Stafford abolished the office of city tax assessor-collector. Appraisal of property is done by Fort Bend Central Appraisal District (Fort Bend CAD). The Property Tax Division of the State Comptroller's Office conducted a survey of costs per parcel for 2002 and 2003. According to the survey results, Fort Bend County CAD's cost per parcel was lower than the state average costs for both years. Fort Bend CAD's cost for 2002 was $13.25 per parcel, while the state average was $16.48. For 2003, Fort Bend CAD's cost was $15.41 per parcel, while the state average was $17.32 per parcel.

In 2003–04, Texas school districts budgeted an average of 52.6 percent of their revenues from the local property tax, while SMSD's budget was 85.2 percent. As other Texas schools average 40.1 percent in revenue from the state, SMSD budgets only 8.9 percent **(Exhibit A-39)**. Regional PEIMS data was not available. SMSD budgeted to receive more than $18 million in 2003–04 from property tax and related collections, which provides approximately 85.2 percent of SMSD operating funds.

SMSD has a higher percentage of business property value than the state, Regional Education Service Center IV (Region 4), and all peer districts except Sweeny **(Exhibit A-40)**. The high business property value is the primary reason that SMSD has a high

EXHIBIT A-38
SMSD ACTUAL AND BUDGETED SOURCES OF REVENUE AS A PERCENT OF TOTAL ACTUAL AND BUDGETED REVENUE, ALL FUNDS 1999–2000 THROUGH 2003–04

	ACTUAL				BUDGETED
SOURCE OF REVENUE	**1999–2000**	**2000-01**	**2001-02**	**2002-03**	**2003–04**
Local property tax	86.9%	86.5%	86.9%	86.8%	85.2%
Other local and intermediate	4.1%	4.3%	4.2%	3.6%	3.6%
State	7.3%	7.5%	6.8%	7.5%	8.9%
Federal	1.7%	1.7%	2.0%	2.1%	2.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 1999–2000 through 2002–03 and PEIMS Budgeted Financial Data 2003–04.
NOTE: Percentages are rounded off.

EXHIBIT A-39
SMSD, STATE, AND PEER DISTRICT SOURCES OF BUDGETED REVENUE AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL BUDGETED REVENUE, ALL FUNDS 2003–04

ENTITY	LOCAL PROPERTY TAX	OTHER LOCAL AND INTERMEDIATE	STATE	FEDERAL
Sweeny	84.9%	4.6%	8.6%	1.9%
SMSD	**85.2%**	**3.6%**	**8.9%**	**2.3%**
Fredericksburg	80.2%	3.7%	13.8%	2.3%
Decatur	64.6%	3.5%	30.0%	1.9%
Bandera	53.1%	4.1%	40.4%	2.5%
State	**52.6%**	**3.6%**	**40.1%**	**3.6%**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS Budgeted Financial Data, 2003–04.

property value, or wealth, per student, which makes the district a wealthy district under Chapter 41 of the Texas Education Code and requires it to send locally derived money to the state.

School districts adopt a tax rate each year for general operations and debt service. Calculation of this rate is dependent upon the certified tax roll provided by a central appraisal district. School districts levy taxes on real and personal property. School districts, including SMSD, offer exemptions for homesteads of $15,000 to all taxpayers, and additional exemptions for homesteads of $10,000 to taxpayers that have an "age 65" or "disabled" classification. Land used for agricultural purposes is reduced to agricultural value upon application by the landowner. SMSD also offers an additional 20 percent optional homestead exemption to its taxpayers.

SMSD's maintenance and operations property tax rate increased by 11.9 percent from 1999–2000

through 2003–04 while the interest and sinking fund (debt) tax rate decreased by more than 15 percent **(Exhibit A-41)**.

All peer districts budgeted a smaller percentage of total expenditures on classroom teaching than did SMSD **(Exhibit A-42)**. SMSD's budgeted expenditures for classroom teaching was slightly above the state average.

Exhibit A-43 shows how SMSD distributed budgeted funds in 2003–04 compared to state averages. Regional averages are not available.

SMSD's per student funding over the past five years, from 1999–2000 through 2003–04, is higher than state averages. On a per student basis from 1999–2000 to 2003–04, SMSD's budgeted expenditures per student have increased 14.4 percent **(Exhibit A-44)**. Instruction has increased 11 percent and school leadership spending has increased 13.4 percent, while central administration spending has increased 28.4

EXHIBIT A-40
SMSD, REGION 4, STATE, AND PEER DISTRICT PROPERTY VALUES
BY CATEGORY AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL PROPERTY VALUE
2002–03

ENTITY	BUSINESS	RESIDENTIAL	LAND	OIL AND GAS	OTHER
Sweeny	80.0%	12.8%	2.9%	4.2%	0.2%
SMSD	67.7%	29.8%	1.9%	0.0%	0.6%
Decatur	33.9%	30.7%	20.1%	11.9%	3.4%
Fredericksburg	22.4%	44.7%	32.2%	0.0%	0.6%
Bandera	11.5%	46.7%	38.8%	0.0%	3.0%
Region 4	40.4%	53.4%	3.1%	0.4%	2.6%
State	36.3%	52.2%	6.7%	3.5%	1.2%

SOURCE: *Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2002–03. Note: Percentages are based on aggregate values from the Annual Property Tax Report for Tax Year 2002 before exemptions are applied.*

EXHIBIT A-41
SMSD MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS TAX RATES, ASSESSED
PROPERTY VALUES AND PER STUDENT PROPERTY VALUES
1999–2000 THROUGH 2003–04

CATEGORY	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	PERCENT CHANGE FROM 1999–2000 TO 2003–04
Maintenance and Operations Tax Rate	$1.34	$1.415	$1.485	$1.50	$1.50	11.9%
Interest and sinking fund tax rate	$0.255	$0.230	$0.210	$0.21	$0.2155	(15.5%)
Total tax rate	$1.595	$1.645	$1.695	$1.710	$1.7155	7.6%

SOURCE: *Comptroller of Public Accounts Property Tax Reports 1999 through 2003, and SMSD superintendent 2003–04.*

EXHIBIT A-42
SMSD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE BUDGETED CLASSROOM TEACHING
EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL EXPENDITURES, ALL FUNDS
2003–04

ENTITY	CLASSROOM TEACHING EXPENDITURES	TOTAL EXPENDITURES	CLASSROOM TEACHING EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL EXPENDITURES
SMSD	$11,617,277	$23,011,386	50.5%
Decatur	$10,674,093	$21,177,652	50.4%
Bandera	$8,880,241	$18,717,013	47.4%
Sweeny	$7,835,393	$17,515,987	44.7%
Fredericksburg	$10,343,055	$22,134,590	46.7%
State	$15,587,342,290	$30,928,922,972	50.4%

SOURCE: *Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 2003–04.*

EXHIBIT A-43
SMSD AND STATE TOTAL BUDGETED EXPENDITURES BY FUNCTION
AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL BUDGETED EXPENDITURES, ALL FUNDS
2003–04

FUNCTION	SMSD	PERCENTAGE SPENT	STATE	PERCENTAGE SPENT
Instruction (11,95)	$11,617,277	50.5%	$15,589,243,761	50.4%
Instructional-Related Services (12,13)	$505,556	2.2%	$808,091,598	2.6%
Instructional Leadership (21)	$131,504	0.57%	$361,760,097	1.2%
School Leadership (23)	$1,006,153	4.4%	$1,650,512,661	5.3%
Support Services-Student (31,32,33)	$719,642	3.1%	$1,242,766,655	4.0%
Student Transportation (34)	$954,260	4.1%	$809,760,319	2.6%
Food Services (35)	$1,055,000	4.6%	$1,564,346,444	5.1%
Co-curricular/ Extracurricular Activities (36)	$465,000	2.0%	$708,421,970	2.3%
Central Administration (41)	$832,263	3.6%	$1,123,457,628	3.6%
Plant Maintenance & Operations (51)	$2,415,469	10.5%	$3,103,620,563	10.0%
Security & Monitoring Services (52)	$56,000	0.24%	$200,272,092	0.6%
Data Processing Services (53)	$147,729	0.64%	$367,534,823	1.2%
Other	$3,105,533	13.5%	$3,399,134,361	11.0%
Total Budgeted Expenditures	$23,011,386	100.0%	$30,928,922,972	100.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, 2003–04.

EXHIBIT A-44
SMSD EXPENDITURES PER STUDENT–GENERAL FUND
1999–2000 THROUGH 2003–04

EXPENDITURE CATEGORY	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	PERCENT CHANGE 1999–2000 TO 2003–04
Instruction and instructional leadership	$3,736	$3,998	$4,183	$4,432	$4,145	11.0%
School leadership	$313	$337	$348	$367	$355	13.4%
Central administration	$229	$241	$244	$257	$294	28.4%
Other operating	$1,562	$1,839	$2,022	$2,084	$2,230	42.8%
Total operations	$5,841	$6,415	$6,798	$7,140	$7,024	20.3%
Total non-operations	$1,260	$1,187	$1,173	$1,148	$1,096	(13.0%)
Total per student	$7,101	$7,602	$7,971	$8,288	$8,120	14.4%
Region 4 total per student	$6,313	$6,673	$7,005	$7,193	No data	No data
State total per student	$6,354	$6,638	$6,913	$7,088	$7,174	12.9%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 1999–2000 through 2002-03 and PEIMS Budgeted Financial Data 2003–04.

percent. The increase in state averages for total expenditures per student during this same period was 12.9 percent.

Exhibit A-45 lists actual functional expenditures per student. The largest increase for SMSD was in Intergovernmental Charges, which include the Chapter 41 payments that the district must make to the state. This category has increased from $675 per student in 1998–99 to $2,260 per student in 2002–03.

TEC 42.201 requires TEA to examine the administration expenses of school districts as a percentage of instructional expenses. As shown in **Exhibit A-46**, SMSD's administrative cost ratio as computed by TEA is lower than all peer districts.

SMSD has exceeded the state average in percentage of budgeted expenditures for instruction as a percent of operating expenditures and total expenditures, as shown in **Exhibit A-47**.

EXHIBIT A-45
SMSD ACTUAL FUNCTIONAL EXPENDITURES PER STUDENT–GENERAL FUND ONLY
1998–99 THROUGH 2002–03

FUNCTION	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	PERCENT CHANGE FROM 1998–99 TO 2002–03
Instruction	$3,437	$3.589	$3,983	$3,988	$4,093	19.1%
Instructional Resources	$83	$96	$94	$102	$128	54.2%
Curriculum and Staff Development	$42	$49	$44	$50	$50	19.0%
Instructional/School Leadership	$343	$318	$329	$412	$401	16.9%
Guidance and Counseling	$141	$164	$152	$188	$191	35.5%
Health Services	$44	$54	$55	$60	$63	43.2%
Transportation	$266	$261	$270	$244	$336	26.3%
Co–/Extracurricular Activities	$154	$151	$160	$148	$164	6.5%
General Administration	$211	$225	$239	$345	$293	38.9%
Plant Maintenance/Operations	$566	$665	$742	$839	$851	50.4%
Security and Monitoring Services	$20	$22	$21	$13	$20	0%
Data Processing Services	$23	$48	$51	$52	$52	126.1%
Community Service	$21	$18	$10	$16	$17	(19.0%)
Intergovernmental Charges	$675	$872	$1,552	$2,194	$2,260	234.8%
Total Expenditures per Student	**$6,024**	**$6,531**	**$7,704**	**$8,651**	**$8,919**	**48.0%**

SOURCE: SMSD Audited Financial Statements, 1998–99 through 2002–03.

EXHIBIT A-46
SMSD AND PEER DISTRICT'S ADMINISTRATIVE COST RATIO
2001–02

SCHOOL	ADMINISTRATIVE COST RATIO
SMSD	7.0%
Decatur	8.9%
Bandera	9.4%
Fredericksburg	10.7%
Sweeny	11.1%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, School Finance, and Fiscal Analysis, 2001–02.

EXHIBIT A-47
PERCENTAGE BUDGETED EXPENDITURES FOR INSTRUCTION
SMSD AND THE STATE
1999–2000 THROUGH 2003–04

		1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Budgeted Instruction Expenditures as a Percent of Operating Expenditures*	SMSD	63.1%	61.5%	60.7%	61.2%	58.4%
	State	58.2%	57.8%	57.2%	56.9%	56.6%
		1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Budgeted Instruction Expenditures as a Percent of Total Expenditures	SMSD	51.9%	51.9%	51.8%	52.7%	50.5%
	State	51.9%	51.5%	51.0%	50.8%	50.4%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 1999–2000 through 2002-03 and PEIMS Budgeted 2003–04.
*Operating expenditures are total expenditures less debt service and capital outlay expenses.

CHAPTER 4
OPERATIONS

SMSD facilities include a high school/middle school, a primary/elementary school, an intermediate school, a field house, gymnasiums, one alternative school (Stafford Adjustment Center), a transportation building, and an administration building. SMSD has no portable buildings. The district allows the city and community groups to use district facilities after-hours. For example, the YMCA offers after-school programs in the gyms, and groups such as the youth basketball program use the gyms for practice and games. Facility rental fees are established in SMSD board policy GKD.

Exhibit A-48 shows the year the district built and remodeled each facility and the square footage of each building.

SMSD funds its construction programs with school bonds that district voters approved in elections called by the school board. SMSD held its last bond election in August 1998, which called for the issuance of $13 million in school bonds, including $7 million to construct the intermediate school, $2 million for technology, $2.5 million for maintenance projects, and $1.5 million for extracurricular enhancements. A long-range facilities planning committee, appointed by the board, met from February through May 1998 and recommended these projects. Technology funds were used to purchase classroom and lab computers so that all schools now have at least three computers in each classroom. Extracurricular enhancements were included because the district was experiencing growth at the time and was preparing for a move up in UIL classification, which would have the district competing with larger schools and thus needing larger facilities.

Of the bond projects identified as maintenance projects and extra-curricular enhancements, the district has completed the following:

- Football field bleacher additions – home and visitors;
- New press box installation at football field;
- New fencing around athletic fields;
- New ticket booth on athletic field;
- New concrete work around athletic fields;
- New running track;
- New gym flooring;
- New sound system for football field;
- Retrofit and upgrades of utilities for athletic fields;
- New sidewalks around complex;
- Installation of speed bumps;
- Extensive upgrades to fire alarm systems to meet compliance issues; and
- Extensive upgrades to sprinkler system to meet compliance issues.

Exhibit A-49 shows that, since 1999–2000, student enrollment numbers (in-district plus transfers) show no net growth. However, actual in-district student enrollment has been declining. From 2002–03 to 2003–04, actual in-district enrollment fell by more than 79 students. The in-district student enrollment decline was offset by 105 students transferring from other districts to attend SMSD, for a net increase of 26 students enrolled.

While the district grew 41.6 percent from 1993-94 to 1998–99, enrollment declined 1.0 percent from 1999–2000 to 2003–04. The district's growth in enrollment from 1993-94 to 1998–99 was due to a number of new single-family housing subdivisions. However, once all houses in the subdivision sold, single-family housing growth stopped.

SMSD provides maintenance services for all school buildings, including minor renovation projects and custodial services, but contracts lawn maintenance to the City of Stafford. Minor renovation projects include items such as adding/removing a wall and pouring a short section of sidewalk. The director of Maintenance and Transportation evaluates each maintenance request and determines if the district staff has sufficient skills and time available to complete the request. If not, consideration is given

EXHIBIT A-48
SMSD FACILITIES
2003–04

FACILITY	YEAR BUILT / ADDITIONS	SQUARE FEET
High School / Middle School	1983 / 1995	204,222
Primary / Elementary School	1983	153,736
Intermediate School	2000	81,261
Alternative School	Leased facility	2,040
Transportation Building	Leased facility	1,652
Administration Building	1983 / 1996	7,737
Field House	No record	8,500
Gyms	1983 / 1996	96,091
Total Facilities		**555,239**

SOURCE: SMSD director of Maintenance and Operations, March 2004.

EXHIBIT A-49
SMSD ENROLLMENT HISTORY
1993–94 THROUGH 2003–04

YEAR	STUDENT ENROLLMENT	CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR	PERCENT CHANGE
2003–04	2,838	26	(1.0%)
2002–03	2,812	(86)	
2001–02	2,898	24	
2000–01	2,874	6	
1999–2000	2,868	96	
1998–99	2,772	219	41.6%
1997–98	2,553	213	
1996–97	2,340	77	
1995–96	2,263	146	
1994–95	2,117	160	
1993–94	1,957	-	

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 1998–99 through 2002–03, SMSD assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel, and the SMSD PEIMS submission, fall 2004.

EXHIBIT A-50
SMSD MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION
2003–04
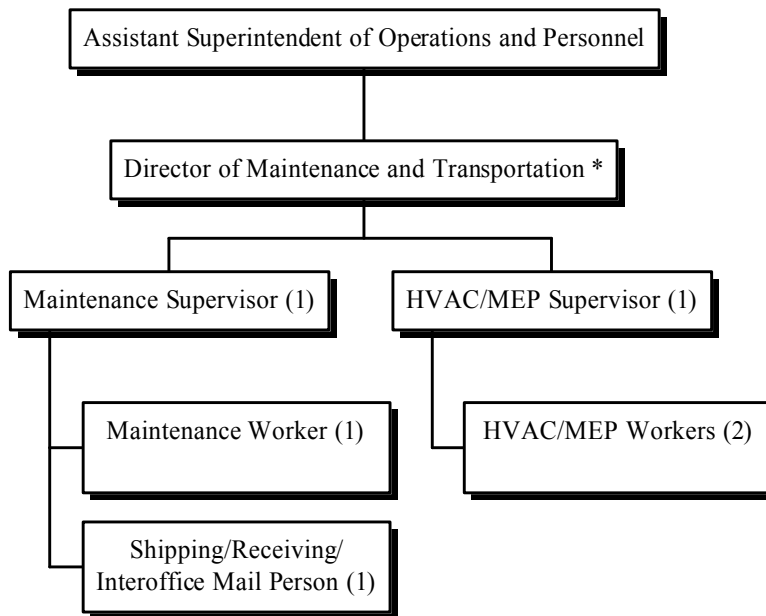
SOURCE: SMSD director of Maintenance and Transportation.
* In July 2004, the district changed the title of the director of Maintenance and Operations to director of Maintenance and Transportation.

to contracting out the work. **Exhibit A-50** displays SMSD Maintenance Department Organization.

The SMSD Maintenance Department consists of two areas. The first is general maintenance, which is staffed with a supervisor, a general maintenance worker, and a shipping/receiving/interoffice mail person. The second area is heating/ventilation/air-conditioning (HVAC) and mechanical/electrical/plumbing (MEP), which is staffed with a supervisor and two maintenance workers. The district pays the employees in both areas comparably. The HVAC/MEP supervisor is a licensed electrician, but the district does not require any specific skills for other maintenance workers.

CHILD NUTRITION

The National School Lunch Act (NSLA) requires school meals that "safeguard the health and well-being of the Nation's children." Participating schools must serve lunches that are consistent with the applicable recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. These guidelines recommend eating a variety of foods; choosing a diet with plenty of grain products, vegetables, and fruits; choosing a diet moderate in salt and sodium; and choosing a diet with 30 percent or less of calories from fat and less than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat.

School lunches must provide, on average in each school week, at least one-third of the Daily Recommended Dietary Allowances for protein, iron, calcium, and vitamins A and C. Under the Traditional Food-Based Menu Planning Approach, which is the approved National School Lunch Plan process for menu planning, schools also must offer five food items from four food components. These components include meat or meat alternate, vegetables and/or fruits, grains/breads, and milk. The NSLA establishes minimum portion sizes for each age and grade group. The National School Lunch Program permits the sale of approved snacks in all cafeterias in addition to breakfast and lunch.

SMSD's Child Nutrition Department consists of a director, an administrative assistant, three cafeteria managers, and 22 cafeteria workers **(Exhibit A-51)**.

Child nutrition accounts in Texas are required to comply with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), including the annual budgeting process. However, there are certain provisions of the Child Nutrition Programs that differ from other funds, programs, and accounts.

All revenues received by or accrued to child nutrition must be used only for the operation and improvement of the Child Nutrition Program. Revenues include child and adult meals, snack bar and a la carte programs, earnings on investments, and other local revenue and federal and state reimbursement received by, or accruing to, child nutrition.

The district is required to carry over to the next year any positive balance remaining in the child nutrition account at the end of the school year. Earnings on the child nutrition school services investments accrue to the dedicated account.

To maintain the nonprofit status of the National School Lunch and Child Nutrition programs, the fund balance of the child nutrition account does not exceed three month's of average expenditures. If an excess balance occurs, the school must immediately take steps to reduce the balance or have an acceptable plan to reduce the surplus within a year. The district can use the excess balance to improve the quality of food served, reduce the price of meals served to children, or purchase needed supplies, services, or equipment.

Exhibit A-52 shows the expenditures allowed and not allowed by the Texas Department of Agriculture in a school Child Nutrition Program.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Keeping Texas Children Safe in School, a Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) report issued in January 2000, outlines a common sense approach to help address the safety issues and challenges facing most public school districts today. The report's findings describe a model safety plan that includes ways to reduce the potential for violence in schools. Safety and security programs must include elements of prevention, intervention, and enforcement, as well as cooperation with all local law enforcement agencies. According to the report, "Prevention is the foundation laid to deter crime and violence."

Exhibit A-53 outlines the 10 steps of TSPR's plan, which is organized around three key areas: prevention, intervention, and enforcement.

School safety and security have become important issues at the national, state, and local levels. Media coverage has heightened parent, teacher, school administrator, and public concerns about incidents at schools throughout the country. TSPR suggests districts develop a plan for handling crises. Staff and students should test the effectiveness of a district's emergency plan until responses become automatic and consistent.

EXHIBIT A-51
SMSD CHILD NUTRITION ORGANIZATION
2003–04
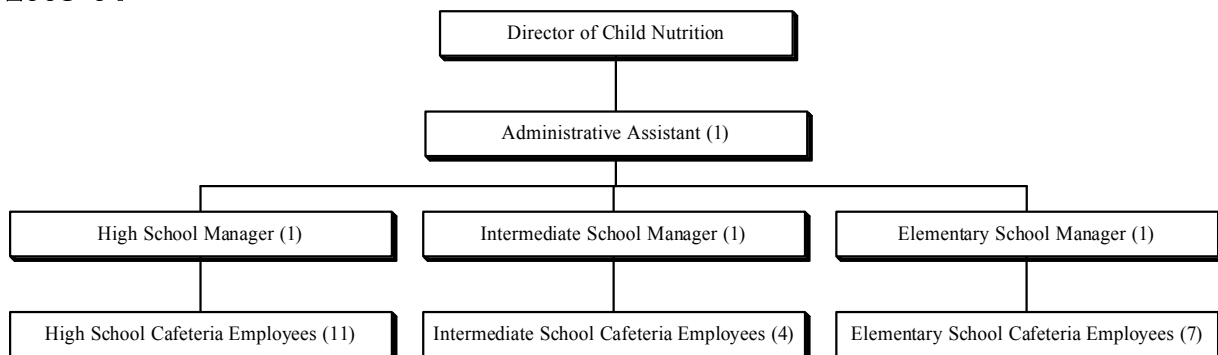
SOURCE: SMSD director of Child Nutrition, March 2004.

EXHIBIT A-52
ALLOWABLE AND UNALLOWABLE CHILD NUTRITION EXPENDITURES
2003–04

ALLOWABLE EXPENDITURES	UNALLOWABLE EXPENDITURES
Advertising.	Cafeteria monitors.
Attorney fees, under certain conditions.	Contributions and donations.
Automotive equipment.	Entertainment, amusements, social activities, gratuities, and related activities.
Recognition of employee achievements, under certain conditions.	Foods of minimal nutritional value for sale in or outside the child nutrition area.
Food purchases and costs directly related to the storage, handling, processing, and transportation of food.	Interest on loans.
Labor.	Land purchase, acquisition and construction of buildings or alterations to existing buildings that materially increase the value of capital assets.
Membership, subscriptions, professional publications, and audio-visual equipment used to benefit child nutrition.	Personal membership in civic, professional, technical, and business organizations. An agency or district membership is allowable.
Non-expendable items used directly in preparing, storing, or serving school meals.	Rent or usage fees for district-owned facilities such as cafeterias, kitchens, or storage facilities.
Office equipment.	
Other supplies and expendable equipment.	
Printing and reproduction equipment or services.	
Promotional materials.	
Rental of non-district-owned food storage facilities or equipment.	
Services, such as pest control, trash removal, and janitorial.	
Travel on child nutrition business, such as workshops, conferences, and training programs.	
Utilities, when accounted for separately or prorated to charge only the portion used by child nutrition.	

SOURCE: Texas Department of Agriculture, Administrator's Reference Manual, October 2002.

EXHIBIT A-53
KEEPING TEXAS CHILDREN SAFE IN SCHOOL
JANUARY 2000

ELEMENT	MEASURES
Prevention	Know your goals and objectives: where your district is going and what you want to accomplish.
	Establish clear expectations for students, parents, teachers and administrators.
	Address warning signs before they turn into trouble.
Intervention	Look for trouble before it finds you.
	Recognize trouble when you see it.
	Have individuals in the right place and at the right time to intervene.
	Have a plan of action appropriate for the occasion and practice it.
Enforcement	Leave no room for double standards.
	Ensure that discipline management extends inside and outside the classroom.
	Alternative programs are not just a matter of compliance with the law; they are many students' last chance at success.

SOURCE: TSPR, "Keeping Texas Children Safe in Schools," January 2000.

Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools, published by the U.S. Department of Education in 1998, notes that crisis intervention plans should include the topics listed in **Exhibit A-54.**

The Texas School Safety Center (TxSSC) provides resources free of charge, including curricula guides such as their Planning Manual for Safe Schools that describes key components of prevention, response, and recovery. They note that, "In addition to school staff and administrators, state and local government agencies, parents/families, students, and appropriate community groups should be involved in planning for safe schools."

Exhibit A-55 lists other SMSD safety and security appropriations for the 2003–04 budget.

SMSD contracts with a canine detection service to maintain a drug-free campus and a safe workplace environment. Contracted canine visits occur 15 times each year from August through May. The contract calls for contraband inspection services utilizing non-aggressive contraband detection canine. These visits are unannounced and inspect communal areas, lockers, gym areas, parking lots (automobiles), grounds, and other areas as directed by the district.

EXHIBIT A-54
TOPICS INCLUDED IN CRISIS INTERVENTION PLANS

TOPIC	EXPLANATION
Training	For teachers and staff in a variety of skills, ranging from dealing with escalating classroom situations to responding to a crisis.
Procedures	Reference to district or state procedures. Many states now have recommended crisis intervention manuals available to their local education agencies and schools.
Community Involvement	Involvement of community agencies, including police, fire and rescue, as well as hospital, health, social welfare and mental health services. The faith community, juvenile justice and related family support systems also have been successfully included in such team plans.
Meetings	Provision for the core team to meet regularly to identify potentially troubled or violent students and situations that may be dangerous.

SOURCE: *Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe School, U.S. Department of Education, 1998.*

EXHIBIT A-55
SMSD SAFETY AND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS
2003–04

CATEGORY	AMOUNT
Support Personnel	$11,150
Substitutes – Personal Leave	$500
Salaries, Alternative School	$133,245
Social Security	$1,365
General Supplies	$2,800
Copy Paper	$200
Printer Supplies	$500
Contracted Services (drug dogs)	$41,000
Service Center Services	$51,000
Computer Repairs	$500
Copier	$2,200
Total	**$244,460**

SOURCE: *SMSD assistant superintendent of Operations and Personnel, March 2004.*

TRANSPORTATION

The primary objective of an effective school transportation function is to provide timely, efficient, and safe transportation services to all qualified students. The main goal of every school district's transportation department is to transport students safely to and from school and approved extra-curricular activities.

The SMSD Transportation Department consists of one director, one secretary/dispatcher, 24 regular route drivers, two special education route drivers, two special education bus aides, and 11 substitute drivers, as shown in **Exhibit A-56**. At the time of this review, seven of the substitute drivers were filling open routes due to driver vacancies.

The director oversees the overall operation and management of the department. Key responsibilities include approving and updating bus routes and schedules for all schools, approving transportation for extracurricular activities and special programs, reviewing rates charged for extra-curricular transportation, enforcing safety standards, developing training options and improvement plans, and approving data necessary to process department payroll.

In late March 2004, the director of Transportation left the district. Responsibility for the Transportation function was then transferred to the director of

Maintenance and Operations, who left SMSD in June 2004. A new director of Maintenance and Transportation was hired in June 2004 and, from his previous positions, has nine years experience of direct responsibility for transportation programs.

The secretary is responsible for answering phones, responding to voice mail and e-mail for the director, time card processing for payroll, processing purchase orders, entering invoice information for payments, and handling any invoices or accounts.

Regular route bus drivers are responsible for driving the buses safely, having knowledge of student management, and being available for field trips as needed. Special education bus drivers are responsible for driving the special needs buses, having knowledge of wheelchair tie-downs, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and how to maintain order on the bus when caring for special needs students.

The aides serve as bus attendants and monitor student behavior on the special needs buses. They report disciplinary infractions to the director, who forwards them to the principal at the appropriate school.

Bus drivers must have a commercial driver's license that is issued by the Texas Department of Public Safety and a Texas School Bus Driver Certificate issued by the Texas Department of Transportation

EXHIBIT A-56
SMSD TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

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                    ┌──────────────────────────────┐
                    │   Assistant Superintendent    │
                    │    Operations and Personnel   │
                    └──────────────────────────────┘
                                  │
                    ┌──────────────────────────────────────┐
                    │ Director of Maintenance and Transportation * │
                    └──────────────────────────────────────┘
                                  │
              ┌──────────────┐    │
              │  Secretary/   │    │
              │ Dispatcher (1)│    │
              └──────────────┘    │
         ┌──────────┬──────────┬──────────┬──────────┐
   ┌─────────┐ ┌─────────┐ ┌──────────────┐ ┌──────────────┐
   │ Regular  │ │Substitute│ │Special Education│ │Special Education│
   │Drivers(24)│ │Drivers(11)│ │  Drivers (2)  │ │   Aides (2)   │
   └─────────┘ └─────────┘ └──────────────┘ └──────────────┘
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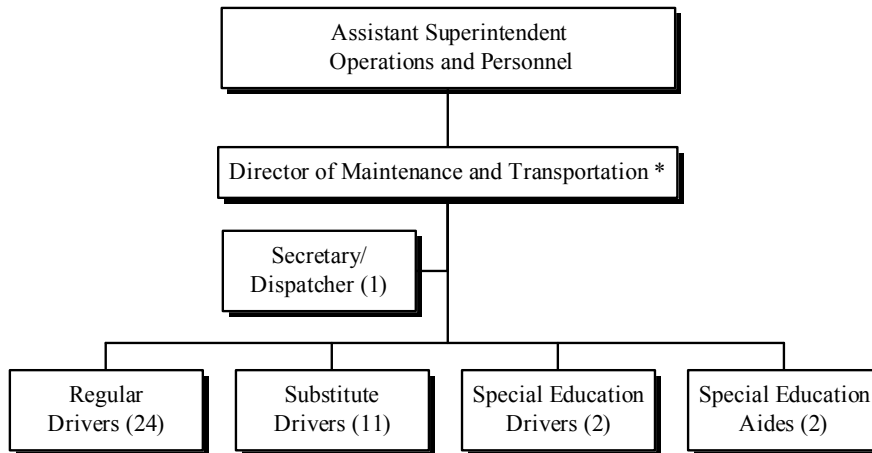
SOURCE: SMSD Transportation staff, March 2004.
* In July 2004, the district changed the title of the director of Maintenance and Operations to director of Maintenance and Transportation.

(TxDOT). Before TxDOT issues the certificate, a driver must take and pass a school bus driver's certification training course offered by Region IV Education Service Center (Region 4) and have their driving record screened by the Transportation director. The district conducts criminal history background checks on all new employees and annually evaluates the motor vehicle records of all personnel who drive district vehicles. Drivers must pass an annual physical exam along with an alcohol and drug test performed by a doctor. New employees required to drive a bus must undergo a blood alcohol and drug test prior to employment and be subject to random testing twice a year.

SMSD contracts with the City of Stafford (City) for repairs on the school buses. The City performs almost all repairs and preventive maintenance, and works with the district to contract out specialized repairs for areas such as engines and transmissions. The City has two mechanics dedicated to school buses. The district is billed for the hours that they work each month plus a 15 percent surcharge for supervision and overhead. The City charges back all labor costs to the district, while SMSD purchases all parts and provides them to the City.

TEA requires each eligible school district receiving state reimbursement to provide two annual school transportation reports, the School Transportation Route Services Report and the School Transportation Operations Report. The former lists miles traveled and the number of riders by program and subprogram and serves as the basis for calculating a district's transportation reimbursement from the state, while the latter lists total miles, costs, and fleet data. State transportation reimbursement is based upon students who either live two or more

road miles from the school (standard two-mile eligible students) or live within two miles of the school but in areas designated as hazardous.

Since SMSD is designated by the state as a Chapter 41 school district (designation began in 2001–02) and must send locally generated revenues back to the state, it does not receive any state allotment for transportation.

During on-site work the review team found that the district's transportation reports were incorrect and had been rejected by TEA back to 2001–02. As a result, for limited comparison purposes, the review team used the information prepared in concert by the district and the review team's transportation expert in analyzing SMSD transportation program trends and comparing it to peer districts.

Exhibit A-57 shows that from 1998–99 to 2002–03, the latest year for which transportation information is available, SMSD's costs for regular transportation increased by 4.3 percent and the total route mileage decreased by 17.2 percent, while the cost-per-mile for regular transportation increased by 26.1 percent over the same period. However, from 1999–2000 through 2002–03, the district's operating costs changed only slightly; the costs for regular transportation increased by 3.5 percent and the total route mileage increased by 0.4 percent, while the cost-per-mile for regular transportation increased by 3.0 percent.

Exhibit A-58 shows that from 1998–1999 through 2002–03, SMSD's costs for special education transportation increased by 43.5 percent and total route mileage decreased by 99.3 percent. SMSD's cost per mile for special education transportation increased by 107.5 percent for the same period.

EXHIBIT A-57
SMSD SUMMARY OF SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS REPORTS
REGULAR PROGRAM TRANSPORTATION
1998–99 THROUGH 2002–03

	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02 *	2002–03 **	PERCENT CHANGE 1998–99 TO 2002–03	PERCENT CHANGE 1999–2000 TO 2002–03
Operations Costs							
Salaries & Benefits	$393,565	$492,371	$416,822	$456,527	$489,585	24.3%	(0.6%)
Purchased & Contracted Services	$53,089	$75,159	$96,084	$91,085	$97,100	82.9%	29.2%
Supplies & Materials	$74,944	$86,909	$97,093	$86,013	$86,789	15.8%	(0.1%)
Other Operating Expenses	$78,527	$86,910	$115,111	$123,923	$21,973	(72.0%)	(74.7%)
Debt Service	$87,204	$0	$0	$0	$0	(100.0%)	No change
Capital Outlay	$110,016	$61,756	$111,948	$111,197	$135,931	23.5%	120.1%
Total Operations Costs	$797,345	$803,105	$837,058	$868,745	$831,378	4.3%	3.5%
Mileage Summary							
Route Mileage	175,034	143,100	140,580	140,580	140,580	(19.5%)	(1.8%)
Extra/Co-curricular Mileage	32,046	49,854	34,955	34,198	39,603	23.5%	(20.6%)
Non-School Organizations Mileage	68,058	38,000	44,000	50,000	45,000	(33.9%)	18.4%
Other Mileage	3,400	6,800	15,660	20,765	13,637	301.1%	100.5%
Total Annual Mileage	288,538	237,754	235,195	245,543	238,820	(17.2%)	0.4%
Cost-per-mile - Regular	$2.76	$3.38	$3.56	$3.54	$3.48	26.1%	3.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, School Transportation Operations Reports, 1998-99 through 2002–03 and WCL ENTERPRISES calculations.
*NOTE: State reporting for 2001–2002 has been submitted but not accepted by Texas Education Agency, School Transportation Division.
**NOTE: State reporting for 2002–03 has been prepared but cannot be submitted until 2001–02 is accepted.

EXHIBIT A-58
SMSD SUMMARY OF SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS REPORTS
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM TRANSPORTATION
1998-99 THROUGH 2002-03

	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02 *	2002–03 **	PERCENT CHANGE 1998–99 TO 2002–03
Operations Costs						
Salaries & Benefits	$43,729	$54,708	$67,855	$74,318	$79,700	82.2%
Purchased & Contracted Services	$5,898	$8,351	$15,642	$14,828	$15,807	168.0%
Supplies & Materials	$8,327	$9,656	$12,000	$11,729	$11,835	42.1%
Other Operating Expenses	$8,725	$9,656	$15,697	$16,899	$2,996	(65.7%)
Debt Service	$9,689	$0	$0	$0	$0	(100.0%)
Capital Outlay	$12,224	$6,862	$14,170	$13,743	$16,800	37.4%
Total Operations Costs	$88,592	$89,233	$125,364	$131,517	$127,138	43.5%
Mileage Summary						
Route Mileage	25,535	10,440	11,880	21,420	20,160	(21.0%)
Extra/Co-curricular Mileage	1,760	5,366	451	507	256	(85.5%)
Non-School Organizations Mileage	5,880	2,556	3,602	4,070	2,590	(56.0%)
Other Mileage	1,500	1,120	2,520	2,720	1,028	(31.5%)
Total Annual Mileage	34,675	19,482	18,453	28,717	24,034	(99.3%)
Cost-per-mile - Special	$2.55	$4.58	$6.79	$4.58	$5.29	107.5%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, School Transportation Operations Reports, 1998–99 through 2002–03 and WCL ENTERPRISES calculations.
* NOTE: State reporting for 2001–2002 has been submitted but not accepted by Texas Education Agency, School Transportation Division.
** NOTE: State reporting for 2002–03 has been prepared but cannot be submitted until 2001–02 is accepted.

SMSD has the second highest cost for regular transportation when compared with the peer districts **(Exhibit A-59)**.

SMSD has the second highest cost for special education transportation when compared with the peer districts **(Exhibit A-60)**.

EXHIBIT A-59
SMSD AND PEER DISTRICTS COMPARISON OF OPERATIONS COSTS
REGULAR PROGRAM TRANSPORTATION
2002–03

DISTRICT	SALARIES AND BENEFITS	PURCHASED AND CONTRACTED SERVICES	SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS	DEPRECIATION OTHER OPERATING EXPENSES	DEBT SERVICE	TOTAL OPERATING COSTS
Bandera	$573,778	$17,029	$141,171	$181,051	$0	$913,029
SMSD *	$489,585	$97,100	$86,789	$157,904	$0	$831,378
Fredericksburg	$390,961	$23,413	$136,318	$84,795	$0	$635,487
Decatur	$0	$508,403	$36,001	$0	$0	$544,404
Sweeny	$318,528	$28,090	$89,050	$15,989	$0	$451,657

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency School Transportation Operations Reports, 2002–03.
* State reporting for 2002–03 has been prepared but cannot be submitted until 2001–02 is accepted.

EXHIBIT A-60
SMSD AND PEER DISTRICTS COMPARISON OF OPERATIONS COSTS
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM TRANSPORTATION
2002–03

DISTRICT	SALARIES AND BENEFITS	PURCHASED AND CONTRACTED SERVICES	SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS	DEPRECIATION OTHER OPERATING EXPENSES	DEBT SERVICE	TOTAL OPERATING COSTS
Decatur	$0	$264,203	$13,382	$0	$0	$277,585
SMSD *	$79,700	$15,807	$11,835	$19,796	$0	$127,138
Bandera	$79,563	$2,361	$19,576	$25,105	$0	$126,605
Sweeny	$82,424	$4,957	$15,715	$2, 402	$0	$105,498
Fredericksburg	$70,728	$4,152	$7,014	$6,420	$0	$88,314

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency School Transportation Operations Reports, 2002–03.
* State reporting for 2002–03 has been prepared but cannot be submitted until 2001–02 is accepted.

COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE COMMENTS

A community open house held on March 23, 2004 at the Stafford Middle/High School Cafeteria produced the following comments.

The comments below illustrate community perceptions of Stafford Municipal School District (SMSD) and do not necessarily reflect the findings and opinions of the Legislative Budget Board or the review team.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

- The district does not really have a gifted and talented program. Children are identified, but the instruction is the same as the other kids.

- Our curriculum has been watered down. Our children are being taught strictly TEKS.

- We do have some very good teachers who truly care about the well-being and future of our kids.

- Implement a free after school TAKS/TAAS tutorial program.

- Offer more instructional programs to help student achievement.

- Too much emphasis on testing, no development of critical thinking and character building of students.

- Curriculum does not address diversity/cultural acceptance.

- Books at the beginning of the year have been in short supply.

- Counseling services are not proactive in identifying issues.

- Our students should be tested on a national level, i.e. Stanford 9.

- Special education has helped my student alot. Staff has gone out of their way to help and educate me to help, too.

- Stop teaching to the tests. Prepare students for college.

- The district needs to be teaching at a much higher level than TAKS. If the curriculum is geared more to the SAT or ACT, the TAKS will take care of itself.

- Very good overall.

- I am disappointed to find no active career track programs.

- What curriculum do we follow? Who is the curriculum specialist? Curriculum is not challenging. I think the fall enrollment will speak for itself.

- More services are needed to meet students' special needs.

- Recently, I have become concerned that many families have decided to move elsewhere in order to provide a better education for their family. This reputation affects the quality of the education perceived by higher-level institutions.

- Special education has been an area that has had many problems. This is an area that the administration has not been held accountable.

- Would prefer to keep the block schedule.

- The curriculum has been good. More emphasis needed to help students prepare for TAKS.

- We would like the option to leave SMSD without having to move out of Stafford.

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

- The superintendent is new; he seems to be very nice and listens to each problem. The management of the district finances seems to be a problem. We need to identify problems and address them.

- Top-heavy administration.

- Lack of committees to help seek ideas and suggestions from the community.

- Superintendent is very well qualified for the job. Good asset for SMSD.

- Board needs to be more involved in helping to frame policy to get the desired results from administration and staff.

- Lack of critical thinking and input from the board.

- Not sure of rash decisions made upon arrival of new superintendent.

- Changes in personnel very abrupt, very political.

- More enforcement and follow-up of rules and procedures. There is a lack of supervision over employees and their work product.

- The management at the high school is sorely lacking.

- The superintendent and the board are doing a very good job of reversing the schools. It will take a couple of years.

- The school board makes decisions based upon their personal agendas, not what is best for the children.

- The school board is out of touch with staff, students and parents. Student interest is far from their concern.

- Reassigning positions in the middle of the school year is disruptive.

- It seems there is no stability in the management of the school system. Everyone always blames everyone else, and nothing seems to improve.

- The school board has made some critical errors in not realizing what the community wants, due to the fact they do not listen to the community.

- "Who's on first?" Seem to have many, many chiefs. When a parent has issues or a problem, clarity is not there to enable a parent to get resolution of their issue.

- Abolish the school board. Please.

- Go back to Ft. Bend ISD; abolish the municipal school district.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Be more supportive of school organizations.

- Create community fund-raising opportunities to support schools, such as garage sale.

- The schools need to do a better job at parental involvement. The community relationship is not that strong. It is a struggle to deal with the schools.

- The business relationship with the schools needs to be improved. Local businesses partner with Ft. Bend ISD rather than SMSD.

- Community involvement is the number one problem for SMSD after fiscal accountability.

- Lack of communication with parents and community. Newsletters are used to promote personalities. Success stories are not told to the public. No active support from the board and administration.

- Who is responsible for community affairs?

- Business and school partnerships are good.

- Parental involvement – not enough.

- I was not aware, as a parent, when national testing (Iowa Test of Basic Skills) was given.

- As a parent, we are very involved with the school. We are a small community who cares about our school.

- Things are changing too fast and not for our children's best interests.

- Parental involvement at the high school is very low. I believe the problem is the lack of timely notice or no notice at all. Communication MUST improve.

- There is not enough or there is very little communication with parents from the teachers and staff.

- I have seen no areas in which SMSD has been involved in community activities. I think SMSD needs massive involvements in that area.

- Parent involvement is a joke. Parents may voice their opinion on an issue, but it falls on deaf ears with the administration.

- Parents have to beg teachers to communicate with the parents about students. Poor communication.

- Parent involvement is very poor. I have participated in meetings held by both school board members and school management and have volunteered to participate in school meetings where policies were discussed but have never been invited.

- Community involvement is an area where much improvement is needed.

- The school board and administrators need to do a better job of encouraging community involvement.

- Community involvement used to be great! Now apathy is our greatest enemy.

- I feel the community involvement in SMSD is very high. Most all businesses are involved in one way or another.

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

- We need to hire more teachers and reduce the classroom size.

- Unfortunately, many times people are hired because they know someone.

- Administrators' personal agendas should not be tolerated.

- We do not have a stable administration. Our primary, elementary, intermediate and high schools have had three principals in five years. Our teacher turnover rate is too high.

- We do not hire the best teachers available.

- Our staff needs cultural training.

- We do not have good gifted and talented teachers.

- Hire more certified teachers.

- Hiring practices are of great concern. The caliber of new teachers is of great concern. Turnover rates are puzzling.

- My concerns lie with the type of teachers that are being or will be hired in the future. Are there strict guidelines that we are following that enable SMSD to hire the best qualified teachers?

- Recruitment practices are bad. We are losing good teachers and staff.

- Why do the principals leave in the middle of the year?

- I have noticed substitute teachers used for at least one-half of the school year due to teacher turnover in the sixth grade.

- The district should have better background checks.

- Hiring practices of the administration is a "good ol' boy" system not the one most qualified.

- Teacher turnover is too high and too many administrators, also.

- School is unstable. Children feel the instability.

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

- In the past year there has been an attempt to reduce the access the community and community organizations have to the facilities. These restrictions have caused deep resentments. I would like the district to reconsider its position on this matter.

- The facilities could be better used. The custodial service could be better used.

- Lack of shared facility use to minimize value to taxpayers and non-profit organizations that supplement educational/after school activities for students.

- The use of the facilities should be offered to its residents.

- Our elementary school organized sports are being charged astronomical fees for the use of the facilities.

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- As a human resources professional, I find it appalling that the district can't come up with health insurance that is more affordable for employees.

- The money from bonds does not always seem to be spent on what it was issued for or it is held onto.

- No clear focus on investment policy.

- Who decides when and where investments are made? How are investments diversified?

- The health insurance is very expensive for employees and families.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- I know sports are important to schools and districts. However, I feel the arts also should be given the same respect. My child is involved in choir, and the budget we have to work with is impossible.

- The district seems to be in financial chaos. The administration seems to not have known enough about Robin Hood and how much has to be paid.

- There seems to be no internal audit program in the district.

- The money seems to go somewhere other than to our own students.

- Lack of communication to public about budget.

- Major expenditures are not planned in advance and no input from staff/community about ideas to reduce costs.

- Inventory control is lacking.

- No process for billing and tracking accounts receivable for services rendered.

- Unclear focus for prioritizing spending and determining areas where savings can be obtained.

- School taxes should be used for SMSD students only.

- No free open enrollment.

- Limit fund-raising activities.

- As a parent, I am sick of too many fundraisers.

- Each school should have budget overseen by the principal and not micromanaged by the superintendent.

- What monitors are in place? Who does the check and balance system?

- I do not feel money is being spent as wisely as needed. We have a lot of disgruntled employees, mainly teachers, and it shows in their performance with our children.

- Students, coaches and bus drivers should pay for their own food for away games.

PURCHASING AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

- Competitive bid process needs to change. Same old vendors year after year.

- District underutilizes interlocal agreement opportunities and should seek bartering agreements in some areas with vendors.

- Textbooks outdated. No material for TAKS. Computers are old.

- Is the bidding process open to the public? Are bids posted?

FOOD SERVICES

- Location could be larger to handle crowds.

- Cafeteria is always clean and neat. Workers are helpful. Food is great!!

- As a parent of a special education student, I send all his food, drinks, snacks, etc. Why can't the school offer the option of the student purchasing their meal at school?

- Our meal plan could consist of more nutritional foods. The selections are okay, but soda and chips should not be available to the younger kids.

- Our cafeteria is nice and clean, and I really like the payment options.

- I have eaten at the school several times, and the quality and taste of food is not good. I would like to see less junk food, such as nachos and corn dogs, and more healthy foods, such as a variety of sandwiches and more fruit.

- The children that have bought lunch do not eat the vegetables. What a waste of my money and the taxpayers.

- Elementary level needs improvement. Portion sizes for older kids are not enough.

- New menu items are needed.

- The food and menu are horrible. Food service was okay until the new administration for this school year.

- The menu or variety of foods offered isn't that great. Perhaps more vegetables and fruit.

- Quality of food is horrible. Food is spoiled or frozen, portions are too small, food lines don't move and students don't have time to eat.

- The quality of the food could improve.

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

- Inventory control is lacking.

- Underutilized technology available to provide communication to parents and students, i.e., notice via email server/distribution/phone tree, etc.

- My daughter took a Cisco class in the 11th grade. This class was a two-year course. In her senior year, there were no teachers qualified to teach this class. Big disappointment.

- My son was in a program in elementary school that was supposed to help his reading by giving us a computer he could use at home. We never received the computer.

- Overall, I feel the basic computer classes are good.

- Each campus should have a technology support person.

- Hardware should be up-to-date.

- Computer-based tutorials should be used on all campuses to improve student achievement.

- Keyboarding is mandatory. Waste of time.

- Outdated.

- What technology? I have yet to see any.

- Very good.

- The children should be taught more about computers and programs than they are now. Most classes with computer courses seem to be self-taught by the students.

TRANSPORTATION

- We have a great transportation system. It meets the needs of the neighborhood. Our kids are picked up very close to the house, sometimes in our driveway.

- Great. I really like the late athletic bus.

- For special education students who ride separate buses, there must be an aide in addition to the driver. We have had periods of time when the driver does not have an aide. The pressure the driver feels is very evident. Money should be in the budget to provide for aides.

- It is the greatest I have ever seen. My children are well taken care of. Drivers are concerned, and the buses are always on time. Well kept.

- I think SMSD does an excellent job in transporting our kids to and from school. We even have after school buses for those who have

after school activities. Our bus driver even makes Christmas ornaments for the kids each year.

- My daughter tells me sometimes the bus driver doesn't have "control" of the students on their bus.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

- Information should be posted on the SMSD website.

- SMSD should continue the no tolerance.

- Parents should be made aware of security measures.

- Continue the alternative campus setting.

- We need to do a better job with drug control in our school.

- Teachers and staff lack training on how to apply the Student Code of Conduct and levels of discipline. Conclusions are made without adequate investigation.

- No program in place to teach conflict resolution to students.

- It seems very difficult for teachers to enforce student policies, including the dress code.

- Administrators focus too much on trivial, unimportant violations that only work to discourage students from conforming. Administrators should concentrate on real issues that truly interfere with the growth and educational process in the schools.

- I don't feel that my child is safe at SMSD since a teacher had a gun on campus. We should have metal detectors, cameras or more security on campuses.

- Bullying is a problem, which caused my daughter to go to another school.

- Teachers are not monitoring students in halls between classes.

- I feel that in order to make the schools safer, the district should look into a camera surveillance system that would scan the entire campus both inside and out, not excluding the classrooms because the teachers can only do so much.

- SMSD's student discipline and safety and security programs need a lot of attention. Some students are punished too harshly whereas others are not.

- We have two police officers on the property, but they seem to stay seated in an office instead of patrolling the hallways. The officers should be seen.

- At present, the security seems adequate. My child has not voiced concerns regarding safety.

- I feel the students and staff are safe on our campuses. Good relations and response with local law enforcement.

- I think safety is an issue at the middle and high schools. There is only one officer on campus, and most of the time, he cannot handle all the issues.

- Student discipline is not always enforced.

- Why aren't there mandatory programs regarding school safety for our children?

- My son is a 7th grader, and I feel there is more concern about discipline than there is about learning.

- My child has not been in trouble in school; however, he did have an incident of bullying and verbal abuse by other students. I feel the way the incident was handled was not enough.

- Need to have more police officers in the schools at all times.

FOCUS GROUP COMMENTS

The review team held 15 focus group sessions from March 22, 2004 through March 26, 2004; three with civic and business groups, five with various parent groups, and seven with employee groups that produced the following comments.

The comments below illustrate community perceptions of Stafford Municipal School District (SMSD) and do not necessarily reflect the findings and opinions of the Legislative Budget Board or the review team.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

- Good programs—reading and math labs for Pace classes very good at the middle school, Thrilling Thursday program at middle school, Peer Assisted Leadership Skills (Pals) class, Advanced Placement English, ROTC at high school is awesome, dual credit in Spanish and Keyboarding.

- High school could be better organized.

- Staff development—we are surveyed every year.

- All we have had this year is Special Education staff development.

- Every teacher at middle school had a class of Pre-AP and not all had gifted and talented training.

- Lack of communication in staff development.

- Need to look at ESL training.

- Good programs at the primary, elementary and intermediate schools—Reading Recovery, Accelerated Reading instruction, tutoring for math.

- Title I program—only help given is in lab.

- Staff development is always the same and then it is not monitored.

- We need CPR/First aid in-service.

- There is no special education curriculum.

- Secondary counselors construct the master schedule.

- No guidance curriculum—we use the campus improvement plan.

- The district uses outside sources for assistance—Ft. Bend Regional council provides drug and alcohol counseling one day per week, campus-to-campus. United Way representative holds anger management groups and Texana provides a psychotherapist for individual counseling.

- A part-time counselor works at the alternative campus two days weekly.

- High School holds an annual college day during the school year. Approximately 50-60 colleges represented.

- Trying to do vertical teaming, but not there yet.

- Reading Recovery program—good program. The four teachers work with entire staff and actively participate in literacy model.

- Nearly every teacher in middle school stays one day weekly to tutor and offer extra help.

- Intermediate science lab is all hands on. All students rotate through the science lab.

- SMSD has been the UIL academic district champ for four consecutive years.

- High School special education inclusion for social studies and science—worked with Region service center for training.

- At the intermediate school—Academic Services Lab funded by Title I and local funds. All Title I Reading and Math Students use it. Teachers use part of the 90 min. conference period to supervise the lab. Anyone wanting extra help, one-on-one help, or a quiet place to study may use the lab. Two to three teachers are in the lab. Two to 10 students use the lab daily.

- We have a district English Language Arts guide. Other teachers align Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) with Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) by grade level and have a time line to meet TEKS.

- Worked on math scope and sequence three years ago but was never finished and is not in use.

- There is a high standard for education and that is good.

- Middle school has after school tutorial with bus service—all schools do.

- Thrilling Thursdays at middle school promotes reading.

- Middle School has workshops for students on Saturday and an after school Dyslexia program.

- Elementary has tutorials once per week based on weaknesses in reading and math and also during the day.

- Students are working at a good pace.

- District could have higher expectations for students.

- Why can students make A's and B's on the report card in first and second grade and then score very low on Iowa Test.

- Bilingual program is excellent. My child came with no English and in six months was speaking English well and is reading in kindergarten.

- Second grade bilingual is great.

- Last year only gave the Cogat to students recommended for the G/T program and used teacher recommendations for qualifications. This year all children take the ITBS and Cogat.

- Teacher recommended my child to be tested for the program and then it was her recommendation that kept him out of the program.

- Last year gifted program was only modification in the regular classroom. This year a pull-out was added.

- G/T kids get projects.

- Why do G/T kids have to do the regular work and the G/T work. If they go on a field trip they have to make up the regular work. Shouldn't G/T curriculum be same content with higher level skills?

- Some kids feel it is not a reward to be in G/T, just a cost.

- There are no G/T parent classes.

- Have had G/T parent meeting twice.

- G/T at high school is AP course. No differentiation for G/T student in AP.

- Would like to see the teachers move up the grade level with the students at middle school.

- Pleased that the students have the same teacher for six weeks in the pull-out program.

- Child is junior in high school, was identified G/T in grade 10, and I cannot see that anything different has occurred.

- My feeling is that the district cares more about special education than regular or G/T.

- When middle school G/T students are assigned projects they have choices. This is very positive.

- Teachers are doing the best job they can with limited resources and support.

- There is no curriculum to have follow-through.

- Procedures are not in place.

- Would like to keep the block schedule.

- High school curriculum not at correct level. When seniors take the ACT/SAT students who have been in National Honor Society do not score at the national average.

- Speech therapy services are very good.

- Agricultural program and FFA—very good program—very dedicated and active.

- I am concerned that my student will not be prepared for college even though she has taken advanced courses.

- ESL is kept as a crutch rather than getting them into mainstream.

- Parent of ADHD child said with parent insistence, the disability is being addressed.

- We experienced foot-dragging on testing for dyslexia.

- District is not prepared to handle dyslexix children.

- There is a disconnect with report grades and standardized tests.

- What are the standards? There appears to be very little homework required at the sixth grade.

- Services not provided consistently for special needs children. Some years good, some years horrific.

- Parent of learning disabled student has found programs and responsiveness in department to be appropriate, but testing is not complete.

- Parents must request to get all problems addressed.

- Speech teacher never attends the ARD.

- I have concerns that the Individual Educational Plans are not being followed.

- Messages seem not to get from the team leaders to the classroom teachers.

- Mainstream teachers need more training in handling special needs students.

- District has had history of weak counseling program. Lots of problems getting timely college information.

- When students change campuses some students seem lost in transition.

- Need to make adjustments for parents who are out of town when school holds orientation.

- Special needs children could have an orientation prior to school being out for transition.

- Counselor was not at ARD due to other responsibilities.

- Current fourth grader is not getting the same quality that my twelfth grader received in the fourth grade. Too much time preparing for tests and the writing assignments and research has diminished.

- Asians feel the standards are dropping.

- Middle school does not have many extra curricular opportunities.

- Independent thinking and analytical analysis is lacking. Not being give tools to research.

- Would like to see more critical thinking.

- Teachers give extra points for bringing box of Kleenex. Should not be part of grade. How do you know what student knows?

- Don't know how they do grades.

- High school does not know what the middle school is doing.

- Phonics program is the pits.

- They are late preparing for tests and are not challenging the students.

- Every teacher teaches something different in the same classes.

- A lot of problems in the counseling offices. District moved one out, but left the rest.

- Good—district implemented a six-year plan for graduation and held parent meetings with students and counselor.

- Class size is good.

- Field trips are limited to one per year.

- There is no real gifted and talented program. The work is not differentiated.

- Teachers need training in how to handle ADHD students.

- Weaknesses were seen in program and no remedies were put in place.

- High school has been a problem.

- Primary/elementary are benchmarking and targeting students who need extra help.

- Only one foreign language is offered in high school.

- Have not disaggregated data.

- Families move when children get to high school.

- To be a premier district you must specialize.

- District has the opportunity to do many things with Houston Community College and has not taken advantage of it.

- District has had problems in the band program. Kids never bought in and district did not recruit.

- District is not competitive in extra curricula activities.

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

- Board members have personal agendas.

- Districtwide Improvement Council (DWIC) is chaired by teachers—bottom up approach—plan approved early for the following year—central office helpful.

- Staff members see very little of board members on campus.

- Middle school campus improvement plan is a working document.

- High school—not sure if everyone got a copy of the improvement plan.

- Superintendent is new—board meetings seem to have less disagreement.

- Community wanted change in leadership and elected board members to do that.

- DWIC met six times this year.

- We have had a year of much change.

- Board is well educated.

- Board had a goal setting session in 2001-02. Campus plans reflected those goals. Have not had any recently.

- In board deliberations, I wonder if they know that the elementary school exists.

- Board is too involved in the administration of the high school. Those with children have children at the high school.

- The schools are small enough to be managed and it becomes more like a family. Would suggest size limits in the state for school size.

- There is a closeness of staff with parents and students.

- New superintendent and board working effectively.

- Campus plans are in place and are effective.

- Superintendent met with each campus and discussed financial—a real plus for him coming to the campus.

- School board planning for facilities has been good. Like the size of schools.

- Parents have not seen or read any board goals.

- There was a grass roots effort to turn over the board.

- New superintendent has been very visible compared to the former superintendent.

- Former superintendent became unresponsive. Not yet familiar with the new one.

- Superintendent seems to be trying.

- District and City should be intertwined and not let egos get in the way.

- Seems things are done in a sneaky manner rather than in the open.

- School board is out of touch with the parents and students. It is as if the district has been turned upside down.

- Tried to get rid of African American principal in October and now again.

- Focus in the district is not on the students.

- Some people on board had an agenda to get rid of the former superintendent.

- Board needs to get more input from the community.

- New superintendent made changes too fast. Did not take time to assess.

- Board member's wife made a complaint against a parent.

- Board sends mixed messages—made announcement at the board meeting that high school principal was at an academy when others said reassigned. Public needed to be informed rather than by the grapevine.

- How could we go so long and then all of a sudden we have a financial problem?

- If we have a financial problem why does the board have an attorney at every meeting? Isn't that costly?

- Board is concerned that kids are leaving the district and requested a demographic study to find out why—how much are we paying for that?

- District does not prioritize appropriately.

- City offered a room for board meetings so they could be televised, but district decided to spend money to retrofit their board room.

- Strength lies in that this is a municipal school district—and district has squandered some of that.

- School and community working together is strength.

- In 1975 everybody understood the concept, ideas and philosophies of the district. Books not bricks, but now we have every kind of brick and more bricks. We were not to be overburdened with administrators. It went awry when we had to hire the first superintendent.

- Superintendents do not become a part of the community.

- Mobility has become a problem.

- Sharing of resources with the city is a strength.

- Having one campus is a strength.

- In past three elections no incumbent has won.

- Animosity between school board and city has to do with priority of school board agenda.

- School board and administration lost sight that they were not an independent district. District wanted city to provide and district run their own show.

- Being a small district we should not have every program.

- Every campus has a campus improvement team—business members have a hard time attending planning meetings when scheduled.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Communication is lacking at secondary schools.

- Very little parent involvement at high school—booster clubs for music and athletics.

- Frost Bank hosts the Gifted and Talented Showcase of projects.

- The past two years businesses participated in a Career night.

- Reading and Writing at Intermediate supported by a Harley Davidson club (Hogs are coming).

- Middle school holds a one day Spartan camp for incoming sixth grade students and parents—may buy school supplies, have fashion show of school attire, demonstrate how to use lockers, and band director gives information about different instruments, etc. Is very well attended.

- Communication from administration to campus is good—improved from past.

- District invites volunteers. Stafford organization for Parents and Teachers.

- Local businesses support schools.

- Middle school open house—approximately 500 attendees.

- Middle school sponsors parent breakfast two times yearly.

- Elementary and intermediate sponsor breakfast for moms and breakfast for dads.

- Family learning nights at the elementary and also middle school.

- SOPT starts the volunteers—middle school has about 3 to 5 volunteers, elementary 5 and intermediate 3-5. High school has none.

- SOPT parents sponsor sock hops for 4th and 5th grade.

- SOPT at middle school is wonderful and so supportive. They provide for many needs and provide money.

- Book fair—a lot of parents attend with their students to buy books

- Communication could be better.

- Would like to receive summary or board notes after board meetings so that we would know what is going on. Could be by e-mail.

- The diagnosticians held a transition fair for students. Local businesses and colleges participated in the fair.

- Last year when there was a bomb threat the high school dismissed and the middle school did not. Bomb was found at 3 pm. Parents were never told.

- We get notices in English and Spanish.

- Need translators at meetings.

- Texas Instruments does a teacher luncheon at the beginning of the year.

- Accessibility of staff is great. My children are here under limited open enrollment and district is responsive.

- Some parents are involved and volunteer.

- Communication from school is good.

- More communication should be mailed and not sent home with children.

- Teachers are very responsive by e-mail.

- Communication at high school is not good. Very difficult to get information from the counselors.

- Open House starts too early for working parents.

- Need to divide Open House between levels. Parking is a problem and parents with multiple students cannot attend all.

- School Board needs to hold Town Hall meetings by levels for parent input and to keep the parents informed.

- Website is not updated.

- Programs have changed without notifying parents.

- Community is not informed about financial issues.

- Teachers come and go and parents are not informed. We are informed if weapons are found on campus.

- Counseling services and interventions should be in student handbook for information for parents.

- Teachers say they don't call parents. The parents should call the teacher.

- Parents feel the office staff does not always make them feel welcome.

- Communication between the schools and parents is not clear and timely.

- Parent does not like open enrollment policy.

- Communication can be improved.

- Local newspaper is not used.

- Content of newsletter should be addressed.

- When tragic incidents happen at one school other schools' parents should also be notified.

- There is a lot of opportunity for parent involvement.

- The community should do a better job to be involved.

- School board needs to have a monthly meeting with business leaders—need citizen advisory groups—must go back in history before we can go forward.

- Communication has not been a strong point.

- I get more info from the district now than prior years.

- Very little public participation. There is a Career and Technology advisory committee that meets.

- Not much parent involvement. Schools do not discourage but probably could encourage more. There are some language and custom barriers.

- We get newsletter twice yearly. Grade level and individual teachers send notes home.

- Spring Open House and fall orientation is held across district.

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

- District has no continuing contracts—makes teachers uneasy.

- No incentives for retention.

- Staff does not get salary info in a timely manner.

- All actions sheets were wrong this year.

- We have been given a lot of extra duties this year due to skeleton staff.

- Middle school does not get 30 minute duty free lunch due to escorting students to cafeteria.

- Teachers must do a lot of administrative and counseling work—counselors not available in crisis.

- When all administrators out of building teachers don't know who is charge.

- Teachers leave Stafford for lack of leadership.

- Teachers are not aware of change of command.

- Second year teacher—I have never received a teacher handbook.

- Salaries are low compared to neighboring districts.

- District joined a cohort with University of Houston, Victoria for employees to work on Masters Degree—the district pays one third, the university pays one third and the employee one third.

- Residents are leaving due to turnover of staff

- Some teachers are not certified.

- I know some paraprofessionals who are getting teachers' salary.

- Vacancies for administrative positions are not posted.

- How many 3A districts have two assistant superintendents, director of instructional services, and assistant curriculum coordinator at the elementary?

- Assistant superintendent job not posted.

- Elementary curriculum position not needed—transferred from intermediate to help elementary principal. District afraid of being sued due to disabilities act so they move to another campus.

- Why do we have athletic director, boys' coordinator and girls' coordinator?

- Aides are called to the office to do other things when they should be in the classroom.

- Look at size of bilingual classes.

- We have a staff development comp day—if you did not comp out you would get docked a days pay for that day.

- Ft. Bend salaries are higher—this affects retention.

- We need to pay a bilingual stipend.

- Salaries for support services are very low—hours have been cut and insurance cost increased.

- Big districts offer bonuses.

- Teachers are not certified—may contribute to turnover.

- Intermediate has a wonderful nurse.

- Staff morale is low—concerned about lay offs.

- High school has had lots of problems—need strong department heads and staff to help with hiring.

- Low morale of staff in the secondary schools trickles down to students.

- At middle school teachers do more personal reading than teaching.

- My children do not want to go to school when they know a certain substitute will be their teacher.

- Teachers yell at students.

- High school has had the most teacher turnover due to leadership.

- Teachers are not certified appropriately.

- There is a lack of well trained teachers.

- High qualified substitutes never get called due to not speaking Spanish.

- District promoted the advanced computer teacher and then disbanded the class.

- Need advanced training for teachers.

- Training of teachers needs to be improved.

- Would like to see a Junior Achievement program.

- Sixth grade science teacher was dismissed and parents were never notified.

- Salaries are low for teachers.

- High school is a concern for me as a parent.

- High school has lost some very qualified teachers and replaced with uncertified.

- Instability of administration—new every two to three years affects morale.

- Had a power struggle between teachers and administrators.

- Middle school—because of high concentration of one ethnicity we feel slighted and overlooked.

- Make sure faculty is not controlled by single ethnicity.

- Three principals in five years in all schools but the middle school.

- High school principal was not mentored.

- A lot of nepotism in the district.

- There are some great teachers here and some horrible ones.

- Principals need to do more evaluation and earlier.

- Teachers left due to administration. No high school principal has stayed more than two years. Have had five principals since 1999.

- Salaries are competitive.

- Retention of staff is a problem—may be due to lack of support in discipline—leaving for variety of reasons and administration.

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

- Custodial staff does awesome job.

- It is hit and miss on when work orders are completed—seems that it depends on if they know you or not.

- Primary school has 2-4 classrooms that cannot be used due to foundation problems—rooms are being used for storage. Why hasn't the foundation been repaired?

- No preventative maintenance.

- Work orders do not get done in three or four weeks.

- Would like to see custodians visible in classroom areas during the day rather than just in the cafeteria.

- Intermediate School is four years old and has foundation problems.

- Many leaks in the intermediate school.

- Every night the air is cut off and in the am you can hear the roof moving.

- Teachers have had to clean up nails, concrete and other items from the playground at the intermediate.

- Need more sidewalks for safety.

- Never have money allotted to go to workshops.

- Playgrounds need to be maintained better.

- Many times we do not know if it is school district or city responsibility.

- Automation of heating/cooling system is old and needs to be upgraded. In another year there will be no support for this system.

- Facilities are kept clean.

- City maintenance of grounds, etc. is a positive.

- Maintenance and warehouse facilities need updating—no fork lift or loading docks for big trucks delivering.

- Transportation needs a new facility.

- Custodial does excellent job.

- Agriculture barn area is overgrown unless parent requests mowing.

- The elementary and primary playgrounds are unsafe. Need repairs or replacement.

- District did not put in a playground at the Intermediate. The SOPT had to raise funds for playground and gym equipment and supplies.

- Ag barn fences are not kept by the district. The parents provide most of the repairs.

- All building slabs have cracked. Has been an issue.

- City provides grounds and vehicle maintenance.

- Custodial staff is excellent. Facilities are clean.

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- Inventory controls are not good.

- Bonds for school district are city bonds.

- Looking at refinancing bonds.

- Employee insurance rates not as good as they used to be.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- In the past each teacher received $50 for supplies—this year that was taken away.

- Do not get colored cartridges for printers.

- Everything I requested has been approved.

- No more department budgets.

- Previous superintendent had all the Title funds.

- Budget—financial planning—principals need to be trained and have a better understanding of the process of zero based.

- Principals don't have a clue of how much money they have for their campus.

- Need better communication from business department.

- Upheaval and turnover in the business office. The auditor presenting the audit pointed out changes that needed to be made and at the same meeting the district received an award from the state.

PURCHASING AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

- Textbooks were supposedly shipped to the intermediate but were not and have never been found.

- Textbooks and other deliveries can be hidden in the warehouse forever.

- Acquiring a product from a new source is very difficult—example, hot water coil for heating system—it has been four months and have not gotten. Probably purchasing was lax and now

the pendulum has swung too far the opposite direction.

- Purchasing process is much more difficult— tighter situation.

- Supplies are not provided by the district for the teachers. They ask parents at Open House to take an apple off a tree which lists items they need.

- Purchasing from local business may not be getting appropriate prices.

FOOD SERVICES

- Nutrition is improving.

- Nutrition is lacking in training.

- Students wait in long lines.

- School day is built around the cafeteria at middle and high school.

- Have only four lines to feed 300 middle school students in a lunch period.

- Food is horrible.

- Meals are all the same color and not appealing.

- Last class to go through cafeteria line never gets what is printed on menu.

- At intermediate school the food is undercooked.

- Quality of food has improved greatly.

- More kids are eating since the new director.

- Too many students to feed when middle school and high school use same cafeteria—causes scheduling problems.

- Eighty five percent of children eat in cafeteria.

- There are lines at the high school only if there is a computer jam.

- Never see anyone bringing their lunch at high school.

- Elementary menu is good.

- Food has improved and more choices.

- Food Service director is wonderful—provided a yearly menu.

- Cafeteria works well with special needs kids.

- Used to serve milk and juice, now just milk. Need something for lactose intolerant children.

- Certain menu items children won't eat. Need more choices.

- Kindergarten students eat at 10 am and have to last all day long. They get hungry.

- Like receiving menu at the beginning of the year.

- Middle school has long lines and not enough time to eat.

- The cafeteria runs out of food a lot.

- Food is served frozen in the middle.

- No color in meals—food is not attractive.

- Young children have choices and are not taking all foods.

- Need to offer water or juice and not just milk.

- High school has very little edible food. Buns have even had mold on them.

- The number for child nutrition is never answered. If you leave a message you never get a call back.

- Would like to receive a statement on my child's lunch account periodically.

- Students buy ice cream with meal. To keep it from melting they eat it first and then are not hungry for the meal.

- Kindergarten is served breakfast for lunch and do not like it.

- Parents got an annual menu listing the main entrée that is rotated every five weeks. It then lists a variety of side items for the entire period. Would like to know by day so that child will know when they want to eat in cafeteria. My child would eat when mashed potatoes are served but not when rice is served. We don't know which will be served with the entrée.

- Would like to see yearly menu with all choices daily.

- I have seen them just rinse off vegetables and use them when they are slimy.

- Up through fifth grade students should not have choices. They are not choosing well-balanced meals and then they are allowed to go through the snack line for chips and that sugar Fruitopia.

- Why can't they have water machines?

- Not enough time to go thru the line in middle school.

- Breakfast is cold and sometimes frozen in the middle.

- Choices of food good.

- The process used now by name—what safe guards that another student cannot use account.

- I have eaten in the cafeteria and have no problem with food.

- Lines are too long.

- Quality of food is questionable. Price increased this year for the first time.

- Food service is in a state of change.

- Nutrition department lost money and had to be supplemented by the general fund.

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

- Computer server should be increased so students could have individual password rather than the generic password.

- Need a separate lab for regular classes rather than just the computer class lab—classrooms have only two student stations.

- Technology misguided dollars into distance learning labs that are never used.

- Have never seen anyone in the distance learning labs at the middle school and high school.

- Computers need to be disc free to avoid viruses—students bring in discs from home.

- Not enough computer technicians—can be a month, or month and one-half before computers are repaired.

- Middle school has glitch in grade program.

- Technology needs updating.

- Technology team is swamped. If you put in requests for work orders you wait forever.

- We have two labs but one person must work both labs.

- Half the computers do not work.

- Headsets are broken.

- Computer lab aide also does In School Suspension.

- Intermediate school uses the Computers on Wheels (COW) lab a lot.

- Primary says their COW is locked in the distance learning lab.

- Board needs to take a positive position on updating technology.

- The district Website has been a concern.

- We love our technology technicians.

- Check on Web page—not kept up to date.

- Computers at the elementary and middle school are very old and don't function properly—not more than 200 or 300 mhz.

- May take a couple of weeks for computer to be repaired after work order is sent.

- Elementary computer lab was inherited from the University of Houston. Can not do much with it.

- Tremendous problems in technology. Band director is now head of technology.

- Computer repair is not timely.

- Software has been a problem. Not aware of any process to purchase software.

TRANSPORTATION

- If the 4:15 bus schedule for tutorial/detention/clubs was eliminated behaviors would change.

- The 4:15 bus allows students to receive tutorial help.

- Detention students should not be allowed to ride the 4:15 bus.

- Need to look at streamlining transportation—redo routes—should not run all 24 buses for each route.

- Some buses have only three or four students on the first run—Pre K and K.

- All 24 buses make the Pre K and K run.

- Kindergarten bus routes can have only one child on bus and they make the entire route. Many buses have less than five riders.

- Transportation drives the school schedules. There is no reason for grades one to three to have to remain at school until 3:30.

- Pre K and K dismiss at 2:30—all 24 buses come and many times only 2 students per bus.

- Some bus drivers do not report discipline problems to principal.

- Bus drivers need training.

- Need extra bus and bus drivers for field trips so the field trip would not be limited on time.

- Transportation is provided for all students who are residents of the district.

- Middle school and intermediate had some bus routes combined causing overcrowded buses—

due to lack of substitute drivers—seems to always be the same two routes.

- Bus driver begins driving before students are seated.

- Transportation is great. Three different times for buses to run. Bus drivers are conscientious.

- Transportation is great.

- Transportation is very good. Our bus driver is very responsive. If there is a problem, transportation responds.

- Every child can ride the bus. Check routes and scheduling. Primary and elementary added an hour to day to accommodate transportation.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

- Don't have good security.

- City police are not effective—don't want to be involved—students can be fighting in front of their office and they do not take care of it.

- Security is not visible on campus and in parking lots.

- We need independent school district police.

- Police have a character education program for sixth grade that is very good.

- Safety and security is adequate but more needs to be done.

- Primary/elementary—visitors must sign in and wear tag.

- Serious consequence discipline is not being applied.

- Keys are an issue. We used to have keys to the building. Have a key to my office but cannot get into my office because of no key to the office in front of mine.

- Don't get much support from school resource officers. The two officers do not get along.

- Kids feel safe at school.

- Children cannot be children anymore—at the elementary school they have to move like soldiers.

- Kids may feel safe, but adults don't.

- High School does not have uniforms, all other levels do and uniforms are a positive.

- Backpacks must be kept in locker.

- Two police officers for the district—we need more.

- If the officer is out of the district there is never a substitute.

- We have a discipline plan—could be more strictly enforced and be more consistent.

- Alternative center is off campus. Some students are sent there when they should be expelled.

- I have been told by the school that they don't know where my child is—two or three times.

- Am not happy that entire class is punished for one child misbehaving—missing recess.

- Behavior at middle school is bad. Principal says normal for the age.

- Minimal discipline problems in elementary.

- Gang problems in middle school.

- When I call the principal, issues are taken care of.

- My child had to go through mediation and parent was never notified.

- Discipline is effective.

- I am horrified by how children behave in the hallways.

- There has been a change of principals at the middle school. I think students are testing and being more disruptive.

- Too many children assigned ISS.

- Teachers don't want to write students up because they don't want to call parents.

- Parent walked into middle school classroom and no teacher was in the class.

- Discipline in high school classrooms is appalling.

- There used to be a police officer in the parking lot when high school dismisses and that needs to be reinstated.

- Lack of discipline or classroom management affects learning.

- Teachers are not taking care of classroom management.

- Parent has taken child from school and called back and the school never knew the parent took the child—at middle school. If secretary goes to lunch there is no supervision in the office.

- District needs to verify residency of students.

- If one or two are disruptive the entire class is penalized in the lower grades.

- Look at how ISS and Alternative placements are applied at the middle and high school.

- Why can teachers write a long list of negatives on notes home and only a smiley face if child has done well?

- Discipline needs improvement and has for a long time.

- Generally kids feel safe at school.

STUDENT SURVEY

SMSD MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

The review team received survey responses from Stafford MSD students in spring 2004. This data was used to get a better sense of the perceptions and issues confronting the district and to gain a more complete picture of the learning environment. Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Demographic Data

1.	GENDER (OPTIONAL)	MALE	FEMALE	NO RESPONSE
		37.5%	45.8%	16.7%

2.	ETHNICITY (OPTIONAL)	AFRICAN AMERICAN	ANGLO	HISPANIC	ASIAN	OTHER	NO RESPONSE
		29.2%	4.2%	25.0%	25.0%	8.3%	8.3%

3.	WHAT IS YOUR CLASSIFICATION?	JUNIOR	SENIOR	NO RESPONSE
		41.7%	54.2%	4.2%

A. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	0.0%	29.2%	25.0%	29.2%	16.7%
2. The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	0.0%	33.3%	45.8%	12.5%	8.3%
3. The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
a. Reading	16.7%	29.2%	33.3%	12.5%	8.3%
b. Writing	16.7%	33.3%	29.2%	8.3%	12.5%
c. Mathematics	4.2%	50.0%	8.3%	16.7%	20.8%
d. Science	20.8%	41.7%	33.3%	4.2%	0.0%
e. English or Language Arts	25.0%	41.7%	20.8%	4.2%	8.3%
f. Computer Instruction	29.2%	33.3%	33.3%	4.2%	0.0%
g. Social Studies (history or geography)	20.8%	29.2%	33.3%	16.7%	0.0%
h. Fine Arts	12.5%	45.8%	25.0%	8.3%	8.3%
i. Physical Education	29.2%	29.2%	41.7%	0.0%	0.0%
j. Business Education	25.0%	16.7%	54.2%	4.2%	0.0%
k. Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	20.8%	12.5%	58.3%	8.3%	0.0%
l. Foreign Language	4.2%	25.0%	25.0%	20.8%	25.0%
4. The district has effective special programs for the following:					
a. Library Service	16.7%	29.2%	29.2%	12.5%	12.5%
b. Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	12.5%	12.5%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%
c. Special Education	8.3%	16.7%	75.0%	0.0%	0.0%
d. Student mentoring program	4.2%	4.2%	70.8%	12.5%	8.3%
e. Advanced placement program	12.5%	29.2%	50.0%	4.2%	4.2%
f. Career counseling program	4.2%	20.8%	41.7%	8.3%	25.0%
g. College counseling program	8.3%	20.8%	33.3%	12.5%	25.0%
5. Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	8.3%	45.8%	12.5%	25.0%	8.3%
6. Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	8.3%	45.8%	16.7%	25.0%	4.2%
7. The district provides a high quality education.	0.0%	25.0%	29.2%	37.5%	8.3%
8. The district has a high quality of teachers.	0.0%	4.2%	12.5%	62.5%	20.8%

B. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
9. Schools are clean.	8.3%	45.8%	20.8%	12.5%	12.5%
10. Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	12.5%	45.8%	8.3%	20.8%	12.5%
11. Repairs are made in a timely manner.	8.3%	33.3%	16.7%	33.3%	8.3%
12. Emergency maintenance is handled in a timely manner.	8.3%	25.0%	29.2%	29.2%	8.3%

C. PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
13. There are enough textbooks in all my classes.	20.8%	41.7%	12.5%	20.8%	4.2%
14. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	8.3%	50.0%	16.7%	20.8%	4.2%
15. Textbooks are in good shape.	12.5%	16.7%	33.3%	20.8%	16.7%
16. The school library meets student's needs for books and other resources.	4.2%	33.3%	33.3%	20.8%	8.3%

D. FOOD SERVICES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
17. The school breakfast program is available to all children.	12.5%	58.3%	16.7%	4.2%	8.3%
18. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	0.0%	12.5%	8.3%	16.7%	62.5%
19. Food is served warm.	0.0%	37.5%	8.3%	12.5%	41.7%
20. Students have enough time to eat.	0.0%	25.0%	16.7%	8.3%	50.0%
21. Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	0.0%	33.3%	12.5%	12.5%	41.7%
22. Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	8.3%	25.0%	12.5%	37.5%	16.7%
23. Discipline and order are maintained in the schools cafeteria.	4.2%	37.5%	25.0%	12.5%	20.8%
24. Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	20.8%	20.8%	25.0%	16.7%	16.7%
25. Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	4.2%	50.0%	20.8%	4.2%	20.8%

E. TRANSPORTATION

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
26. I regularly ride the bus.	20.8%	16.7%	12.5%	25.0%	25.0%
27. The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	20.8%	12.5%	45.8%	16.7%	4.2%
28. The length of the bus ride is reasonable.	20.8%	20.8%	45.8%	4.2%	8.3%
29. The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	20.8%	41.7%	33.3%	0.0%	4.2%
30. The bus stop near my house is safe.	29.2%	29.2%	37.5%	0.0%	4.2%
31. The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	25.0%	37.5%	29.2%	0.0%	8.3%
32. Buses arrive and depart on time.	25.0%	16.7%	37.5%	8.3%	12.5%
33. Buses arrive early enough to eat breakfast at school.	16.7%	12.5%	50.0%	12.5%	8.3%
34. Buses seldom break down.	20.8%	20.8%	41.7%	12.5%	4.2%
35. Buses are clean.	20.8%	29.2%	37.5%	4.2%	8.3%
36. Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	12.5%	25.0%	37.5%	8.3%	16.7%

F. SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
37. I feel safe and secure at school.	16.7%	29.2%	20.8%	8.3%	25.0%
38. School disturbances are infrequent.	4.2%	25.0%	29.2%	16.7%	25.0%
39. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	12.5%	37.5%	25.0%	16.7%	8.3%
40. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	8.3%	8.3%	20.8%	25.0%	37.5%
41. Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	12.5%	12.5%	29.2%	33.3%	12.5%
42. Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	12.5%	16.7%	50.0%	12.5%	8.3%
43. Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	12.5%	33.3%	25.0%	12.5%	16.7%
44. A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	0.0%	37.5%	45.8%	4.2%	12.5%
45. Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	16.7%	20.8%	25.0%	12.5%	25.0%
46. Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	0.0%	12.5%	54.2%	20.8%	12.5%

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.	8.3%	33.3%	16.7%	25.0%	16.7%
48. Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	12.5%	58.3%	20.8%	0.0%	8.3%
49. Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	12.5%	58.3%	20.8%	0.0%	8.3%
50. The district offers enough classes in computer fundamentals.	12.5%	54.2%	20.8%	4.2%	8.3%
51. The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.	16.7%	50.0%	20.8%	4.2%	8.3%
52. Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	25.0%	58.3%	8.3%	0.0%	8.3%

PARENT SURVEY

SMSD MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

The review team received survey responses in Fall 2003 from parents of students of Stafford MSD. This data was used to get a better sense of the perceptions and issues confronting the district. Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Demographic Data

1.	GENDER (OPTIONAL)	FEMALE	MALE	NO RESPONSE
		67.0%	28.9%	4.1%

2.	ETHNICITY (OPTIONAL)	AFRICAN AMERICAN	ANGLO	ASIAN	HISPANIC	NO RESPONSE	OTHER
		20.6%	25.8%	20.6%	24.7%	6.2%	2.1%

3.	HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED IN STAFFORD MSD?	0-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11 YEARS OR MORE
		32.0%	29.9%	38.1%

4.	WHAT GRADES LEVEL(S) DOES YOUR CHILD(REN) ATTEND?				
	PRE-KINDERGARTEN	KINDERGARTEN	FIRST GRADE	SECOND GRADE	THIRD GRADE
	2.1%	7.2%	7.2%	5.2%	8.3%
	FOURTH GRADE	FIFTH GRADE	SIXTH GRADE	SEVENTH GRADE	EIGHTH GRADE
	6.2%	14.4%	23.7%	27.8%	32.0%
	NINTH GRADE	TENTH GRADE	ELEVENTH GRADE	TWELFTH GRADE	
	11.3%	16.5%	17.5%	17.5%	

A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

	SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	7.2%	34.0%	36.1%	15.5%	7.2%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	7.2%	29.9%	37.1%	15.5%	10.3%
3.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	11.3%	30.9%	45.4%	5.2%	7.2%
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	8.3%	29.9%	52.6%	3.1%	6.2%

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.	13.4%	42.3%	10.3%	26.8%	7.2%
6.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	13.4%	30.9%	36.1%	18.6%	1.0%
7.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	5.2%	33.0%	25.8%	22.7%	13.4%
8.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	5.2%	32.0%	40.2%	16.5%	6.2%
9.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
a.	Reading	15.5%	68.0%	4.1%	10.3%	2.1%
b.	Writing	13.4%	61.9%	5.2%	15.5%	4.1%
c.	Mathematics	12.4%	57.7%	9.3%	16.5%	4.1%
d.	Science	11.3%	67.0%	6.2%	12.4%	3.1%
e.	English or Language Arts	15.5%	67.0%	4.1%	11.3%	2.1%
f.	Computer Instruction	13.4%	67.0%	6.2%	10.3%	3.1%
g.	Social Studies (history or geography)	13.4%	67.0%	6.2%	10.3%	3.1%
h.	Fine Arts	10.3%	51.6%	17.5%	16.5%	4.1%
i.	Physical Education	16.5%	59.8%	10.3%	10.3%	3.1%
j.	Business Education	8.3%	33.0%	35.1%	18.6%	5.2%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT (CONTINUED)

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
k. Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	9.3%	32.0%	35.1%	16.5%	7.2%
l. Foreign Language	11.3%	35.1%	23.7%	19.6%	10.3%
10. The district has effective special programs for the following:					
a. Library Service	12.4%	51.6%	21.7%	12.4%	2.1%
b. Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	10.3%	49.5%	23.7%	13.4%	3.1%
c. Special Education	12.4%	45.4%	30.9%	6.2%	5.2%
d. Head Start and Even Start programs	8.3%	26.8%	53.6%	7.2%	4.1%
e. Dyslexia program	5.2%	16.5%	58.8%	14.4%	5.2%
f. Student mentoring program	9.3%	27.8%	32.0%	24.7%	6.2%
g. Advanced placement program	9.3%	42.3%	29.9%	13.4%	5.2%
h. Literacy program	7.2%	36.1%	40.2%	11.3%	5.2%
i. Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	7.2%	16.5%	50.5%	16.5%	9.3%
j. Summer school programs	15.5%	43.3%	16.5%	14.4%	10.3%
k. Alternative education programs	8.3%	27.8%	45.4%	14.4%	4.1%
l. "English as a second language" program	15.5%	32.0%	37.1%	11.3%	4.1%
m. Career counseling program	7.2%	25.8%	29.9%	20.6%	16.5%
n. College counseling program	4.1%	27.8%	27.8%	17.5%	22.7%
o. Counseling the parents of students	7.2%	27.8%	24.7%	19.6%	20.6%
p. Drop out prevention program	6.2%	18.6%	44.3%	17.5%	13.4%
11. Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	12.4%	44.3%	13.4%	16.5%	13.4%
12. Teacher turnover is low.	4.1%	24.7%	28.9%	19.6%	22.7%
13. Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	6.2%	23.7%	27.8%	25.8%	16.5%
14. A substitute teacher rarely teaches my child.	6.2%	38.1%	19.6%	23.7%	12.4%
15. Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	11.3%	46.4%	15.5%	21.7%	5.2%
16. All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs, and art classes.	12.4%	57.7%	17.5%	8.3%	4.1%
17. Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	23.7%	65.0%	3.1%	8.3%	0.0%
18. Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	13.4%	45.4%	28.9%	11.3%	1.0%
19. The district provides a high quality education.	14.4%	33.0%	13.4%	25.8%	13.4%
20. The district has a high quality of teachers.	12.4%	29.9%	18.6%	27.8%	11.3%

C. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
21. The district regularly communicates with parents.	12.4%	33.0%	15.5%	26.8%	12.4%
22. District facilities are open for community use.	9.3%	42.3%	30.9%	10.3%	7.2%
23. Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	10.3%	30.9%	24.7%	21.7%	12.4%

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.	5.2%	29.9%	36.1%	17.5%	11.3%
25. Schools are clean.	25.8%	57.7%	7.2%	7.2%	2.1%
26. Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	18.6%	51.6%	15.5%	13.4%	1.0%
27. Repairs are made in a timely manner.	14.4%	46.4%	23.7%	12.4%	3.1%
28. The district uses very few portable buildings.	37.1%	42.3%	17.5%	3.1%	0.0%
29. Emergency maintenance is handled expeditiously.	11.3%	41.2%	38.1%	8.3%	1.0%

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.	9.3%	32.0%	23.7%	21.7%	13.4%
31. Board members and administrators do a good job explaining the use of tax dollars.	5.2%	23.7%	34.0%	19.6%	17.5%

F. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
32. Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	3.1%	19.6%	51.6%	18.6%	7.2%
33. Campus administrators are well-trained in fiscal management techniques.	4.1%	19.6%	52.6%	16.5%	7.2%
34. The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	5.2%	19.6%	50.5%	16.5%	8.3%
35. Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	5.2%	20.6%	58.8%	8.3%	7.2%

G. PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
36. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	15.5%	55.7%	9.3%	15.5%	4.1%
37. Textbooks are in good shape.	17.5%	65.0%	9.3%	6.2%	2.1%
38. The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	20.6%	54.6%	12.4%	9.3%	3.1%

H. FOOD SERVICES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
39. My child regularly purchases his/her meal from the cafeteria.	33.0%	43.3%	12.4%	9.3%	2.1%
40. The school breakfast program is available to all children.	28.9%	58.8%	9.3%	2.1%	1.0%
41. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	11.3%	36.1%	21.7%	18.6%	12.4%
42. Food is served warm.	16.5%	44.3%	15.5%	15.5%	8.3%
43. Students have enough time to eat.	5.2%	34.0%	8.3%	23.7%	28.9%
44. Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	10.3%	45.4%	13.4%	17.5%	13.4%
45. Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes	9.3%	22.7%	20.6%	21.7%	25.8%
46. Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	10.3%	60.8%	16.5%	7.2%	5.2%
47. Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	10.3%	46.4%	25.8%	7.2%	10.3%
48. Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	14.4%	53.6%	16.5%	10.3%	5.2%

I. TRANSPORTATION

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
49. My child regularly rides the bus.	38.1%	38.1%	4.1%	9.3%	10.3%
50. The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	26.8%	45.4%	19.6%	6.2%	2.1%
51. The length of the student's bus ride is reasonable.	26.8%	47.4%	20.6%	2.1%	3.1%
52. The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	30.9%	51.6%	14.4%	2.1%	1.0%
53. The bus stop near my house is safe.	33.0%	52.6%	12.4%	1.0%	1.0%
54. The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	36.1%	54.6%	9.3%	0.0%	0.0%
55. Buses arrive and depart on time.	25.8%	52.6%	13.4%	4.1%	4.1%
56. Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	21.7%	43.3%	20.6%	8.3%	6.2%
57. Buses seldom break down.	24.7%	42.3%	27.8%	3.1%	2.1%
58. Buses are clean.	22.7%	53.6%	17.5%	1.0%	5.2%
59. Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	25.8%	47.4%	16.5%	5.2%	5.2%
60. The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	17.5%	25.8%	53.6%	2.1%	1.0%

J. SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
61. Students feel safe and secure at school.	16.5%	53.6%	11.3%	15.5%	3.1%
62. School disturbances are infrequent.	11.3%	50.5%	16.5%	13.4%	8.3%
63. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	10.3%	29.9%	25.8%	25.8%	8.3%
64. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	6.2%	20.6%	26.8%	30.9%	15.5%
65. Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	9.3%	33.0%	26.8%	21.7%	9.3%
66. Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	17.5%	43.3%	29.9%	8.3%	1.0%
67. Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	13.4%	48.5%	29.9%	3.1%	5.2%
68. A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	16.5%	49.5%	25.8%	5.2%	3.1%
69. Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	10.3%	41.2%	15.5%	17.5%	15.5%
70. Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	9.3%	33.0%	34.0%	15.5%	8.3%

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.	12.4%	57.7%	18.6%	8.3%	3.1%
72. Computers are new enough to be useful to teach students.	13.4%	62.9%	9.3%	9.3%	5.2%
73. The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	13.4%	54.6%	10.3%	17.5%	4.1%
74. The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	13.4%	35.1%	24.7%	21.7%	5.2%
75. Students have easy access to the Internet.	13.4%	53.6%	16.5%	11.3%	5.2%

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY

SMSD MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

The review team received survey responses in Fall 2003 from Stafford MSD administrators and support staff. This data was used to get a better sense of the perceptions and issues confronting the district. In addition, this was a useful tool in drawing comparisons between the perception and opinions of the district staff versus other stakeholders. Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Demographic data

1.	GENDER (OPTIONAL)	MALE	FEMALE	NO RESPONSE		
		9.8%	83.0%	7.2%		

2.	ETHNICITY (OPTIONAL)	AFRICAN AMERICAN	ANGLO	HISPANIC	ASIAN	OTHER	NO RESPONSE
		3.6%	54%	27.8%	0.5%	3.6%	9.8%

3.	HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN EMPLOYED BY STAFFORD MSD?	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS	NO RESPONSE
		27.8%	23.2%	17.5%	10.8%	19.6%	1.0%

4.	ARE YOU A:	A. ADMINISTRATOR	B. CLERICAL STAFFER	C. SUPPORT STAFFER	D. NO RESPONSE
		25.3%	24.7%	46.9%	3.1%

5.	HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN EMPLOYED IN THIS CAPACITY BY STAFFORD MSD?	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS	NO RESPONSE
		33.5%	25.3%	17.0%	8.8%	12.4%	3.1%

A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	16.5%	40.2%	32.5%	9.3%	1.6%
2. School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	8.8%	42.8%	22.2%	22.2%	4.1%
3. The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	25.3%	40.7%	20.6%	9.3%	4.1%
4. The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	23.7%	36.1%	25.3%	11.3%	3.6%
5. Central administration is efficient.	13.9%	43.8%	16.0%	20.6%	5.7%
6. Central administration supports the educational process.	17.5%	49.5%	17.5%	11.9%	3.6%
7. The morale of central administration staff is good.	10.8%	43.3%	31.4%	12.4%	2.1%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
8. Education is the main priority in our school district.	30.4%	43.3%	7.2%	16.0%	3.1%
9. Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	12.9%	39.7%	30.4%	16.5%	0.5%
10. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	8.8%	44.3%	32.5%	12.4%	2.1%
11. The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	9.8%	36.6%	32.5%	19.1%	2.1%
12. The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
a. Reading	20.1%	50.5%	20.6%	6.7%	2.1%
b. Writing	17.0%	53.1%	20.6%	7.7%	1.6%
c. Mathematics	18.0%	52.1%	20.1%	8.8%	1.0%
d. Science	15.0%	50.5%	25.3%	8.8%	0.5%
e. English or Language Arts	16.0%	54.1%	22.7%	6.2%	1.0%
f. Computer Instruction	14.4%	50.5%	19.6%	12.9%	2.6%
g. Social Studies (history or geography)	12.9%	53.6%	24.2%	8.8%	0.5%
h. Fine Arts	11.9%	49.5%	25.3%	9.3%	4.1%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT
(CONTINUED)

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
i. Physical Education	13.9%	54.1%	22.2%	7.7%	2.1%
j. Business Education	10.3%	45.4%	33.5%	9.8%	1.0%
k. Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	11.3%	47.4%	27.3%	11.9%	2.1%
l. Foreign Language	10.3%	46.9%	30.4%	10.8%	1.6%
13. The district has effective special programs for the following:					
a. Library Service	10.3%	40.7%	36.6%	11.3%	1.0%
b. Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	16.0%	51.0%	23.2%	9.3%	0.5%
c. Special Education	18.6%	47.9%	20.1%	11.3%	2.1%
d. Head Start and Even Start programs	17.5%	47.4%	30.9%	4.1%	0.0%
e. Dyslexia program	13.4%	34.0%	34.5%	13.4%	4.6%
f. Student mentoring program	7.2%	34.0%	40.2%	15.5%	3.1%
g. Advanced placement program	12.4%	37.1%	38.7%	10.3%	1.6%
h. Literacy program	10.8%	39.2%	40.7%	5.7%	3.6%
i. Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	12.4%	37.6%	27.3%	18.6%	4.1%
j. Summer school programs	13.4%	52.6%	25.8%	8.3%	0.0%
k. Alternative education programs	12.9%	46.9%	27.3%	8.8%	4.1%
l. "English as a second language" program	8.8%	44.9%	32.0%	11.9%	2.6%
m. Career counseling program	9.8%	33.0%	36.1%	20.6%	0.5%
n. College counseling program	9.8%	35.6%	35.1%	19.1%	0.5%
o. Counseling the parents of students	10.8%	23.7%	36.6%	25.3%	3.6%
p. Drop out prevention program	8.3%	32.0%	34.0%	22.7%	3.1%
14. Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	12.9%	37.6%	25.8%	16.5%	7.2%
15. Teacher turnover is low.	5.7%	26.8%	34.0%	25.8%	7.7%
16. Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	6.7%	33.0%	25.8%	28.4%	6.2%
17. Teacher openings are filled quickly.	10.3%	40.2%	25.8%	19.1%	4.6%
18. Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	3.6%	16.0%	30.9%	33.5%	16.0%
19. Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	5.2%	27.8%	42.3%	20.6%	4.1%
20. All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs, and art classes.	10.8%	26.8%	20.1%	29.4%	12.9%
21. The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	7.7%	35.6%	18.6%	28.4%	9.8%
22. Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	20.1%	60.8%	13.4%	5.2%	0.5%
23. Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	11.9%	46.4%	27.3%	11.9%	2.6%

C. PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
24. District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	1.0%	15.0%	14.4%	46.4%	23.2%
25. The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	7.7%	38.1%	27.3%	21.1%	5.7%
26. Temporary workers are rarely used.	5.7%	29.9%	29.9%	30.4%	4.1%
27. The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	3.6%	22.2%	38.1%	26.8%	9.3%
28. The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	3.6%	24.2%	38.1%	27.3%	6.7%
29. The district operates an effective staff development program.	10.3%	42.3%	25.3%	15.5%	6.7%
30. District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	19.6%	57.7%	11.3%	7.7%	3.6%
31. The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	4.6%	16.5%	19.1%	36.1%	23.7%
32. Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	4.1%	26.3%	26.8%	29.4%	13.4%
33. The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	7.2%	31.4%	47.9%	10.8%	2.6%
34. The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	2.6%	33.0%	11.9%	30.4%	22.2%

D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
35. The district regularly communicates with parents.	10.8%	47.9%	19.6%	18.6%	3.1%
36. The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	11.3%	60.3%	11.3%	12.4%	4.6%
37. Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	7.7%	22.2%	29.4%	32.0%	8.8%
38. District facilities are open for community use.	10.8%	44.3%	33.0%	8.8%	3.1%

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.	5.7%	28.4%	35.6%	25.3%	5.2%
40. The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	4.6%	20.6%	64.4%	7.7%	2.6%
41. Schools are clean.	17.5%	54.1%	9.3%	13.4%	5.7%
42. Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	13.4%	40.7%	9.8%	24.7%	11.3%
43. Repairs are made in a timely manner.	11.3%	36.1%	11.3%	30.9%	10.3%
44. Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	18.6%	52.1%	13.4%	12.4%	3.6%

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.	6.7%	33.0%	44.3%	8.8%	7.2%
46. Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	7.7%	33.0%	40.2%	12.4%	6.7%
47. The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	6.2%	25.8%	49.0%	17.0%	2.1%
48. Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	7.2%	27.8%	58.3%	5.7%	1.0%

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.	9.3%	48.5%	22.2%	16.5%	3.6%
50. Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	9.8%	35.1%	29.9%	21.7%	3.6%
51. Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	9.3%	38.7%	32.0%	18.0%	2.1%
52. The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	14.4%	49.5%	25.8%	6.7%	3.6%
53. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	10.3%	41.8%	32.0%	9.3%	6.7%
54. Textbooks are in good shape.	8.3%	52.1%	28.4%	7.7%	3.6%
55. The school library meets student needs for books and other resources for students.	10.3%	43.8%	25.8%	15.5%	4.6%

H. SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
56. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	2.6%	11.9%	19.6%	46.9%	19.1%
57. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	0.5%	11.9%	16.5%	45.4%	25.8%
58. Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	1.0%	16.5%	17.0%	47.4%	18.0%
59. Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	6.7%	43.3%	34.0%	8.8%	7.2%
60. Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	4.1%	35.1%	44.3%	10.3%	6.2%
61. A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	12.9%	56.2%	24.2%	4.6%	2.1%
62. Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	9.3%	28.9%	21.1%	28.4%	12.4%

I. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
63. Students regularly use computers.	18.6%	53.1%	12.4%	12.9%	3.1%
64. Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	10.8%	47.4%	18.6%	19.1%	4.1%
65. Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	12.4%	45.9%	20.6%	18.6%	2.6%
66. Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	9.8%	51.0%	19.6%	15.5%	4.1%
67. The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	9.3%	49.0%	22.2%	16.0%	3.6%
68. The district meets students needs in advanced computer skills.	7.2%	35.6%	36.1%	16.5%	4.6%
69. Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	15.0%	54.6%	20.6%	7.7%	2.1%

PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SURVEY

SMSD MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

The review team received survey responses from Stafford MSD principals and assistant principals in Fall 2003. This data was used to get a better sense of the perceptions and issues confronting the district. Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Demographic Data

1.

GENDER (OPTIONAL)	MALE	FEMALE	NO RESPONSE
	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%

2.

ETHNICITY (OPTIONAL)	ANGLO	AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC	ASIAN	OTHER	NO RESPONSE
	25.0%	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%

3.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN EMPLOYED BY STAFFORD MSD?	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS	NO RESPONSE
	75.0%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	25.0%	75.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
2. School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	25.0%	75.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
3. School board members understand their role as policymakers and stay out of the day-to-day management of the district.	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
4. The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
5. The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
6. Central administration is efficient.	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
7. Central administration supports the educational process.	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
8. The morale of central administration staff is good.	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%

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.	25.0%	75.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
10. Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
11. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
12. The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	0.0%	25.0%	75.0%	0.0%	0.0%
13. The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	0.0%	75.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%
14. The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	0.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	25.0%
15. The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	25.0%	25.0%
16. The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
a. Reading	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
b. Writing	25.0%	75.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT (Continued)

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
c.　Mathematics	0.0%	75.0%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%
d.　Science	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
e.　English or Language Arts	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
f.　Computer Instruction	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
g.　Social Studies (history or geography)	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
h.　Fine Arts	0.0%	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%
i.　Physical Education	0.0%	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%
j.　Business Education	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%
k.　Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%
l.　Foreign Language	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%
17.　The district has effective special programs for the following:					
a.　Library Service	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
b.　Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
c.　Special Education	0.0%	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%
d.　Head Start and Even Start programs	0.0%	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%
e.　Dyslexia program	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%
f.　Student mentoring program	0.0%	25.0%	75.0%	0.0%	0.0%
g.　Advanced placement program	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%
h.　Literacy program	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%
i.　Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%
j.　Summer school programs	0.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	25.0%
k.　Alternative education programs	0.0%	25.0%	50.0%	0.0%	25.0%
l.　"English as a second language" program	0.0%	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%
m.　Career counseling program	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%
n.　College counseling program	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%
o.　Counseling the parents of students	0.0%	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%
p.　Drop out prevention program	0.0%	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%
18.　Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	0.0%	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%
19.　Teacher turnover is low.	0.0%	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%
20.　Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	0.0%	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%
21.　Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	0.0%	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%
22.　Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
23.　All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs, and art classes.	50.0%	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%
24.　Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
25.　Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%

C. PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
26.　District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	25.0%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	50.0%
27.　The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%
28.　Temporary workers are rarely used.	0.0%	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%
29.　The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
30.　The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	0.0%	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%
31.　The district operates an effective staff development program.	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%
32.　District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%
33.　The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	0.0%	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%

C. PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT (Continued)

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
34. Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%
35. The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	25.0%	0.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%
36. The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	0.0%	25.0%	50.0%	0.0%	25.0%

D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
37. The district regularly communicates with parents.	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
38. Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	0.0%	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%
39. District facilities are open for community use.	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%

E. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
40. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff, and the board provide input into facility planning.	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%
41. Schools are clean.	75.0%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
42. Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
43. Repairs are made in a timely manner.	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
44. Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%

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.	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%
46. Campus administrators are well-trained in fiscal management techniques.	0.0%	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%
47. Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%

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.	0.0%	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%
49. Purchasing acquires high quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	0.0%	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%
50. Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
51. The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	0.0%	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%
52. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
53. Textbooks are in good shape.	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
54. The school library meets students needs for books and other resources.	0.0%	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%

H. FOOD SERVICES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
55. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
56. Food is served warm.	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
57. Students have enough time to eat.	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
58. Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
59. Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
60. Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
61. Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
62. Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%

I. TRANSPORTATION

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
63. The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
64. The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
65. Buses arrive and leave on time.	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
66. Adding or modifying a route for a student is easy to accomplish.	25.0%	25.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%

J. SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
67. Students feel safe and secure at school.	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
68. School disturbances are infrequent.	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
69. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
70. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	0.0%	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%
71. Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
72. Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
73. Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
74. A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%
75. Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
76. Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	0.0%	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%

K. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
77. Students regularly use computers.	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
78. Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
79. Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
80. The district meets students needs in computer fundamentals.	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
81. The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
82. Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
83. Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	75.0%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%

TEACHER SURVEY

SMSD MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

The review team received survey responses from Stafford MSD teachers in Fall 2003. This data was used to get a better sense of the perceptions and issues confronting the district. This data was used to gain a more complete picture of the working environment within the district. This data was also used to gain an indication of gaps in perception between the faculty, staff and central office personnel. Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Demographic data

1.	GENDER (OPTIONAL)	FEMALE	MALE	NO RESPONSE
		58.3%	20.0%	21.7%

2.	ETHNICITY (OPTIONAL)	AFRICAN AMERICAN	ANGLO	ASIAN	HISPANIC	NO RESPONSE	OTHER
		16.7%	48.3%	1.7%	1.7%	23.3%	8.3%

3.	HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN EMPLOYED BY STAFFORD MSD?	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11 –15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS
		58.3%	21.7%	8.3%	6.7%	5.0%

4.	PRE-KINDERGARTEN	FOURTH GRADE	NINTH GRADE
	1.7%	15.0%	31.7%
	KINDERGARTEN	FIFTH GRADE	TENTH GRADE
	5.0%	11.7%	36.7%
	FIRST GRADE	SIXTH GRADE	ELEVENTH GRADE
	8.3%	8.3%	36.7%
	SECOND GRADE	SEVENTH GRADE	TWELFTH GRADE
	8.3%	15.0%	35.0%
	THIRD GRADE	EIGHTH GRADE	
	5.0%	11.7%	

A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	5.0%	30.0%	45.0%	16.7%	3.3%
2. School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	3.3%	38.3%	30.0%	21.7%	6.7%
3. School board members work well with the superintendent.	1.7%	18.3%	63.3%	8.3%	8.3%
4. The school board has a good image in the community.	0.0%	28.3%	36.7%	25.0%	10.0%
5. The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	3.3%	16.7%	46.7%	15.0%	18.3%
6. The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	6.7%	23.3%	38.3%	13.3%	18.3%
7. Central administration is efficient.	1.7%	40.0%	13.3%	28.3%	16.7%
8. Central administration supports the educational process.	10.0%	46.7%	11.7%	21.7%	10.0%
9. The morale of central administration staff is good.	1.7%	23.3%	45.0%	23.3%	6.7%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
10. Education is the main priority in our school district.	21.7%	40.0%	8.3%	23.3%	6.7%
11. Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	10.0%	48.3%	10.0%	20.0%	11.7%
12. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	3.3%	33.3%	40.0%	20.0%	3.3%
13. The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	5.0%	25.0%	41.7%	25.0%	3.3%
14. The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	8.3%	45.0%	10.0%	28.3%	8.3%
15. The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	13.3%	38.3%	21.7%	20.0%	6.7%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT (CONTINUED)

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
16. The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	5.0%	28.3%	30.0%	23.3%	13.3%
17. The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
a. Reading	13.3%	53.3%	8.3%	21.7%	3.3%
b. Writing	8.3%	58.3%	11.7%	16.7%	5.0%
c. Mathematics	11.7%	50.0%	13.3%	20.0%	5.0%
d. Science	11.7%	48.3%	20.0%	15.0%	5.0%
e. English or Language Arts	11.7%	61.7%	11.7%	13.3%	1.7%
f. Computer Instruction	8.3%	61.7%	11.7%	15.0%	3.3%
g. Social Studies (history or geography)	11.7%	63.3%	16.7%	8.3%	0.0%
h. Fine Arts	8.3%	58.3%	16.7%	11.7%	5.0%
i. Physical Education	13.3%	56.7%	23.3%	5.0%	1.7%
j. Business Education	8.3%	30.0%	58.3%	3.3%	0.0%
k. Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	5.0%	21.7%	50.0%	20.0%	3.3%
l. Foreign Language	11.7%	31.7%	40.0%	13.3%	3.3%
18. The district has effective special programs for the following:					
a. Library Service	20.0%	56.7%	6.7%	11.7%	5.0%
b. Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	10.0%	61.7%	10.0%	18.3%	0.0%
c. Special Education	15.0%	45.0%	10.0%	23.3%	6.7%
d. Head Start and Even Start programs	5.0%	21.7%	63.3%	8.3%	1.7%
e. Dyslexia program	5.0%	40.0%	35.0%	18.3%	1.7%
f. Student mentoring program	1.7%	36.7%	26.7%	30.0%	5.0%
g. Advanced placement program	10.0%	40.0%	30.0%	18.3%	1.7%
h. Literacy program	5.0%	38.3%	43.3%	11.7%	1.7%
i. Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	3.3%	25.0%	40.0%	15.0%	16.7%
j. Summer school programs	8.3%	48.3%	18.3%	20.0%	5.0%
k. Alternative education programs	5.0%	23.3%	41.7%	18.3%	11.7%
l. "English as a second language" program	15.0%	51.7%	20.0%	11.7%	1.7%
m. Career counseling program	1.7%	21.7%	46.7%	20.0%	10.0%
n. College counseling program	1.7%	18.3%	50.0%	25.0%	5.0%
o. Counseling the parents of students	5.0%	26.7%	25.0%	35.0%	8.3%
p. Drop out prevention program	1.7%	13.3%	48.3%	25.0%	11.7%
19. Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	5.0%	40.0%	13.3%	35.0%	6.7%
20. Teacher turnover is low.	1.7%	28.3%	6.7%	38.3%	25.0%
21. Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	8.3%	50.0%	8.3%	28.3%	5.0%
22. Teacher openings are filled quickly.	6.7%	53.3%	8.3%	25.0%	6.7%
23. Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	0.0%	8.3%	11.7%	38.3%	41.7%
24. Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	3.3%	45.0%	25.0%	20.0%	6.7%
25. Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	25.0%	63.3%	3.3%	8.3%	0.0%
26. All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs, and art classes.	13.3%	46.7%	11.7%	20.0%	8.3%
27. The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	13.3%	56.7%	8.3%	15.0%	6.7%
28. Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	28.3%	58.3%	5.0%	6.7%	1.7%

C. PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
29. District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	5.0%	15.0%	6.7%	43.3%	30.0%
30. The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	6.7%	43.3%	13.3%	31.7%	5.0%
31. Temporary workers are rarely used.	0.0%	46.7%	21.7%	28.3%	3.3%
32. The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	0.0%	31.7%	23.3%	35.0%	10.0%

C. PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT (Continued)

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
33. The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	3.3%	31.7%	35.0%	23.3%	6.7%
34. The district operates an effective staff development program.	5.0%	46.7%	10.0%	28.3%	10.0%
35. District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	25.0%	58.3%	6.7%	6.7%	3.3%
36. The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	0.0%	11.7%	16.7%	35.0%	36.7%
37. Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	1.7%	33.3%	40.0%	18.3%	6.7%
38. The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	0.0%	20.0%	50.0%	15.0%	15.0%
39. The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	0.0%	23.3%	10.0%	25.0%	41.7%

D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
40. The district regularly communicates with parents.	10.0%	56.7%	11.7%	20.0%	1.7%
41. The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	6.7%	45.0%	21.7%	20.0%	6.7%
42. Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	0.0%	18.3%	10.0%	53.3%	18.3%
43. District facilities are open for community use.	6.7%	56.7%	21.7%	13.3%	1.7%

E. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
44. The district plans facilities far enough in the future to support enrollment growth.	5.0%	35.0%	35.0%	16.7%	8.3%
45. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff, and the board provide input into facility planning.	1.7%	23.3%	40.0%	28.3%	6.7%
46. The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	0.0%	6.7%	81.7%	6.7%	5.0%
47. The quality of new construction is excellent.	3.3%	28.3%	46.7%	10.0%	11.7%
48. Schools are clean.	41.7%	53.3%	1.7%	3.3%	0.0%
49. Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	13.3%	63.3%	5.0%	13.3%	5.0%
50. Repairs are made in a timely manner.	8.3%	33.3%	13.3%	30.0%	15.0%
51. Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	13.3%	65.0%	13.3%	3.3%	5.0%

F. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
52. Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	6.7%	21.7%	25.0%	21.7%	25.0%
53. Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	5.0%	28.3%	40.0%	21.7%	5.0%
54. Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	6.7%	15.0%	18.3%	36.7%	23.3%

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.	1.7%	16.7%	21.7%	33.3%	26.7%
56. Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	0.0%	26.7%	36.7%	28.3%	8.3%
57. Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	1.7%	18.3%	21.7%	45.0%	13.3%
58. Vendors are selected competitively.	1.7%	30.0%	53.3%	15.0%	0.0%

G. PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING (Continued)

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
59. The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	0.0%	25.0%	11.7%	50.0%	13.3%
60. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	13.3%	55.0%	8.3%	16.7%	6.7%
61. Textbooks are in good shape.	6.7%	65.0%	13.3%	10.0%	5.0%
62. The school library meets students needs for books and other resources.	11.7%	58.3%	13.3%	13.3%	3.3%

H. FOOD SERVICES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
63. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	0.0%	26.7%	15.0%	28.3%	30.0%
64. Food is served warm.	3.3%	51.7%	18.3%	15.0%	11.7%
65. Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	5.0%	65.0%	10.0%	8.3%	11.7%
66. Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes	8.3%	31.7%	15.0%	30.0%	15.0%
67. Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	8.3%	60.0%	13.3%	13.3%	5.0%
68. Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	15.0%	48.3%	18.3%	10.0%	8.3%
69. Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	18.3%	58.3%	18.3%	3.3%	1.7%

I. SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
70. School disturbances are infrequent.	8.3%	60.0%	10.0%	20.0%	1.7%
71. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	0.0%	31.7%	25.0%	40.0%	3.3%
72. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	0.0%	11.7%	25.0%	56.7%	6.7%
73. Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	1.7%	20.0%	30.0%	41.7%	6.7%
74. Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	15.0%	68.3%	5.0%	6.7%	5.0%
75. Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	11.7%	65.0%	16.7%	3.3%	3.3%
76. A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	18.3%	56.7%	20.0%	5.0%	0.0%
77. Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	11.7%	41.7%	8.3%	26.7%	11.7%
78. Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	6.7%	45.0%	25.0%	16.7%	6.7%

J. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
79. Students regularly use computers.	13.3%	65.0%	11.7%	10.0%	0.0%
80. Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	16.7%	60.0%	3.3%	18.3%	1.7%
81. Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	20.0%	65.0%	3.3%	8.3%	3.3%
82. Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	15.0%	66.7%	6.7%	11.7%	0.0%
83. The district meets students needs in classes in computer fundamentals.	10.0%	55.0%	10.0%	21.7%	3.3%
84. The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.	6.7%	35.0%	36.7%	20.0%	1.7%
85. Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	28.3%	60.0%	3.3%	6.7%	1.7%

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR MINI SURVEY

SMSD MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

The review team conducted this mini survey in April 2004 to supplement earlier surveys done in Fall 2003. Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

(n=5)

Demographic Data

1.	GENDER (OPTIONAL)	MALE	FEMALE
		40%	60%

2.	ETHNICITY (OPTIONAL)	AFRICAN AMERICAN	ANGLO	HISPANIC	ASIAN	OTHER
		40%	20%	40%	0%	0%

3.	HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN EMPLOYED BY STAFFORD MSD?	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS
		60%	20%	0%	0%	20%

4.	ARE YOU A:				
	A. DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR	B. PRINCIPAL OR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	C. CAMPUS PROFESSIONAL (E.G., COUNSELOR, DIAGNOSTICIAN, SPEECH PATHOLOGIST)	D. CAMPUS AIDE OR SUPPORT STAFF (E.G., CLERK, SECRETARY)	E. DISTRICT SUPPORT STAFF
	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%

5.	HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN EMPLOYED IN THIS CAPACITY BY STAFFORD MSD?	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS
		80%	20%	0%	0%	0%

A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. The board sets annual goals and objectives that drive district actions.	20%	40%	20%	20%	0%
2. The district and campus plans are effective planning tools.	0%	80%	20%	0%	0%
3. School board members act as policymakers.	20%	60%	20%	0%	0%
4. The superintendent is an effective leader.	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%
5. Central administration is staffed correctly.	40%	40%	0%	20%	0%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
6. Necessary resources are provided to support the educational program.	20%	80%	0%	0%	0%

C. PERSONNEL

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
7. Salaries are competitive.	20%	40%	0%	40%	0%
8. The district has an effective staff development program.	0%	40%	40%	20%	0%
9. The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	0%	80%	20%	0%	0%

D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
10. The district regularly communicates with parents.	0%	60%	40%	0%	0%
11. Information sent to parents is translated to a native language when necessary.	20%	40%	20%	20%	0%
12. The district keeps staff informed.	0%	60%	0%	40%	0%

E. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
13. Schools are clean.	40%	60%	0%	0%	0%
14. School grounds are well kept.	40%	60%	0%	0%	0%
15. Schools are well maintained.	20%	60%	0%	20%	0%

F. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
16. The district's financial condition is sound.	0%	40%	40%	20%	0%
17. Financial reports are made available to the community.	20%	40%	40%	0%	0%
18. Staff provide input to the annual budget.	20%	40%	40%	0%	0%

G. PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
19. Purchasing processes are not cumbersome.	20%	40%	40%	0%	0%

H. FOOD SERVICES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
20. Cafeteria facilities are clean.	40%	60%	0%	0%	0%

I. TRANSPORTATION

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
21. Buses run on a timely basis.	20%	20%	60%	0%	0%
22. Discipline is maintained on buses.	20%	20%	60%	0%	0%

J. SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
23. Staff members are safe in the schools.	40%	60%	0%	0%	0%
24. The district provides adequate security.	20%	80%	0%	0%	0%

K. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
25. Staff members required to use computers in their jobs receive adequate training.	20%	20%	40%	20%	0%

DISTRICT SUPPORT STAFF MINI SURVEY

SMSD MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

The review team conducted this mini survey in April 2004 to supplement earlier surveys done in Fall 2003. Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

(n=25)

Demographic Data

1.	GENDER (OPTIONAL)	MALE	FEMALE
		28%	72%

2.	ETHNICITY (OPTIONAL)	AFRICAN AMERICAN	ANGLO	HISPANIC	ASIAN	OTHER
		4%	32%	60%	0%	4%

3.	HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN EMPLOYED BY STAFFORD MSD?	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS
		32%	36%	12%	12%	8%

4.	ARE YOU A:				
	A. DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR	B. PRINCIPAL OR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	C. CAMPUS PROFESSIONAL (E.G., COUNSELOR, DIAGNOSTICIAN, SPEECH PATHOLOGIST)	D. CAMPUS AIDE OR SUPPORT STAFF (E.G., CLERK, SECRETARY)	E. DISTRICT SUPPORT STAFF
	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%

5.	HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN EMPLOYED IN THIS CAPACITY BY STAFFORD MSD?	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS	NO RESPONSE
		40%	28%	12%	8%	8%	4%

A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. The board sets annual goals and objectives that drive district actions.	8%	56%	12%	20%	4%
2. The district and campus plans are effective planning tools.	0%	48%	32%	16%	0%
3. School board members act as policymakers.	0%	44%	44%	4%	4%
4. The superintendent is an effective leader.	8%	28%	44%	4%	4%
5. Central administration is staffed correctly.	0%	52%	16%	24%	8%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
6. Necessary resources are provided to support the educational program.	0%	80%	12%	4%	4%

C. PERSONNEL

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
7. Salaries are competitive.	0%	4%	28%	48%	20%
8. The district has an effective staff development program.	0%	56%	16%	28%	0%
9. The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	4%	28%	48%	12%	8%

D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
10. The district regularly communicates with parents.	8%	64%	16%	12%	0%
11. Information sent to parents is translated to a native language when necessary.	4%	80%	12%	4%	0%
12. The district keeps staff informed.	0%	36%	20%	36%	8%

E. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
13. Schools are clean.	28%	48%	24%	0%	0%
14. School grounds are well kept.	24%	76%	0%	0%	0%
15. Schools are well maintained.	28%	68%	4%	0%	0%

F. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
16. The district's financial condition is sound.	0%	24%	56%	16%	4%
17. Financial reports are made available to the community.	8%	20%	52%	16%	4%
18. Staff provide input to the annual budget.	4%	12%	48%	12%	16%

G. PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
19. Purchasing processes are not cumbersome.	0%	28%	36%	16%	4%

H. FOOD SERVICES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
20. Cafeteria facilities are clean.	4%	52%	40%	0%	4%

I. TRANSPORTATION

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
21. Buses run on a timely basis.	12%	36%	40%	8%	4%
22. Discipline is maintained on buses.	4%	32%	52%	4%	8%

J. SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
23. Staff members are safe in the schools.	4%	72%	4%	8%	12%
24. The district provides adequate security.	4%	68%	8%	12%	8%

K. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
25. Staff members required to use computers in their jobs receive adequate training.	0%	64%	24%	8%	4%

PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL MINI SURVEY

SMSD MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

The review team conducted this mini survey in April 2004 to supplement earlier surveys done in Fall 2003. Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

(n=4)

Demographic Data

1.	GENDER (OPTIONAL)	MALE	FEMALE	NO RESPONSE		
		25%	50%	25%		

2.	ETHNICITY (OPTIONAL)	AFRICAN AMERICAN	ANGLO	HISPANIC	ASIAN	NO RESPONSE
		0%	75%	0%	0%	25%

3.	HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN EMPLOYED BY STAFFORD MSD?	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS
		50%	0%	25%	0%	25%

4.	ARE YOU A:				
	A. DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR	B. PRINCIPAL OR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	C. CAMPUS PROFESSIONAL (E.G., COUNSELOR, DIAGNOSTICIAN, SPEECH PATHOLOGIST)	D. CAMPUS AIDE OR SUPPORT STAFF (E.G., CLERK, SECRETARY)	E. DISTRICT SUPPORT STAFF
	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%

5.	HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN EMPLOYED IN THIS CAPACITY BY STAFFORD MSD?	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS
		100%	0%	0%	0%	0%

A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

	SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1.	The board sets annual goals and objectives that drive district actions.	0%	75%	25%	0%	0%
2.	The district and campus plans are effective planning tools.	0%	50%	0%	50%	0%
3.	School board members act as policymakers.	0%	75%	25%	0%	0%
4.	The superintendent is an effective leader.	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%
5.	Central administration is staffed correctly.	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

	SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
6.	Necessary resources are provided to support the educational program.	0%	75%	25%	0%	0%

C. PERSONNEL

	SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
7.	Salaries are competitive.	0%	0%	25%	75%	0%
8.	The district has an effective staff development program.	0%	50%	25%	25%	0%
9.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	25%	75%	0%	0%	0%

D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

	SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
10.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	0%	75%	25%	0%	0%
11.	Information sent to parents is translated to a native language when necessary.	0%	75%	0%	25%	0%
12.	The district keeps staff informed.	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%

E. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
13. Schools are clean.	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%
14. School grounds are well kept.	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%
15. Schools are well maintained.	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%

F. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
16. The district's financial condition is sound.	0%	75%	0%	25%	0%
17. Financial reports are made available to the community.	25%	50%	25%	0%	0%
18. Staff provide input to the annual budget.	0%	50%	25%	25%	0%

G. PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
19. Purchasing processes are not cumbersome.	0%	0%	25%	75%	0%

H. FOOD SERVICES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
20. Cafeteria facilities are clean.	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%

I. TRANSPORTATION

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
21. Buses run on a timely basis.	25%	50%	0%	25%	0%
22. Discipline is maintained on buses.	0%	75%	0%	25%	0%

J. SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
23. Staff members are safe in the schools.	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%
24. The district provides adequate security.	25%	50%	25%	0%	0%

K. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
25. Staff members required to use computers in their jobs receive adequate training.	0%	50%	25%	25%	0%

TEACHER MINI SURVEY

SMSD MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

The review team conducted this mini survey in April 2004 to supplement earlier surveys done in Fall 2003. Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

(n=114)

Demographic Data

1.	GENDER (OPTIONAL)	MALE	FEMALE	NO RESPONSE
		11%	74%	16%

2.	ETHNICITY (OPTIONAL)	AFRICAN AMERICAN	ANGLO	HISPANIC	ASIAN	NO RESPONSE
		6%	59%	5%	3%	25%

3.	HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN EMPLOYED BY STAFFORD MSD?	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS	NO RESPONSE
		55%	17%	14%	6%	4%	4%

4.	IN WHICH SCHOOL DO YOU TEACH?	PRIMARY	ELEMENTARY	INTERMEDIATE	MIDDLE	HIGH
		18%	19%	15%	23%	25%

A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

	SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1.	Campus plans are effective tools in setting priorities at my school.	11%	52%	14%	14%	9%
2.	Administrators at my campus are effective leaders.	19%	42%	13%	19%	6%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

	SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
3.	Teachers provide input on the effectiveness of programs and materials.	16%	51%	9%	18%	5%
4.	The emphasis on education has increased in the past year.	12%	34%	20%	23%	6%
5.	The curriculum at my school was developed with teacher input.	11%	41%	18%	18%	9%
6.	The principal/assistant principal monitors the delivery of curriculum to ensure consistency.	13%	42%	14%	19%	9%
7.	Teachers are evaluated fairly and effectively.	25%	50%	10%	13%	3%
8.	Teacher moral is not a problem.	2%	17%	14%	35%	32%
9.	The district could do more to reduce teacher turnover.	49%	25%	9%	9%	7%
10.	In my school the educational programs are effective in the following areas:					
	a) Core subjects	9%	41%	32%	5%	5%
	b) Electives	4%	39%	18%	25%	10%
	c) Computer Instruction	2%	25%	35%	22%	8%
	d) Career and Technology Education	13%	39%	22%	15%	7%
	e) Bilingual/ESL	6%	53%	18%	14%	6%
	f) Gifted and Talented/Advanced Placement	11%	49%	18%	17%	4%
	g) Special education	0%	8%	54%	18%	10%
	l) Alternative education	15%	63%	9%	11%	1%

C. PERSONNEL

	SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
11.	District salaries are competitive.	3%	22%	5%	46%	23%
12.	The district has an effective staff development program.	1%	36%	15%	35%	12%
13.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	2%	17%	59%	13%	7%

D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
14. The district regularly communicates with parents.	17%	58%	9%	14%	3%
15. Information sent to parents is translated to a native language when necessary.	18%	60%	13%	6%	3%
16. The principal/assistant principal at my school keep teachers informed.	14%	48%	7%	19%	11%

E. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
17. Schools are clean.	32%	61%	4%	3%	1%
18. The school grounds are well kept.	25%	56%	3%	15%	2%
19. Schools are well maintained.	20%	55%	5%	17%	3%

F. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
20. The district's financial condition is sound.	0%	5%	34%	39%	19%
21. Financial reports are made available to the community.	2%	24%	47%	17%	10%
22. Teachers provide input on the school budget.	0%	11%	17%	40%	32%

G. PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
23. Purchasing processes are not cumbersome.	2%	10%	18%	35%	33%
24. The district provides an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	2%	23%	13%	31%	29%
25. Students receive textbooks in a timely manner.	22%	49%	12%	7%	6%

H. FOOD SERVICES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
26. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	2%	32%	18%	29%	18%
27. Food is served warm.	4%	60%	18%	11%	7%
28. Students have enough time to eat.	7%	55%	5%	20%	12%
29. Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	18%	57%	10%	11%	4%
30. Cafeteria facilities are clean.	21%	62%	10%	4%	2%

I. TRANSPORTATION

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
31. Pick up and drop off zones are safe.	18%	64%	5%	8%	4%
32. Buses run on a timely basis.	15%	56%	11%	13%	4%
33. Discipline is maintained on buses.	7%	33%	47%	7%	4%

J. SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
34. I feel safe in my school.	25%	55%	5%	10%	4%
35. School disturbances are infrequent.	15%	43%	4%	31%	7%
36. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	2%	17%	34%	37%	11%
37. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	2%	7%	33%	38%	20%
38. Security personnel are effective in my school.	9%	36%	17%	22%	17%
39. Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	7%	34%	7%	28%	24%
40. Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	4%	44%	18%	25%	6%

K. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
41. Teachers receive adequate training in the use computers.	5%	48%	11%	32%	3%

CAMPUS PROFESSIONAL STAFF MINI SURVEY

SMSD MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

The review team conducted this mini survey in April 2004 to supplement earlier surveys done in Fall 2003. Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

(n=13)

Demographic Data

1.	GENDER (OPTIONAL)	MALE	FEMALE	NO RESPONSE
		8%	84%	8%

2.	ETHNICITY (OPTIONAL)	AFRICAN AMERICAN	ANGLO	HISPANIC	ASIAN	NO RESPONSE
		8%	54%	15%	0%	23%

3.	HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN EMPLOYED BY STAFFORD MSD?	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS
		38%	23%	15%	15%	8%

4.	ARE YOU A:				
	A. DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR	B. PRINCIPAL OR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	C. CAMPUS PROFESSIONAL (E.G., COUNSELOR, DIAGNOSTICIAN, SPEECH PATHOLOGIST)	D. CAMPUS AIDE OR SUPPORT STAFF (E.G., CLERK, SECRETARY)	E. DISTRICT SUPPORT STAFF
	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%

5.	HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN EMPLOYED IN THIS CAPACITY BY STAFFORD MSD?	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS
		54%	8%	23%	15%	0%

A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

	SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1.	The board sets annual goals and objectives that drive district actions.	0%	54%	23%	15%	8%
2.	The district and campus plans are effective planning tools.	0%	54%	15%	23%	8%
3.	School board members act as policymakers.	8%	46%	15%	23%	8%
4.	The superintendent is an effective leader.	15%	54%	15%	8%	8%
5.	Central administration is staffed correctly.	0%	46%	23%	23%	8%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

	SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
6.	Necessary resources are provided to support the educational program.	0%	54%	8%	31%	8%

C. PERSONNEL

	SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
7.	Salaries are competitive.	0%	31%	15%	31%	23%
8.	The district has an effective staff development program.	0%	38%	15%	38%	8%
9.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	0%	31%	54%	0%	15%

D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

	SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
10.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	0%	85%	8%	0%	8%
11.	Information sent to parents is translated to a native language when necessary.	15%	62%	8%	8%	8%
12.	The district keeps staff informed.	0%	23%	8%	54%	15%

E. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
13. Schools are clean.	46%	38%	8%	8%	0%
14. School grounds are well kept.	31%	54%	8%	0%	8%
15. Schools are well maintained.	38%	31%	15%	15%	0%

F. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
16. The district's financial condition is sound.	0%	15%	38%	31%	15%
17. Financial reports are made available to the community.	0%	15%	77%	0%	8%
18. Staff provide input to the annual budget.	0%	15%	23%	31%	31%

G. PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
19. Purchasing processes are not cumbersome.	0%	15%	15%	46%	23%

H. FOOD SERVICES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
20. Cafeteria facilities are clean.	31%	62%	8%	0%	0%

I. TRANSPORTATION

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
21. Buses run on a timely basis.	0%	77%	23%	0%	0%
22. Discipline is maintained on buses.	0%	46%	46%	8%	0%

J. SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
23. Staff members are safe in the schools.	15%	62%	8%	15%	0%
24. The district provides adequate security.	15%	46%	8%	31%	0%

K. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
25. Staff members required to use computers in their jobs receive adequate training.	0%	38%	0%	38%	23%

CAMPUS SUPPORT STAFF MINI SURVEY

SMSD MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

The review team conducted this mini survey in April 2004 to supplement earlier surveys done in Fall 2003. Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

(n=26)

Demographic Data

1.	GENDER (OPTIONAL)	MALE	FEMALE	NO RESPONSE
		8%	77%	15%

2.	ETHNICITY (OPTIONAL)	AFRICAN AMERICAN	ANGLO	HISPANIC	ASIAN	OTHER	NO RESPONSE
		19%	27%	27%	8%	4%	15%

3.	HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN EMPLOYED BY STAFFORD MSD?	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS
		62%	27%	4%	0%	8%

4.	ARE YOU A:				
	A. DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR	B. PRINCIPAL OR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	C. CAMPUS PROFESSIONAL (E.G., COUNSELOR, DIAGNOSTICIAN, SPEECH PATHOLOGIST)	D. CAMPUS AIDE OR SUPPORT STAFF (E.G., CLERK, SECRETARY)	E. DISTRICT SUPPORT STAFF
	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%

5.	HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN EMPLOYED IN THIS CAPACITY BY STAFFORD MSD?	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS
		73%	15%	4%	0%	8%

A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. The board sets annual goals and objectives that drive district actions.	4%	54%	42%	0%	0%
2. The district and campus plans are effective planning tools.	0%	54%	31%	15%	0%
3. School board members act as policymakers.	4%	35%	50%	8%	0%
4. The superintendent is an effective leader.	15%	19%	54%	4%	4%
5. Central administration is staffed correctly.	0%	27%	31%	23%	8%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
6. Necessary resources are provided to support the educational program.	4%	50%	27%	19%	0%

C. PERSONNEL

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
7. Salaries are competitive.	0%	23%	15%	35%	27%
8. The district has an effective staff development program.	4%	42%	23%	23%	4%
9. The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	0%	23%	65%	4%	4%

D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
10. The district regularly communicates with parents.	23%	42%	23%	12%	0%
11. Information sent to parents is translated to a native language when necessary.	27%	42%	19%	12%	0%
12. The district keeps staff informed.	8%	31%	15%	38%	8%

E. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
13. Schools are clean.	38%	46%	8%	8%	0%
14. School grounds are well kept.	31%	50%	8%	12%	0%
15. Schools are well maintained.	31%	54%	8%	8%	0%

F. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
16 The district's financial condition is sound.	0%	12%	50%	23%	15%
17. Financial reports are made available to the community.	0%	31%	54%	15%	0%
18. Staff provide input to the annual budget.	0%	23%	42%	27%	8%

G. PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
19. Purchasing processes are not cumbersome.	4%	19%	42%	27%	8%

H. FOOD SERVICES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
20. Cafeteria facilities are clean.	12%	77%	12%	0%	0%

I. TRANSPORTATION

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
21. Buses run on a timely basis.	12%	46%	19%	23%	0%
22. Discipline is maintained on buses.	0%	35%	42%	19%	4%

J. SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
23. Staff members are safe in the schools.	4%	77%	8%	8%	4%
24. The district provides adequate security.	8%	65%	12%	12%	4%

K. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
25. Staff members required to use computers in their jobs receive adequate training.	8%	46%	15%	27%	4%