

# TRANSMITTAL LETTER

August 22, 2001

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

Fellow Texans:

I am pleased to present my performance review of the Water Valley Independent School District (WVISD).

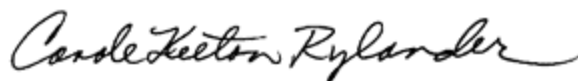
This review is intended to help WVISD hold the line on costs, streamline operations, and improve services to ensure that more of every education dollar goes directly into the classroom, with the teacher and children, where it belongs. To aid in this task, I contracted with Gibson Consulting Group, Inc.

I have made a number of recommendations to improve WVISD's efficiency. I also have highlighted a number of "best practices" in district operations-model programs and services provided by the district's administrators, teachers, and staff. This report outlines 44 detailed recommendations that could save WVISD \$254,376 over the next five years, while reinvesting \$19,125 to improve educational services and other operations. Net savings are estimated to reach more than \$235,251 that the district can redirect to the classroom.

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

I also am pleased to announce that the report is available on my Window on State Government Web site at [www.window.state.tx.us/tspr/watervalley/](http://www.window.state.tx.us/tspr/watervalley/).

Sincerely,



Carole Keeton Rylander  
Texas Comptroller

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In December 2000, Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Rylander announced her intent to conduct school performance reviews of six districts in Tom Green County: the Water Valley, Wall, Veribest, Grape Creek, Christoval and San Angelo ISDs. Based upon more than six months of work, this report identifies Water Valley ISD's exemplary programs and suggests concrete ways to improve district operations. If fully implemented, the Comptroller's 44 recommendations could result in a net savings of \$235,251 over the next five years.

## **Improving the Texas School Performance Review**

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

Recognizing that only 51 cents of every education dollar is spent on instruction, Comptroller Rylander's approach is designed to give local school officials in Water Valley and in other Texas communities the ability to move more of every education dollar directly into the classroom. Comptroller Rylander also has ordered TSPR staff to share best practices and exemplary programs quickly and systematically with all the state's school districts and with anyone else who requests such information. Comptroller Rylander has directed TSPR to serve as a clearinghouse of the best ideas in Texas public education.

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

- Ensure students and teachers receive the support and resources necessary to succeed;
- Identify innovative ways to address the district's core management challenges;
- Ensure administrative duties are performed efficiently, without duplication and in a way that fosters education;
- Develop strategies to ensure the district's processes and programs are continuously assessed and improved;
- Challenge any process, procedure, program or policy that impedes instruction and recommend ways to reduce or eliminate obstacles; and

- Put goods and services to the "Yellow Pages Test": government should do no job if a business in the Yellow Pages can do that job better and at a lower cost.

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

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

### **TSPR in Water Valley ISD**

The Comptroller's Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) began work in Tom Green County on March 1, 2001, at the request of state Representative Rob Junell.

The review team conducted its review with the understanding that smaller districts such as WVISD face unique challenges and have only limited resources to meet them. The majority of districts reviewed by TSPR have fallen in the moderate to large range, including seven of the state's largest districts: Houston, Dallas, Austin, San Antonio, Fort Bend, Ysleta in El Paso and Corpus Christi. The district responded graciously to TSPR's requests for data as well as a schedule of interviews, public forums and focus-group meetings.

Gibson Consulting Group Inc., an Austin-based consulting firm, was contracted to assist with the reviews of the six school districts at a cost of \$400,000. The contract was later amended by \$15,000 to allow the Gibson Consulting Group to do additional data analyses.

The review team interviewed district employees, school board members, students and parents, and held a public forum at the Water Valley Elementary School cafeteria on March 27, 2001 from 5:00 to 8:00 pm. The review team also conducted focus groups with teachers and members of the district's two Site-Based Decision-Making Committees (SBDMC). TSPR also received letters and phone calls from community members.

The review team sent written surveys to parents, teachers, district administrators and students. In all, 116 respondents answered the surveys, including 55 parents, five district administrators and support staff, 17 teachers and 39 students. Details from the surveys appear in **Appendices A through D**.

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

WVISD selected peer districts for comparative purposes, based upon similarities in size, location, enrollment and property value. The districts chosen were Bronte, Eden, North Zulch and Veribest ISDs.

**Exhibit 1** compares demographic information for WVISD, the selected peer districts, TEA's Region 15, which includes WVISD, and the state as a whole.

**Exhibit 1  
Demographic Characteristics of WVISD  
And Peer School Districts  
2000-01**

District	Student Enrollment		Ethnic Groups					Economically Disadvantaged	
	Number	5 Year Percent Change	Percent African American	Percent Hispanic	Percent Anglo	Percent Other	Percent Minority	Percent	5 Year Percent Change*
Bronte	514	25.4%	15.2%	25.7%	58.7%	0.4%	41.2%	60.1%	85.5%
North Zulch	344	6.2%	0.3%	2.9%	96.2%	0.6%	3.8%	37.2%	(10.8%)
Eden	336	(16.8%)	0.6%	42.6%	56.8%	0.0%	43.2%	55.1%	7.6%
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>(21.3%)</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>18.4%</b>	<b>79.4%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>20.6%</b>	<b>38.7%</b>	<b>(2.8%)</b>
Veribest	272	54.5%	0.7%	36.0%	61.4%	1.8%	38.6%	30.5%	(25.4%)
<b>Region 15</b>	<b>50,696</b>	<b>(3.8%)</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>47.9%</b>	<b>47.8%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>52.2%</b>	<b>53.5%</b>	<b>5.1%</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>4,071,433</b>	<b>6.3%</b>	<b>14.4%</b>	<b>40.5%</b>	<b>42.1%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>57.9%</b>	<b>49.2%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>

*Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.*

A detailed list of costs and savings by recommendation appears in **Exhibit 5**. Many TSPR recommendations would not have a direct financial impact but would improve the district's overall operations.

On August 16, 2001 the Texas Education Agency released the TAAS results for the 2000-01 school year. Water Valley received an overall Recognized Rating, same as the 1999-2000 rating. According to these latest reports, the district has an Exemplary elementary school and a Recognized high school. Because this information came late in the review process, and because information regarding the cumulative test results will not be available until November 2001, the data presented throughout the rest of this report reflects 1999-2000 information.

**Acknowledgments**

The Comptroller's office and Gibson Consulting Group, Inc. wish to express appreciation to the WVISD Board of Trustees, Superintendent David Howard and the district employees, students, parents and community members who assisted the review team throughout the process.

**Water Valley ISD**

WVISD is located in Tom Green County, about 22 miles northwest of San Angelo. The district's facilities are located in the same area in separate buildings. These facilities include the elementary school, high school and an administrative office.

WVISD had 315 students enrolled in the 2000-01 school year. Of these students, about 39 percent are considered economically disadvantaged, 10 percent less than the state average of nearly 49 percent. The district is about 79 percent Anglo and 18 percent Hispanic. WVISD's annual budget was about \$2.9 million in 1999-2000. The district's adopted tax rate has risen by 7.9 percent from \$1.39 in 1997-98 to \$1.50 in 2000-01 (**Exhibit 2**).

**Exhibit 2  
Water Valley Adopted Tax Rates  
1997-98 through 2000-01**

<b>1997-98</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-01</b>	<b>Percent Change over Period</b>
\$1.390	\$1.456	\$1.470	\$1.500	7.9%

*Source: TEA, AEIS 1997-98 through 2000-01 and Tom Green County Appraisal District.*

As seen in **Exhibit 3**, WVISD's overall scores on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) rose by almost 22 percent between 1995-96 and 1999-2000, a rise similar to increases experienced in Region 15 and the state. WVISD's percent of students passing all TAAS tests taken in 1999-2000 was about 6 percent higher than the state average and ranked third among the peer districts. Nearly 92 percent of WVISD's students took the TAAS in 1999-2000, compared to the state average of 90.2 percent.

**Exhibit 3**  
**Percentage of Students Passing TAAS, All Tests Taken**  
**(Grades 3-8, & 10)**  
**1995-96 through 1999-2000**

<b>District</b>	<b>1995-96</b>	<b>1996-97</b>	<b>1997-98*</b>	<b>1998-99**</b>	<b>1999-2000**</b>	<b>Percent Change from 1995-96 to 1999-2000</b>	<b>Percent of Students Tested 1999-2000</b>
Eden	68.8%	79.6%	69.3%	82.9%	89.3%	29.8%	90.7%
Veribest	81.3%	85.0%	78.8%	92.0%	89.2%	9.7%	87.9%
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>70.3%</b>	<b>76.4%</b>	<b>66.7%</b>	<b>82.7%</b>	<b>85.7%</b>	<b>21.9%</b>	<b>91.8%</b>
North Zulch	51.2%	66.4%	63.5%	66.1%	83.2%	62.5%	93.9%
Bronte	80.1%	89.1%	78.4%	87.4%	82.6%	3.1%	89.9%
<b>Region 15</b>	<b>69.0%</b>	<b>76.2%</b>	<b>73.6%</b>	<b>80.7%</b>	<b>82.2%</b>	<b>19.1%</b>	<b>90.6%</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>67.1%</b>	<b>73.2%</b>	<b>73.1%</b>	<b>78.1%</b>	<b>79.9%</b>	<b>19.1%</b>	<b>90.2%</b>

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

*\*Recalculated from original posting to include special education and grade 3 and 4 Spanish TAAS.*

*\*\* Recalculated from original posting to include special education and grade 3-6 Spanish TAAS.*

TSPR believes that the main challenges facing WVISD are not education-related, but involve the following:

- Improve financial management;
- Planning for change.

## **Key Findings and Recommendations**

### **Improved Financial Management**

- ***Provide additional training to board members in school finance and district planning.*** WVISD board members receive training required by law, but could benefit from additional training in the areas of financial management and planning, the two most critical issues facing WVISD. Through Regional Education Service Center IV (Region 15), the board could receive additional training, enhancing board member's knowledge in planning and finance and ensuring that they fully understand the district's financial position and can make appropriate decisions.
- ***Increase communication with SBDM committees in developing school budgets and staff decisions by defining levels of authority within the SBDM process.*** In interviews with the district's site-based decision-making (SBDM) committees, committee members claimed they are not sufficiently involved in developing school budgets. Ultimately the final determination of the budget is left to the discretion of the superintendent and the board, however, increasing communication between the two SBDMs and the superintendent could ensure that various initiatives are addressed from different points of view, building consensus inside the district.
- ***Establish a fund balance management policy.*** WVISD has operated with a shrinking fund balance for the past four consecutive years, and without a formal fund balance management policy. Such a policy sets a desired level for the district's fund balance and proposes steps needed to reach the desired goal.
- ***Enter into a countywide food purchasing cooperative.*** The district's Food Services Department has been operating at a deficit for many years. WVISD could benefit by exploring a countywide food purchasing cooperative with other districts in Tom Green County, and realize savings of approximately 15 percent in total food costs.
- ***Improve the accuracy of PEIMS data reporting.*** WVISD has reported inaccurate data to PEIMS. PEIMS is used for a variety of purposes, one of the most important is attendance rates which determines state funding, while the percentage of economically

disadvantaged students is used to calculate state and federal compensatory funding. Region 15 provides extensive PEIMS training to school districts, and WVISD should take advantage of it.

### **Planning for Change**

- ***Develop a long-range strategic plan incorporating alternate growth scenarios.*** WVISD's state funding is declining due to a shrinking enrollment base, yet the district does not have a long-range strategic plan or a district improvement plan (DIP) to guide its decision-making. The district's two campus improvement plans focus on broad educational goals without regard for operational issues. A long-range strategic plan envisioning alternate growth scenarios could serve as a blueprint for future district decision-making.
- ***Explore multi-age classes.*** WVISD is facing declining student enrollment resulting in a loss of funding. While the district has cut its staffing, its 1999-2000 student-teacher ratio in grades K through 3 still was 12-to-1, compared to a 19-to-1 state average. By creatively exploring multi-age classes, WVISD could maximize the effectiveness of its personnel and maintain a flexible instructional environment while saving the district about \$40,637 each year.
- ***Update facility plans based on revised enrollment projection scenarios.*** The district's spring bond election for a new elementary school failed and enrollment has declined past the level projected in a 1999 facilities evaluation. WVISD does not have a current facilities plan to match its present and projected enrollment. The district could benefit from an updated plan for each of three scenarios: continuing declines in enrollment; flat enrollment; and moderate growth.

### **Water Valley ISD Exemplary Programs and Practices**

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

- ***The superintendent effectively uses technology and graphics to present information at board meetings.*** The superintendent uses a



laptop computer and a TV screen to present each agenda item at WVISD board meetings. Each item is presented in a format that is easily understood by the board and community members.

- ***WVISD provides a host of opportunities for involving parents and the community in the schools.*** The district has combined its Academic Booster Club and Athletic Booster Club to form the Water Valley Booster Club, so the two entities would not be in competition with one another. The Water Valley Volunteer Program and Grandmother Volunteer Program uses community volunteers to aid in the library and assist with district and campus clerical duties. WVISD also maintains an active alumni association that has created and maintains the district's Web site.
- ***The district's online policy manual is accessible by teachers, administrators and the general public.*** WVISD has placed its policy manual on the district's website at <http://www.watervalley.netxv.net/>. A key-word search capability allows staff, students and the community to quickly identify all policies applicable to a particular issue.
- ***WVISD has implemented several instructional initiatives, that have improved overall student performance.*** WVISD has aggressively striven to ensure high performance on the TAAS. The district has, for instance, computerized its grading system so that student records are easily accessible. The district also has used the Accelerated Reader program to make reading a top priority with students in the district.
- ***The district seeks grants to improve its technological resources.*** WVISD has obtained state Technology Infrastructure Fund and Technology in Education grants and other grant programs stating \$151,709 for adapting technology to instructional purposes during 2000-01. As a result, much of the district's computer technology is less than three years old.
- ***A breakfast burrito program at the high school has increased Food Services revenues and breakfast participation.*** Each morning the superintendent delivers grab-and-go breakfasts consisting of burritos to high school students. This popular program allows students to develop a relationship with district administration while bolstering Food Services revenues.

## **Savings and Investment Requirements**

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

TSPR recommended 44 ways to save WVISD \$254,376 in gross savings over a five-year period. Reinvestment opportunities would cost the district \$19,125 during the same period. Full implementation of all recommendations in this report could produce net savings of \$235,251 by 2005-06 (**Exhibit 4**).

**Exhibit 4**  
**Summary of Net Savings**  
**TSPR Review of Water Valley Independent School District**

Year	Total
2001-02 Initial Annual Net Savings	\$13,887
2002-03 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$55,366
2003-04 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$55,366
2004-05 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$58,366
2005-06 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$55,366
One Time Net (Costs) Savings	(\$3,100)
<b>TOTAL SAVINGS PROJECTED FOR 2001-2006</b>	<b>\$235,251</b>

A detailed list of costs and savings by recommendation appears in **Exhibit 5**. The page number for each recommendation is listed in the summary chart for reference purposes. Detailed implementation strategies, timelines and the estimates of fiscal impact follow each recommendation in this report. The implementation section associated with each recommendation highlights the actions necessary to achieve the proposed results. Some items should be implemented immediately, some over the next year or two and some over several years.

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

**Exhibit 5**  
**Summary of Costs and Savings by Recommendation**

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>Total 5- Year (Costs) or Savings</b>	<b>One Time (Costs) or Savings</b>
<b>Chapter 1 District Organization and Management</b>								
1	Develop a long-range strategic plan incorporating alternate growth scenarios. p. 23	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2	Provide additional training to board members in the areas of school finance and district planning. p. 26	(\$500)	(\$500)	(\$500)	(\$500)	(\$500)	(\$2,500)	\$0
3	Prepare more detailed board minutes. p. 28	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4	Use timed agendas to better manage board meeting length and time spent in executive sessions. p. 29	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5	Incorporate specific performance measures into the superintendent's performance evaluation instrument. p. 32	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
6	Increase communication with SBDM	(\$250)	(\$250)	(\$250)	(\$250)	(\$250)	(\$1,250)	\$0

	committees in developing school budgets and staff decisions by defining levels of authority within the SBDM process. p. 34							
7	Establish performance criteria for non-teaching staff members and school administrators and use a performance evaluation guide to provide employees with feedback on their annual performance. p. 38	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8	Develop a WVUSD Education Foundation and track all contributions received by the district. p. 41	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
9	Upgrade the district newsletter and use the high school journalism teacher to produce it. p. 42	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	<b>Totals-Chapter 1</b>	<b>(\$750)</b>	<b>(\$750)</b>	<b>(\$750)</b>	<b>(\$750)</b>	<b>(\$750)</b>	<b>(\$3,750)</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Chapter 2 Educational Service Delivery</b>								
10	Develop an instructional plan that specifically addresses the	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	needs of students who have been retained. p. 54							
11	Explore multi-age classes for grades 2 and 3 and for grades 4 and 5. p. 56	\$0	\$40,637	\$40,637	\$40,637	\$40,637	\$162,548	\$0
12	Ensure the accuracy of PEIMS data by providing the PEIMS data coordinator and PEIMS data entry operator with appropriate training and time. p. 58	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
13	Adopt the state's recommended high school graduation program as the district standard for Water Valley High school students and ensure that appropriate data is reported through PEIMS to the Texas Education Agency. p. 59	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
14	Improve communication and coordination to ensure that special education teachers have appropriate support from the Small Schools Cooperative and	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	school staff. p. 63							
15	Provide special education support services to the vocational and the regular education teacher. p. 64	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
16	Establish campus intervention teams at each school to develop and monitor pre-referral practices. p. 66	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
17	Fully implement the <i>Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students</i> . p. 68	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
18	Offer a more balanced school to career program that mirrors current job market needs. p. 71	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
19	Document specific compensatory education objectives, strategies and funding sources in campus improvement plans. p. 73	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
20	Provide additional training for the special education teacher that is currently in charge of the Alternative	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	Education Center. p. 75							
21	Provide Crisis Management Manual and training to the elementary school principal and staff. p. 76	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	<b>Totals-Chapter 2</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$40,637</b>	<b>\$40,637</b>	<b>\$40,637</b>	<b>\$40,637</b>	<b>\$162,548</b>	<b>\$0</b>

### Chapter 3 Financial Management

22	Establish a fund balance management policy and develop administrative procedures to follow the status. p. 88	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
23	Create a Budget Planning Committee to identify the district's financial goals and constraints for the next five years and prepare a budget calendar. p. 91	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
24	Prepare Request for Proposals for audit services that includes a provision for an option to extend the term. p. 92	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
25	Form a committee composed of district employees and board	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	members to effectively manage the transition to the state provided health insurance program. p. 96							
26	Enter the acquisition date of each fixed asset into the RSCCC fixed asset module. p.99	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
27	Perform an annual physical inventory and install a bar-coding system to track fixed assets. p. 100	(\$50)	(\$50)	(\$50)	(\$50)	(\$50)	(\$250)	(\$2,100)
	<b>Totals-Chapter 3</b>	<b>(\$50)</b>	<b>(\$50)</b>	<b>(\$50)</b>	<b>(\$50)</b>	<b>(\$50)</b>	<b>(\$250)</b>	<b>(\$2,100)</b>
<b>Chapter 4 Operations</b>								
28	Develop a fiscal impact analysis of new versus renovated facility operating costs and explore funding available through the federal QZAB program. p. 108	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
29	Update facility plans based on revised enrollment projection scenarios. p. 110	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$2,000)
30	Develop and maintain a facilities inventory. p. 111	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
31	Negotiate un-front	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0





	training each year. p. 122							
38	Maintain QuickBooks data on the network. p. 123	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
39	Sell surplus buses and adopt a bus procurement plan to replace buses every 15 years or 200,000 miles. p. 126	\$0	(\$3,000)	(\$3,000)	\$0	(\$3,000)	(\$9,000)	\$1,000
40	Coordinate with other districts in Tom Green County to provide expanded driver training. p. 128	(\$120)	(\$120)	(\$120)	(\$120)	(\$120)	(\$600)	\$0
41	Revise written menus to identify meals made from scratch. p. 134	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
42	Disable the vending machines located outside the cafeteria during serving hours. p. 135	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
43	Enter into a countywide food-purchasing cooperative. p. 137	\$11,250	\$11,250	\$11,250	\$11,250	\$11,250	\$56,250	\$0
44	Encourage increased meal participation in district cafeterias. p. 138	\$3,842	\$7,684	\$7,684	\$7,684	\$7,684	\$34,578	\$0
	<b>Totals-Chapter 4</b>	<b>\$14,687</b>	<b>\$15,529</b>	<b>\$15,529</b>	<b>\$18,529</b>	<b>\$15,529</b>	<b>\$79,803</b>	<b>(\$1,000)</b>

	<b>TOTAL SAVINGS</b>	<b>\$15,092</b>	<b>\$59,571</b>	<b>\$59,571</b>	<b>\$59,571</b>	<b>\$59,571</b>	<b>\$59,571</b>	<b>\$253,376</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>
	<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>(\$1,205)</b>	<b>(\$4,205)</b>	<b>(\$4,205)</b>	<b>(\$1,205)</b>	<b>(\$4,205)</b>	<b>(\$4,205)</b>	<b>(\$15,025)</b>	<b>(\$4,100)</b>
	<b>NET SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>	<b>\$13,887</b>	<b>\$55,366</b>	<b>\$55,366</b>	<b>\$58,366</b>	<b>\$55,366</b>	<b>\$55,366</b>	<b>\$238,351</b>	<b>(\$3,100)</b>

<b>5 Year Gross Savings</b>	<b>\$254,376</b>
<b>5 Year Gross Costs</b>	<b>(\$19,125)</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$235,251</b>

# Chapter 1

## DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the Water Valley Independent School District's (WVISED) district organization and management and includes the following sections:

- A. Governance
- B. District and School Management
- C. Personnel
- D. Community Involvement

The effectiveness of a district's organization and management may be evaluated against several critical success factors; a vision that is clearly communicated to staff and community members through a planning document; an efficient and logical organizational structure supporting site-based decision-making; a planning, budgeting and improvement process that ensures resources are used efficiently and support district goals; a thorough and objective performance evaluation system; sound and consistently applied policies that comply with applicable laws; and board actions that demonstrate an understanding of members' roles as planners, policy-makers and performance monitors.

### **BACKGROUND**

WVISED is on U.S.Highway 87, 22 miles northwest of San Angelo in northwestern Tom Green County. The first school in the Water Valley area was started by a group of men and women with school age children, calling themselves the "Eagle Hunt Club." They each pledged as much as they could pay toward hiring a teacher. They then selected a site on the North Concho River close to Yandel, which was about 4 miles from present day Water Valley.

The Simpson School District and Powell School District consolidated with the WVISED in 1931. In 1949 Walnut Grove (Tom Green County) and the Walnut District (Coke County) consolidated with Water Valley. Carlsbad School district consolidated with WVISED in 1971.

According to the 2000-01 Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), WVISED had 315 students for the 2000-01 school year. Of those students, approximately 45 percent are economically disadvantaged, four percent less than the state average of nearly 49 percent.

For this review, WVISD selected peer districts for comparisons based upon similarities in size, location, enrollment and property value. The districts chosen were Bronte, Eden, North Zulch and Veribest ISDs. Their enrollment, accreditation status, ethnicity and percentage of economically disadvantaged students are presented in **Exhibit 1-1**.

**Exhibit 1-1**  
**WVISD and Peer District**  
**1999-2000**

<b>District</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>Accreditation Status</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Percentage Economically Disadvantaged</b>
Bronte	515	Academically Acceptable	Anglo: 62.1% Hispanic: 24.9% African American: 12.8% Asian/Pacific Islander: 0.2% Native American: 0.0%	64.5%
Eden	346	Recognized	Anglo: 54.0% Hispanic: 45.4% African American: 0.6% Asian/Pacific Islander: 0.0% Native American: 0.0%	55.2%
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>347*</b>	<b>Recognized</b>	<b>Anglo: 82.4%</b> <b>Hispanic: 14.7%</b> <b>African American: 0.6%</b> <b>Asian/Pacific Islander: 0.6%</b> <b>Native American: 1.7%</b>	<b>45.0%</b>
North Zulch	354	Academically Acceptable	Anglo: 95.8% Hispanic: 3.1% African American: 0.6% Asian/Pacific Islander: 0.0% Native American:	43.5%

			0.6%	
Veribest	231	Recognized	Anglo: 67.1% Hispanic: 29.4% African American: 1.3% Asian/Pacific Islander: 1.3% Native American: 0.9%	40.7%

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

\*Enrollment numbers include students at Carlsbad State School figured into WVISD by AEIS.

WVISD had budgeted revenues of \$2.9 million in 2000-01. Compared to its peer group, Water Valley has the third-highest budgeted revenue and the highest revenue per student (**Exhibit 1-2**).

**Exhibit 1-2**  
**WVISD Budgeted Revenues Compared to Peer Districts**  
**2000-01**

District	Total Revenue (millions)	Revenue / Student
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>\$2.9</b>	<b>\$9,138</b>
Eden	\$3.0	\$8,873
Bronte	\$4.3	\$8,344
Veribest	\$2.2	\$8,103
North Zulch	\$2.5	\$7,168

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.

WVISD's total operating expenditures for 2000-01 were \$2.8 million. Compared to its peer group, WVISD has the third-highest operating expenditures and the second-highest operating expenditures per student (**Exhibit 1-3**).

**Exhibit 1-3**  
**WVUSD Budgeted Operating Expenditures**  
**Compared to Peer Districts**  
**2000-01**

District	Total Operating Expenditures (millions)	Total Operating Expenditures Per Student
Bronte	\$4.6	\$8,973
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>\$2.8</b>	<b>\$8,952</b>
Eden	\$3.0	\$8,853
Veribest	\$2.0	\$7,226
North Zulch	\$2.4	\$6,922

*Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.*

In 2000-01, Texas school districts received an average of 53.1 percent of their revenue from local sources, 43.6 percent from the state and 3.3 percent from federal sources. WVUSD and its peer districts all had a lower percentage of local revenue and a higher percentage of state revenue than the state average. WVUSD also had a lower percentage of federal revenue than the state or its peers (**Exhibit 1-4**).

**Exhibit 1-4**  
**WVUSD, State and Peer District Revenue Sources**  
**as a Percentage of Total Revenues**  
**2000-01**

District	Local/Other Revenue	State Revenue	Federal Revenue
Bronte	21.9%	73.4%	4.7%
Eden	48.2%	48.8%	3.0%
Veribest	34.4%	63.1%	2.5%
North Zulch	31.7%	66.1%	2.2%
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>30.7%</b>	<b>67.2%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>53.1%</b>	<b>43.6%</b>	<b>3.3%</b>

*Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.*

WVUSD spends 56.0 percent of its expenditures on instruction, which is the third-highest compared with its peers. The state average exceeds the district average by nearly 2 percent (**Exhibit 1-5**).

**Exhibit 1-5**  
**WVUSD and Peer District Expenditures for Instruction**  
**as a Percentage of Total Expenditures**  
**2000-01**

<b>District</b>	<b>Total Operating Expenditures</b>	<b>Expenditures for Instruction</b>	<b>Instruction as Percentage of Total Expenditures</b>
Veribest	\$1,885,339	\$1,185,805	62.9%
North Zulch	\$2,347,150	\$1,365,865	58.2%
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>\$2,552,912</b>	<b>\$1,430,301</b>	<b>56.0%</b>
Eden	\$2,850,571	\$1,583,703	55.6%
Bronte	\$4,504,361	\$2,484,170	55.2%
<b>State</b>	<b>\$23,994,222,366</b>	<b>\$13,871,475,883</b>	<b>57.8%</b>

*Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.*



# Chapter 1

## DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

### A. GOVERNANCE

In Texas, a school district's organization begins with an elected Board of Trustees. Residents of the districts elect school board members either at-large, district-wide or from single-member districts that cover only a portion of the school district.

The organization and management of a school district requires cooperation between elected members of the Board of Trustees and 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 that will govern the district; approve the plans for implementing those policies; select key management, establish property tax rates and approve staffing levels, pay rates and the annual budget. The board also determines facility needs and calls bond elections as necessary to support those needs.

As a legal agent of the state of Texas, the board derives its legal status from the Texas Constitution and state laws. School boards must operate in accordance with applicable state and federal statutes, regulations interpreting statutes and controlling court decisions. Under the Texas Education Code (TEC), each board must:

- Govern and oversee the management of the public schools of the district;
- Adopt such rules, regulations and bylaws as the board may deem proper;
- Approve a district-developed plan for site-based decision-making and provide for its needs;
- Select tax officials, as appropriate for the district's needs;
- Prepare and adopt a budget for the next 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 or public accountant holding a permit from the Texas State of 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 those objectives;
- Receive bequests and donations or other money coming legally into its hands in the name of the district; Select a depository for district funds;

- Order elections, canvass the returns, declare results and issue certificates of election as required by law;
- Dispose of property no longer necessary for the operation of the school district;
- Acquire and hold real and personal property in the name of the district;
- Adopt a policy for the employment and duties of district personnel; and
- Hold all powers and duties not specifically delegated by statute to the Texas Education Agency or the State Board of Education.

Due to a board member's resignation in fall 2000, WVISD's Board of Trustees included six members instead of seven prior to the May 6, 2001 election. In the May 6, 2001 election, three members were elected, bringing the board back up to seven trustees. Members serve three-year terms with elections held annually. At least two of the trustees' terms expires each year. All members are elected at large. The current board is shown in **Exhibit 1-6**.

**Exhibit 1-6  
WVISD Board of Education  
2000-01**

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Term Expires</b>	<b>Full Years of Service as of 5/2001</b>	<b>Occupation</b>
Brian K. Marschall	President	May 2003	1 yr, 10 mo	Banker
Cary Tomerlin	Vice-President	May 2002	1 year	Retailer
Quinn Bannister	Secretary	May 2004	6 months	Data Manager
Charles Holler	Trustee	May 2004	0 years	Self-employed
Dana Tipton	Trustee	May 2003	0 Years	Retailer
J.C. Schovajsa	Trustee	May 2003	1 year	Mechanic
Ricki Gochenauer	Trustee	May 2002	0 years	Food Service Director

*Source: Water Valley Board of Trustees List 2000-2001 and WVISD Administration Office.*

The board has experienced significant turnover in recent years, and compared to most school boards is inexperienced. After the May 2001 election, the longest tenured board member will have less than two years of experience.

In June 1999, the superintendent and the two most experienced board members at WVISD abruptly resigned, citing personality conflicts with the remaining board members. In May 2000, 11 candidates competed for four board seats, making it the most contested race in Tom Green County. Two more board members resigned in the Fall 2000, and only one was replaced. This instability in district governance comes at a time when the district is experiencing declining enrollment and accompanying financial stress.

Regular board meetings are held on the second Monday of each month unless the board president changes the date for the convenience of the members or other reasons deemed necessary. Meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. and are usually held at Water Valley High School.

The board agendas are developed by the superintendent and the board president and incorporate requests from all board members. Any trustee may request that a subject be included on the agenda for a meeting and the board president does not have the authority to remove an item from the agenda without the trustee's specific authorization. Agenda items are due by noon seven days before a regular board meeting or special board meeting. The final agenda for regular board meetings is usually posted at least a day before the 72 hours required by district policy.

Water Valley parents and teachers are generally pleased with the governance of the school district. In a survey of parents by TSPR, positive opinions outweighed negative opinions by two to one. Teacher comments were more favorable, with the exception of the two responses relating to the board's relationship with the superintendent and the board's image in the community. For both questions, 53 percent of the teachers responded unfavorably. **Exhibits 1-7 and 1-8** present the results of parent and teacher survey questions relating to the district's organization and management.

**Exhibit 1-7  
WVISD Parent Survey Results  
District Organization and Management**

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	The school board allows	9.4%	43.4%	28.3%	13.2%	5.7%

	sufficient time for public input at meetings.					
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	7.5%	34.0%	34.0%	18.9%	5.7%
3.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	18.9%	30.2%	24.5%	15.1%	11.3%
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	18.9%	30.2%	30.2%	15.1%	5.7%

*Source: TSPR Parent Survey, March 2001.*

**Exhibit 1-8**  
**WVUSD Teacher Survey Results**  
**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.	17.6%	47.1%	23.5%	11.8%	0.0%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	11.8%	52.9%	0.0%	29.4%	5.9%
3.	School board members work well with the superintendent.	0.0%	29.4%	17.6%	47.1%	5.9%
4.	The school board has a good image in the community.	0.0%	17.6%	29.4%	47.1%	5.9%
5.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	11.8%	41.2%	5.9%	29.4%	11.8%
6.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	23.5%	29.4%	23.5%	11.8%	11.8%

7.	Central administration is efficient.	17.6%	70.6%	0.0%	11.8%	0.0%
8.	Central administration supports the educational process.	17.6%	58.8%	11.8%	11.8%	0.0%
9.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	23.5%	23.5%	29.4%	23.5%	0.0%

*Source: TSPR Teacher Survey, March 2001.*

## **FINDING**

The superintendent effectively uses technology, charts and graphs to present board packet information at WVUSD board meetings. Packets of background materials are distributed to board trustees the Thursday before the board meeting. Any member of the public may also request a copy of the board packet. Based on a review of board packets prepared for meetings during 2000-01, they are complete and well organized. Each item in the packet has a cover sheet that contains the agenda item number, the subject matter, references to any related pages, background information, administrative consideration and administrative recommendation. Board members are pleased with the content, organization and timeliness of the board packets.

During board meetings, the superintendent uses his laptop computer and a TV screen to project each agenda item for all in the room to view. He also uses graphics to present information that is contained in the board packet. For example, in the April 11, 2001 board meeting, the superintendent presented a graphic showing enrollment trends since 1968, isolating the effect of transfers on total enrollment. In another graphic, the superintendent presented a stacked bar chart, showing three years of expenditure levels. These and other graphs, displayed on a TV screen, effectively communicate important information that all viewers can comprehend.

## **COMMENDATION**

**The superintendent effectively uses technology and graphics to present information at board meetings.**

## **FINDING**

WVUSD has an online policy manual that is easy to use and accessible by all teachers and administrators, as well as any community member with an Internet connection.

The online manual was set up through the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) in 2000. Upon entering the Web address, the user is shown a directory of policies by topic. A key word search capability is available for identifying any policies containing specific words or phrases. This helps the district quickly identify all policies applicable to a particular issue.

Any policy changes are reviewed and approved by the board before they are placed online.

### **COMMENDATION**

**The district's online policy manual provides efficient access to district policies to teachers, administrators and the general public.**

### **FINDING**

WVUSD does not have a long-range strategic plan to guide key decisions. The district does not prepare a district improvement plan (DIP) but prepares separate campus improvement plans for the elementary and high school. The superintendent said that since the district has only one campus, the campus improvement plans for the elementary and high school schools effectively serve as the DIP. The district cites Section 11.252(c) of the TEC, which states that "In a district that has only one campus, the district- and campus-level committees may be one committee and the district and campus plans may be one plan."

Each school has a separate site-based committee that prepares each plan annually. The plans include campus goals, strategies, formative evaluation benchmarks, performance measures, resources required and sources of funds. The district's goals are included in the high school and elementary school CIPs, however, there is little correlation with the campus goals. Additionally, the district goals that are in the high school plan are outdated.

The superintendent and the board establish and document district goals. WVUSD's district goals for 2000-01 are contained in each of the campus improvement plans and are listed in **Exhibit 1-9**:

### **Exhibit 1-9 WVUSD Goals for 2000-01**

Goal 1	<b>Quality Education</b> To provide a quality education so that all students will excel on the stated accountability standards through appropriate curriculum, which will challenge and prepare students for real world experiences.
Goal 2	<b>Financial Awareness</b> To provide financial awareness and stewardship for efficient use of district resources that result in a sound financial foundation.
Goal 3	<b>Quality Staff</b> To maintain a quality, team-oriented staff that models and ensures a professional, positive, respectful and safe learning environment.
Goal 4	<b>Facilities</b> To provide and maintain facilities that are efficiently utilized, comply with state standards and provide a safe, positive and clean learning environment.

*Source: Water Valley Elementary School Campus Improvement Plan 2000-2001.*

Other than these goals, there is no district-level planning document addressing district issues. WVISD faces several key issues, the most important being declining enrollment and deteriorating financial stability. Enrollment has declined from 398 students in 1996-97 to 347 students in 1999-2000, and the general fund balance declined from \$750,946 to \$160,693. The decline in enrollment was due primarily to the opening of the new Grape Creek high school. Some high school students living in the Grape Creek community had previously attended high school in WVISD. The enrollment has since declined to 315 or by 9 percent from 1999-2000 to 2000-01. The enrollment decline has also mirrored a drop in the region's oil and gas industry.

The district did not respond immediately to the declining enrollment. According to AEIS budget information for WVISD, its cost per student increased from \$7,251 in 1998-99 to \$8,483 in 1999-2000. The 2000-01 budget PEIMS information shows a slight decrease in the cost per student, to \$8,291. In 2000-01, the district budgeted \$2.6 million. Compared to its peer group, WVISD had the lowest student-to-teacher ratio in 2000-01 (**Exhibit 1-10**).

**Exhibit 1-10**  
**Total staff (FTEs) for WVISD and Peer Districts**  
**2000-01**

<b>Staff Category</b>	<b>Bronte</b>	<b>Eden</b>	<b>North Zulch</b>	<b>Veribest</b>	<b>Water Valley</b>
Enrollment	514	336	344	272	315
Teachers	42.1	34.4	31.6	26.9	33.8
Professional support	3.3	3.0	1.0	3.2	2.0
Campus administration	2.8	2.1	1.4	1.1	2.0
Central administration	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.7
Education aides	13.8	6.0	0.0	6.5	0.0
Auxiliary staff	19.4	20.2	20.0	11.9	15.8
<b>Total staff</b>	<b>82.5</b>	<b>66.6</b>	<b>55.0</b>	<b>50.6</b>	<b>54.2</b>
Number of Students per Staff Member	6.2	5.0	6.3	5.4	5.8
Number of Students per Teacher	12.2	9.8	10.9	10.1	9.3

*Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01. Totals may not add due to rounding.*

During the 2000-01 school year, nine staff positions were eliminated, and the superintendent has proposed additional staff reductions for 2001-02 that will bring the district's faculty more in line with enrollment. During this period of financial instability, the district attempted to pass a bond election to build a new elementary school. District management wanted to be in a position to take advantage of the Instructional Facilities Allotment, which provides additional state funds for debt service on facilities. School districts must pass a bond issue to be eligible for funding. In April 2001, the Water Valley community voted against the bond issue.

WVUSD's formal planning efforts focus primarily on school improvement plans. These plans appropriately focus on student performance, attendance rates and community involvement in the schools but not on districtwide needs. The CIP plans do not address the administrative or support functions of the district. Consequently, the lack of a district-level plan impairs the district's ability to respond effectively to changing events that affect the entire district.

**Recommendation 1:**

**Develop a long-range strategic plan incorporating alternate growth scenarios.**



The long-range strategic plan should serve as the framework for future district decisions. The board should appoint a committee of staff members and citizens who are representative of the school and community and charge them with developing a plan for the board's consideration. The committee needs to incorporate a decision-making framework under various growth scenarios into the plan. This will place the district in a better position to respond to change. The plan should include clearly defined goals, objectives and priorities, appropriate implementation strategies and should clearly specify how the district will evaluate progress against the plan, once it is adopted by the board. The strategic plan and CIPs should be aligned with the budget to fund the district's priorities.

The strategic plan should establish a vision for the district, and provide direction for the development of the annual CIPs by the site-based committees. This plan should include specific performance targets that the district wishes to achieve within five years. Performance targets should address instructional and non-instructional areas. Enrollment projections and high-level financial projections should also be incorporated into the strategic plan.

The strategic plan should also include goals that affect the non-instructional functions of the district so that the administrative and support staff understand how they fit into overall educational programs. The goals for the non-instructional functions should be set and measured, in much the same way as the instructional programs are measured. The district and individual campus plans should be expanded in both scope and depth so that they become a meaningful part of the district's decision-making process. The district and campus plans should be aligned with the budget in order to fund the district's initiatives.

## **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The board establishes a long-range strategic planning committee consisting of the superintendent, administrators, teachers, parents, community members and board members.	October 2001
2.	The board gives the committee instructions and a timetable for completion.	October 2001
3.	The strategic planning committee creates working teams for addressing the goals and objectives defined by the board and superintendent.	November 2001
4.	The district provides the committee with necessary data and analysis to understand the district's situation.	November 2001
5.	The committee teams develop action plans, timelines and	November 2001

	performance measures for the strategic plan.	- January 2002
6.	The strategic planning committee prepares long-range objectives and implementation steps and incorporates the se into a long-range strategic plan.	January - March 2002
7.	The strategic planning committee presents the draft to the superintendent for review and comments.	March 2002
8.	The strategic planning committee revises the draft to include the superintendent's comments and presents the strategic plan to the community for input.	April - May 2002
9.	The strategic planning committee includes community comments into the draft and finalizes the strategic plan.	June 2002
10.	The board adopts the strategic plan.	July 2002
11.	The superintendent and administrative staff incorporate the plan's objectives into the budget.	June - August 2002
12.	The superintendent provides annual progress reports against strategic plan objectives and updates the plan as needed	August 2002 and each year thereafter.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## **FINDING**

Board members receive training required by law, but need additional training on certain topics due to their relative inexperience. The requirements set forth by Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) for new, as well as experienced board members, are presented in **Exhibit 1-11**.

### **Exhibit 1-11 Overview of Continuing Education Requirements For School Board Members**

<b>Type of Continuing Education</b>	<b>First Year Board Member</b>	<b>Annual Requirements of Experienced Board Member</b>
Orientation to the Texas Education Code	3 hours	Not required
Update to the Texas Education	Incorporated into	After legislative

Code	Orientation to the Texas Education Code	session: of sufficient length to address major changes
Team-building Session/Assessment of Continuing Education Needs of the Board-Superintendent Team	At least 3 hours	At least 3 hours
Additional Continuing Education, based on assessed need and Framework for School Board Development	At least 10 hours	At least 5 hours
<b>Total Minimum Number of Hours</b>	<b>16 hours, plus local district orientation</b>	<b>8 hours, plus update</b>

*Source: TASB, Leadership Team Services January 28, 2000.*

The hours of training attended by each board member from January 1 to December 31, 2000 is presented in **Exhibit 1-12**. Quinn Bannister has not completed his first year of service, and still has time to meet training requirements.

**Exhibit 1-12**  
**Continuing Education Hours Attended by WVISD Board Members**  
**January 1, 2000-December 31, 2000**

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Continuing Education Hours</b>
Bob Lacy	21.00
Brian K. Marschall	16.50
J.C. Schovajsa	14.75
Cary Tomerlin	11.75
Carolyn Kuhn	9.50
Quinn Bannister	1.50

*Source: WVISD board member continuing education reports, January 1, 2001.*

The only training board members get in financial management and planning, two of the most critical issues facing the district, is one three-hour course on setting goals. The district faces complicated financial challenges that the board must be adequately prepared to address. Examples of challenges the board faces are the decline in its fund balance and drop in enrollment, which reduces the amount of state funding. The board also needs to be involved in the strategic planning process.

Regional Education Service Center XV (Region 15) offers Tier III customized courses in planning and school finance. Region 15 can determine which topics need to be covered in the courses. Region 15 records indicate that the WVSD Board of Trustees received goal-setting training during summer 2000.

TASB also offers planning services to local districts. Services and program schedules can be custom-designed to meet a district's specific needs. TASB offers workshops on critical issues planning, effective approaches to districtwide planning, districtwide goal setting and districtwide strategic planning. TASB also offers courses in planning and finance at its conferences and workshops.

**Recommendation 2:**

**Provide additional training in school finance and district planning to board members.**

Enhancing board members' knowledge in planning and finance will ensure that they fully understand the district's financial position.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES**

1.	The superintendent contacts Region 15 and requests courses pertaining to school finance and strategic planning for board members and administrators.	October 2001
2.	The superintendent and board meet with Region 15 to determine the criteria for the customized courses.	October 2001
3.	The board takes the continuing education courses identified at the meeting with Region 15 beginning in November 2001 and each year thereafter.	November 2001 and Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

If all seven board members complete two courses per year at \$250 per course from Region 15, it will cost the district about \$500 a year.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
Provide additional training in school finance and district planning to board members.	(\$500)	(\$500)	(\$500)	(\$500)	(\$500)

## **FINDING**

The board minutes do not sufficiently describe the basis for district decisions, limiting the community's ability to hold the board accountable for its actions. The board minutes presented in a format that is clear and concise, containing the agenda number and title; motions made, including names of individuals making and seconding the motions; votes taken by each board member and the resolution. The minutes also include the date of the board meeting, and times of call to order and adjournment.

Meeting minutes should give a clear indication of the process applied by the board, and the factors considered when it makes decisions. The WVISD minutes do not elaborate on the discussions held at the meeting for each agenda item. **Exhibit 1-13** provides examples of the descriptions of the board votes for the March 7, 2001 board meeting.

### **Exhibit 1-13**

#### **Descriptions of Board Votes for the March 7, 2001 Board Meeting**

Motion by Cary Tomerlin, seconded by Quinn Banister to renew all Teacher Contracts for the 2001-02 school year.
Motion by Cary Tomerlin, seconded by J.C. Schovajsa to approve the three transfer students as presented.

*Source: WVISD March 7, 2001 Board Meeting Minutes.*

These descriptions do not state whether there was any discussion, nor describe the content of the discussion. Any person not in attendance at the board meeting should be able to read the minutes and clearly understand a particular board decision.

### **Recommendation 3:**

#### **Prepare more detailed board minutes.**

The board secretary should develop more detailed minutes using a tape recorder if necessary. More detailed minutes will allow the district to understand each decision the board makes, increasing the accountability of the board.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The secretary takes detailed notes, including what was said and by whom during the board meeting, using a tape recorder if necessary.	September 2001
2.	The secretary includes descriptions of discussions for each agenda item, with particular emphasis on items requiring a vote.	September 2001

### FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

### FINDING

WVISED board meetings are excessively long, and executive sessions take up a large portion of time. As shown in **Exhibit 1-14**, board meetings averaged 4.5 hours with executive sessions averaging approximately two hours. This much time spent in executive session gives the impression that the board is conducting its business in private.

**Exhibit 1-14**  
**Length of WVISED Board Meetings**  
**2000-01**

Board Meeting Dates	Type of Meeting	Time Meeting Called	Time Meeting Ended	Total Time for Board Meeting	Executive Session
January 10, 2000	Regular	7 p.m.	12:30 a.m.	5 hours 30 min.	4 hours 3 min.
April 10, 2000	Regular	7 p.m.	11:30 p.m.	4 hours 30 min.	N/A
September 11, 2000	Regular	7 p.m.	9:25 p.m.	2 hours 25 min.	22 min.
December 11, 2000	Regular	7 p.m.	10:50 p.m.	3 hours 50 min.	13 min.
December 20, 2000	Special	7 p.m.	12:39 a.m.	5 hours 39 min.	4 hours 5 min.
January 15, 2001	Regular	7 p.m.	12:42 a.m.	5 hours 42 min.	3 hours 44 min.
February 12, 2001	Regular	7 p.m.	11:30 p.m.	4 hours 30 min.	2 hours 35 min.

2001				min.	min.
March 7, 2001	Regular	7:06 p.m.	10:59 p.m.	3 hours 53 min.	1 hour 13 min.
April 11, 2001	Regular	7:02 p.m.	9:00 p.m.	2 hours 58 min.	N/A

*Source: WVISD board meeting minutes.*

A few of the board members interviewed stated that an unwarranted amount of time was spent on discussion of agenda items where board members disagree. The board recently started a consent agenda to move through agenda items more quickly. The members believe that this has made an improvement in shortening the meetings. One board member said that with the leadership of the new board president, the meetings are more organized.

**Exhibit 1-15** shows the agenda items discussed during executive sessions. The majority of discussion items that took place during executive session were personnel matters.

**Exhibit 1-15**  
**Agenda Items Discussed During Executive Sessions**

<b>Board Meeting Dates</b>	<b>Executive Session Agenda Items</b>
September 11, 2000	Discuss letter from lawyer regarding employee layoffs.
December 11, 2000	Discuss whether to leave trustee vacancy open after board member resigned.
December 20, 2000	Discuss superintendent's appraisal.
January 15, 2001	Discuss renewal of the superintendent's contract.
February 12, 2001	Discuss principal and athletic director's contracts and salary increases.
March 7, 2001	Discuss personnel matters.

*Source: WVISD board meeting minutes.*

During the March 7, 2001 and April 11, 2001 meetings, the board made an effort to shorten the length of time for board meetings.

Some school districts manage board meetings by establishing timed agendas, including estimates for the amount of time spent in executive session.

**Recommendation 4:**

**Use timed agendas to better manage board meeting lengths and time spent in executive session.**

The board should continue working toward reducing the length of time for board meetings. Allotting time to each agenda item will help keep board meetings on track and allow meetings to adjourn at a more reasonable time. The board also should strive to reduce the time in executive sessions in order to keep meetings shorter.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent and board president establish times for discussion of each major item on the agenda.	October 2001
2.	The superintendent and board trustees minimize time in executive sessions.	October 2001

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.



# Chapter 1

## DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

### **B. DISTRICT AND SCHOOL MANAGEMENT**

A superintendent hired by the board serves as chief executive officer for a period of time stipulated by contract. The superintendent recommends the staffing levels and the amount of resources necessary to operate and accomplish the board's goals and objectives. The superintendent is also responsible for reporting management information to the board of trustees and making sure the district is accountable for its performance toward its goals.

While the school board is responsible for creating policy, the superintendent is responsible for implementing and carrying out that policy. The superintendent must also manage the district in the most cost-effective and efficient manner possible. Section 11.201 of the TEC states that the superintendent primarily holds:

- Administrative responsibility for the planning, operation, supervision and evaluation of the educational programs, services and facilities of the district and for annual performance appraisals of the staff;
- Administrative authority and responsibility for the assignment and evaluation of all district personnel;
- Responsibility for termination or suspension of staff members or the non-renewal of staff members' term contracts;
- Authority over day-to-day management of district operations;
- Responsibility for preparation of district budgets;
- Responsibility for preparation of policy recommendation for the board and implementation of adopted policies;
- Responsibility for development of appropriate administrative regulations to implement board policies;
- Responsibility for leadership in attainment of student performance; and
- Responsibility for organization of the district's central administration.

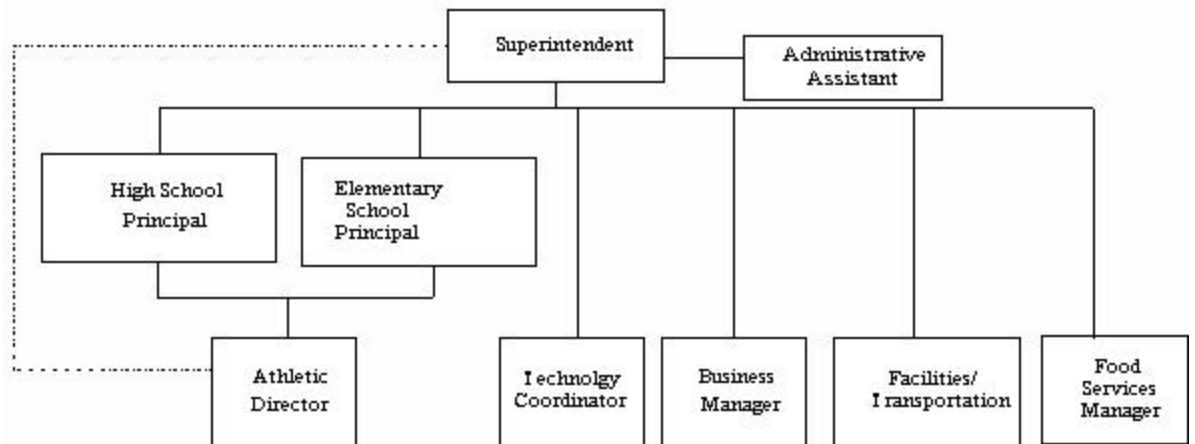
Section 11.253(a) of the TEC requires "Each school district to maintain current policies and procedures to ensure that effective planning and site-based decision-making occur at each campus to direct and support the improvement of student performance."

The district is managed by a superintendent who directs all functional areas of the district including: personnel management, facilities use and

management, asset and risk management, financial management, purchasing, technology, student transportation, food services and discipline management.

David Howard is the superintendent of WVISD, and serves as the chief executive officer of the district. He was hired on December 7, 1999. Eight employees report directly to the superintendent. **Exhibit 1-16** presents the organization chart of WVISD.

**Exhibit 1-16**  
**WVISD District Organization**



*Source: WVISD organization chart, April 2001.*

## **FINDING**

The superintendent's performance evaluation does not contain any specific measures of performance. This results in a highly subjective review with wide ranges of performance cited by individual board members.

WVISD uses an appraisal based on ten evaluation criteria specified in Section 21.354 of the TEC. The criteria are:

- Instructional management;
- School or organizational morale;
- School or organizational improvement;
- Personnel management;
- Management of administration, budget and facilities;
- Student management;
- School or community relations;
- Professional growth and development;
- Academic excellence indicators and district performance objectives; and

- Board/superintendent relations.

The superintendent's performance is ranked on each criteria using one of four ratings: exceeding expectations; proficient; below expectations and unsatisfactory. Academic excellence indicators and district performance objectives includes the district's accountability rating and percentage gains in Texas Assessment of Academic Skills passing rates, attendance, dropout prevention and Texas Learning Index scores. There are no other specific measures of performance mentioned in the superintendent's evaluation.

Many school districts include specific measures to make the superintendent evaluations more objective, using results to measure superintendent performance.

**Recommendation 5:**

**Incorporate specific performance measures into the superintendent's performance evaluation.**

The board should hold the superintendent responsible for a target fund balance, a balanced budget, and targets for operating expenditures per student and the percentage of operating expenditures spent on instruction. The superintendent should also be held accountable for academic performance, such as school ratings, TAAS scores, student attendance and PEIMS reporting.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The board includes specific district objectives in the superintendent's evaluation. In subsequent years these will be identified in the strategic plan.	October 2001
2.	The superintendent prepares a comparison of actual performance against objectives and presents the comparison to the board at least one month prior to the superintendent's performance evaluation.	December 2001
3.	The board compares actual to target performance and mentions specific performance measures in the written evaluation of the superintendent's performance.	January 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

The district's Site-Based Decision-Making (SBDM) committees say they are not fully involved in developing school budgets. A site-based committee exists for each of the two schools that meet throughout the year, developing and reviewing campus improvement plans, and discussing school issues, but do not participate in the budget process.

Members of the SBDM committees interviewed by TSPR stated that they are not involved in establishing school budgets or making staffing decisions. The committee members are primarily involved in discussing the types of programs needed for WVISD, CIPs, school ratings and seeking ways to improve the district for the benefit of the students, faculty, parents and other members of the community. The minutes of the committee meetings also support this finding. **Exhibit 1-17** shows an example of agenda items discussed at SBDM committee meetings.

**Exhibit 1-17**  
**Agenda Items Discussed at SBDM Committee Meetings**

SBDM Date	SBDM Committee	Agenda Items
August 17, 1999	Elementary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Campus Improvement Plan</li> </ul>
September 8, 1999	Elementary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cafeteria improvements</li> </ul>
October 23, 2000	Elementary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TAAS II Surveys</li> <li>• TAAS Scores, Spring 2000</li> <li>• Student enrollment / State Funding dropping</li> <li>• Waiver requests on AEP</li> <li>• Staff Development</li> </ul>
February 8, 2001	Elementary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Campus Improvement Plan</li> <li>• School Calendar</li> </ul>

*Source: WVISD SBDM Committee Agendas and Minutes.*

In accordance with the administrative procedures established under Section 11.251(b), of the Education Code, "the campus-level committee shall be involved in decisions in the areas of planning, budgeting, curriculum, staffing patterns, staff development, and school organization."

The superintendent, on the other hand believes the SBDMs are involved in the budget process in an advisory capacity, but authority for budget decision making rests with the board.

Some districts have addressed problems in communication by creating a model that assigns responsibility at each level for providing input, offering recommendations, making decisions and giving approval (**Exhibit 1-18**).

**Exhibit 1-18**  
**Partial Site-Based Decision-Making Model**  
**Spring Branch Independent School District**

<b>Function</b>	<b>School Principal</b>	<b>Central Office</b>	<b>Superintendent</b>	<b>School Board</b>	<b>Campus Advisory Teams</b>
Goal Setting: Develop campus improvement plan	D	R	R	A	I
Personnel: Make final recommendation for the selection of new personnel and assignment of new and current campus staff	D	R			
Budget: Determine use of campus allocations for special populations programs	D	I	A		I

*Source: Spring Branch Independent School District Model for Increasing School Effectiveness.*

*Through More Campus-Based Decision-Making*

*I = Input: share/provide information/advise*

*D = Decide: make a choice/judgment*

*R = Recommend: to present as worthy of acceptance*  
*A = Approve: give formal/official sanction*

Ultimately the final determination of the budget is left to the discretion of the superintendent and the board, however, increasing communication between the two SBDMs and the superintendent could ensure that programs and ways to improve the district for the benefit of students, faculty, parents and other members of the community is addressed from different points of view building consensus inside the district.

**Recommendation 6:**

**Increase communication with SBDM committees in developing school budgets and staff decisions by defining levels of authority within the SBDM process.**

The decisions of the district and building-level committees must be in response to district goals, and an evaluation plan must be included to measure how well the decision teams are reaching stated objectives. Involving these committees will help the district build consensus for budget and staffing decisions at the schools. The committee members will need training to fulfill these obligations.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent, principal and SBDM chairs meet as a committee to review current policies and problems.	October 2001
2.	The committee recommends levels of authority for key functions and presents these to the board.	November 2001
3.	The board reviews and approves the recommendations.	December 2001
4.	The new policy is implemented.	December 2001
5.	The committee members receive finance and budget training from Region 15.	March 2002
6.	The SBDM committees make recommendations and provide input into the budget process.	March 2002
7.	The superintendent reviews the committee proposals, reviews non-instructional budget needs and compares resources available to those requested by the committees.	April 2002
8.	The committees, the board and superintendent receive SBDM training. Members will receive training as needed and work	Ongoing

together to make certain that each understand their roles and responsibilities.	
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**FISCAL IMPACT**

This fiscal impact assumes that all committee members will receive training each year from Region 15 for a flat cost of \$250.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
Involve SBDM committees in developing school budgets and staffing levels.	(\$250)	(\$250)	(\$250)	(\$250)	(\$250)

# Chapter 1

## DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

### C. PERSONNEL

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

### BACKGROUND

The superintendent is responsible for all district staffing. **Exhibit 1-18** compares WVISD's staffing with the selected peer districts. The district's staffing is relatively consistent with its peers in most staffing categories. The district's percentage of teachers is substantially higher than the state average, at 62.2 percent compared with 50.6 percent for the state. The district did not employ educational aides until February 2001, when one aide was hired.

**Exhibit 1-18**  
**WVISD Staffing Compared to Peer Districts**  
**2000-2001**

District	Teachers	Professional Support	Campus Admin.	Central Admin.	Educational Aides	Auxiliary Staff
Bronte	51.1%	4.0%	3.5%	1.2%	16.7%	23.5%
Eden	51.6%	4.4%	3.2%	1.5%	9.0%	30.3%
North Zulch	57.5%	1.8%	2.5%	1.8%	0.0%	36.4%
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>62.2%</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>29.1%</b>
Veribest	53.2%	6.4%	2.1%	2.0%	12.8%	23.5%
Peer Average	55.1%	4.1%	3.0%	1.6%	7.7%	28.6%
<b>State</b>	<b>50.6%</b>	<b>7.9%</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	<b>10.3%</b>	<b>27.7%</b>

*Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.*



WVUSD employed 54.3 full time employees in 2000-01. The number of employees and the percentage of staff full-time equivalents (FTEs), by category, are described in **Exhibit 1-19**.

**Exhibit 1-19  
WVUSD FTEs  
2000-2001**

Category	Number of FTEs	Percent of FTEs
Teachers	33.8	62.2%
Professional support	2.0	3.7%
Campus administration	2.0	3.7%
Central administration	0.7	1.3%
Educational aides	0.0	0.0%
Auxiliary staff	15.8	29.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>54.3</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

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

**Exhibit 1-20** displays the ratio of students to total district employees. The 9.3-to-1 student-to-teacher ratio declined 11.5 percent since 1997-98, indicating that the district has struggled to manage staffing levels during a period of declining enrollment. The overall student-to-staff ratio has declined to a lesser degree.

**Exhibit 1-20  
Employee Statistics, WVUSD  
1997-1998 through 2000-01**

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01
Number of Students Enrolled	400	371	347	315
Number of Total FTEs	63	62.6	57.3	54.2
Number of students per teacher	10.5	9.6	9.4	9.3
Ratio of Students per FTE	6.4	5.9	6.1	6.0

*Source: TEA, PEIMS 1997-98 through 2000-01.*

**Exhibit 1-21** shows average teacher salaries for WVISD, its peer districts and the state. WVISD ranks in the middle in average teacher salaries among the peer districts; however, the state rate (\$38,359) is higher than WVISD and the peer districts. The highest average teacher salary rate among the peers is Eden Consolidated ISD, which pays its teachers an average of \$1,759 more annually than WVISD. WVISD falls below the annual state average by \$2,649.

**Exhibit 1-21**  
**WVISD and Peer District Average**  
**2000-01 Teacher Salaries**

District	Average Salary for Teachers
Eden	\$37,469
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>\$35,710</b>
Veribest	\$34,054
North Zulch	\$33,271
Bronte	\$32,667
<b>State</b>	<b>\$38,359</b>

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

**Exhibit 1-22** compares WVISD teacher salaries by experience with those of its peers and with the state average. The district pays its teachers more than the state average. Compared to its peers, WVISD pays some of the highest teacher salaries.

**Exhibit 1-22**  
**WVISD and Peer District Average Teacher Salary**  
**by Years of Experience**  
**2000-01**

Years of Experience	Bronte ISD	Eden ISD	North Zulch ISD	Water Valley ISD	Veribest ISD	State
Beginning Teachers	\$24,238	\$26,018	\$27,652	N/A	\$31,034	<b>\$27,007</b>
1-5 years	\$26,011	\$26,980	\$27,834	<b>\$29,066</b>	\$28,045	<b>\$28,758</b>
6-10 years	\$30,826	\$32,909	\$36,329	<b>\$34,535</b>	\$34,216	<b>\$33,499</b>

11-20 years	\$37,498	\$40,846	\$41,293	<b>\$40,842</b>	\$40,560	<b>\$39,499</b>
More than 20 years	\$42,171	\$42,722	\$42,201	<b>\$44,132</b>	\$42,600	<b>\$43,602</b>

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

*Note: Average salary for beginning teachers was not reported by WVISD and the district has no beginning teachers.*

**Exhibit 1-23** illustrates the superintendent's salary information for WVISD and its peer districts.

**Exhibit 1-23  
WVISD and Peer District  
Central Administrative Salaries  
2000-01**

<b>District</b>	<b>Average Superintendent Salary</b>
Bronte	\$75,049
Eden	\$75,000
Veribest	\$65,600
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>\$62,000</b>
North Zulch	\$57,515
<b>State</b>	<b>\$75,025</b>

*Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2000-01 and WVISD payroll records.*

As part of the superintendent's compensation package, WVISD provides housing on property next to the school campus.

**FINDING**

The district does not have performance criteria for non-teaching staff members, which leaves employees uncertain of their roles and the expectations placed upon them.

Performance criteria should provide expectations for employees as well as feedback on their performance. Performance criteria help employees to

become more efficient and effective in their jobs by helping them to plan their work by receiving periodic evaluations based on the established criteria and corrective feedback or rewards for performance.

**Recommendation 7:**

**Establish performance criteria for non-teaching staff members and school administrators and use an annual performance evaluation guide to provide employees with feedback on their performance.**

Establishing performance criteria for non-teaching staff will help WVUSD employees become more effective in their jobs. The district should use TASB guidelines to develop an employee performance evaluation system.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent uses TASB and other resources to develop employee performance evaluations for each district position.	September 2001
2.	The superintendent presents the performance evaluations to the board of trustees.	October 2001
3.	The board of trustees reviews and approves the performance evaluations.	October 2001
4.	The superintendent prepares performance criteria for each non-teaching position and submits them to the board.	January 2002
5.	The board reviews and approves the established performance criteria.	February 2002
6.	The superintendent distributes all performance criteria to the appropriate non-teaching personnel.	March 2002
7.	The superintendent begins to conduct employee evaluations for each non-teaching position.	May 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# Chapter 1

## DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

### **D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

A high level of community involvement can be reached when the district actively asks for the input of the community and responds quickly to their suggestions and ideas. An effective school district community relations program can be established through regular communication with the media, parents, business and community leaders, students and employees.

Community involvement usually includes activities that enable parents, business leaders and others with an interest in public education to have a voice in a school district's management. In smaller districts the superintendent and principals usually coordinate these activities.

### **FINDING**

WVUSD recently combined its Academic Booster Club with its Athletic Booster Club and the club has been renamed the Water Valley Booster Club. WVUSD merged the two clubs to keep them from competing with one another and to allow the participants to work together for a common goal. The Booster Club sponsors both the elementary and high school. There are 30 active members and the club meets once a month. The Booster Club performs a variety of services for the schools, such as the Fall Festival, accelerated reader store, junior high award banquet, high school award banquet, high school athletic banquet, elementary Little Olympians and TAAS lock-in. At the TAAS lock-in, all students who passed the TAAS and their parents are invited to celebrate a job well done.

WVUSD also has two other organizations, the Water Valley Volunteer Program and the Grandmother Volunteer Program. The Water Valley Volunteer Program has approximately eight volunteers who are mostly non-parent community members. The volunteers assist in the accelerated reader store, shelving back library books, performing clerical duties, and they also assist special education students who need one-on-one attention.

The Grandmother Volunteer Program has approximately seven volunteers who assist at the library in the elementary school. The district recognized them at an end of the school year award ceremony and presented them with an award in gratitude for their services.

The district also has an active alumni association that created and maintains a website for keeping former students informed of school and district activities.

## **COMMENDATION**

**WVISED provides a host of opportunities for involving parents and the community in the schools.**

## **FINDING**

The district does not have an education foundation or a tracking mechanism for determining what donations the district receives from organizations, so a determination of the value of the donations is not available.

While contributions to the student activity funds are received from a variety of sources, the district is not aggressively seeking donations at the district level. The district's superintendent has solicited and received computers from Goodfellow Air Force Base and computer equipment and furniture from Texas A&M University. The high school principal sent a letter to HEB asking the company to participate in an "Adopt-a-School" program.

The district received donations for student activities such as the TAAS lock-in celebration in 2001 from many businesses, including Wal-mart, Target, Kmart, Fishers Food Mart and Conch Butane. WVISED also receives monetary donations regularly from the Concho Butane Company, where a board member works.

Few businesses exist in WVISED, but the proximity to San Angelo provides opportunities for business partnerships. Some small school districts near larger communities tap businesses in those communities to form partnerships. The district is at a disadvantage in obtaining business support from San Angelo businesses since there are five other school districts in Tom Green County that are also competing for donations from the same businesses.

To combat this problem, WVISED's neighboring district, Grape Creek ISD, created the Grape Creek Education Foundation which has secured thousands of dollars in donations from large corporations and local businesses as well as individuals. The purpose of the foundation is to secure grants, endowments and donations for the enhancements of educational opportunities for anyone in the district. Funds are dispersed to meet physical or professional development needs, extracurricular programs or special project sponsorships. This includes the purchase of equipment, books, technology, curriculum, furniture and facilities as well as support for programs by supplying stipends, money instructional substitutes/aides, and expenses for field trips and training.

**Recommendation 8:**

**Develop a WVISD Education Foundation and track all contributions received by the district.**

Creating an education foundation similar to the Grape Creek Education Foundation will help WVISD increase the amount of donations they receive. WVISD should actively solicit donations by asking parents if their employer would be interested in becoming a partner with the district. The district could also request the WVISD Booster Club assist in identifying businesses that might help. WVISD would benefit from business relationships either monetarily through donations and sponsorships or through mentoring programs by employees of these businesses. In return, WVISD could provide free advertising in the district newsletter or Web page.

WVISD should appoint a district employee or employees to coordinate community involvement activities and keep a record of donations made to the district. The WVISD community involvement coordinator should also be appointed to develop the education foundation.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent appoints an employee or employees to coordinate community involvement activities.	October 2001
2.	The community involvement coordinator writes an article in the WVISD newsletter requesting parent and community assistance.	October 2001
3.	The community involvement coordinator contacts Grape Creek ISD to gather more information about its education foundation.	October 2001
4.	The community involvement coordinator meets with the WVISD Booster Club members and other community members to solicit their assistance in developing the education foundation and identifying businesses who could form partnerships with the district.	November 2001
5.	The community involvement coordinator, with the assistance of other community members, develops the WVISD Education Foundation.	November 2001 to January 2002
6.	The community involvement coordinator, with the assistance of other community members, contacts the organizations identified, pursue business partnerships and determine what the business will provide for the school.	November 2001 through May 2002

7.	The community involvement coordinator tracks all contributions received by the district.	Ongoing
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## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## FINDING

The district newsletter has received criticism from the Water Valley community. The superintendent's office publishes *The WildCat Scream* newsletter for parents and the community. Contents of the newsletter include community news as well as articles pertaining to school events, awards, sports, bond elections and school taxes. This newsletter and the district's Web site are the primary means through which the district communicates with citizens of Water Valley.

Several members of the community expressed concerns about the tone of several newsletter articles and comments, stating that the newsletter often goes beyond presenting facts and presents opinions not necessarily shared by community members. This issue was the most cited contributing factor to negative responses received in a TSPR survey of parents. Approximately 35 percent of the parents surveyed disagreed with the statement that "The district regularly communicates with parents."

Some districts assign the high school journalism teacher and class to assist in writing the district newsletters. An editorial process is put in place to filter the articles that are in the newsletter to ensure that the contents are factual and appropriate for the newsletter.

### **Recommendation 9:**

#### **Upgrade the district newsletter and use the high school journalism teacher to produce it.**

The district should ensure that the newsletter does not contain offensive comments to promote a positive relationship with all members of the community. The district should turn the newsletter over to the journalism teacher and implement an editorial process to ensure that information is properly presented to the public.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent puts the journalism teacher in charge of the newsletter.	September 2001
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2.	The journalism teacher begins to write and edit the district newsletter.	October 2001 and Ongoing
3.	The superintendent reviews all district newsletters before distribution.	October 2001 and Ongoing

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.



Bronte	514	25.4%	15.2%	25.7%	58.7%	0.4%	41.2%	60.1%	85.5%
North Zulch	344	6.2%	0.3%	2.9%	96.2%	0.6%	3.8%	37.2%	(10.8%)
Eden	336	(16.8%)	0.6%	42.6%	56.8%	0.0%	43.2%	55.1%	7.6%
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>(21.3%)</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>18.4%</b>	<b>79.4%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>20.6%</b>	<b>38.7%</b>	<b>(2.8%)</b>
Veribest	272	54.5%	0.7%	36.0%	61.4%	1.8%	38.6%	30.5%	(25.4%)
Region 15	50,696	(3.8%)	3.6%	47.9%	47.8%	0.7%	52.2%	53.5%	5.1%
<b>State</b>	<b>4,071,433</b>	<b>6.3%</b>	<b>14.4%</b>	<b>40.5%</b>	<b>42.1%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>57.9%</b>	<b>49.2%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>

*Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.*

Demographic, staffing and financial data for each school district and school are reported in TEA's Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) reports. These reports are sent to each school and district and are available on TEA's Internet web site, [www.tea.state.tx.us](http://www.tea.state.tx.us). The latest AEIS data, published by TEA in November 2000 is for 1999-2000. Some data is available for 2000-01 from Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) reports submitted in Fall 2000. This information will be used whenever possible when compatible with 1999-2000 data (primarily student performance) that are not yet available from 2000-01. Care will be taken when interpreting differences among peer districts and state averages when there are few students, particularly within categories such as economically disadvantaged.

For 2000-01, WVISD's enrollment was 315. WVISD enrollment was steady from 1996 through 1998. Beginning in 1998-99, however, WVISD began to lose students at about 30 students per year. Primarily because Grape Creek ISD stopped sending high school students to WVISD, the district has a higher percentage of Anglo students (79.4 percent) than all its peer districts except North Zulch ISD.

At 38.7 percent, WVISD has the third lowest percentage of economically disadvantaged students among its four peer districts. Between 1995-96 and 1999-2000, the percentage of economically disadvantaged students in the state has increased by about two percent. During the same time, the percentage of economically disadvantaged students in WVISD decreased by about three percent.

As shown in **Exhibit 2-2**, WVISD ranks third among its peer districts in instructional expenditures per student at \$4,645 per student. WVISD is

about average compared to the peer districts and is slightly higher than the state average in the percentage of its expenditures for regular instruction, 66.0 percent. WVISD is similar in the percentage directed to the various programs with the exception of Bronte ISD.

**Exhibit 2-2**  
**Actual Instructional Expenditures in WVISD and Peer Districts**  
**2000-01**

District	Total Expenditures	Instruct. Expend Per Student*	Percent Regular	Percent Bil/ESL	Percent Career & Tech.	Percent Compensatory	Percent Gifted & Talented	Percent Special Educ.
Eden	\$3,508,258	\$5,260	58.9%	0.6%	7.4%	15.3%	1.4%	12.4%
Veribest	\$2,084,013	\$4,669	71.5%	0.0%	5.5%	6.3%	0.3%	15.3%
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>\$3,249,351</b>	<b>\$4,645</b>	<b>66.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>5.6%</b>	<b>6.9%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>14.8%</b>
North Zulch	\$2,795,978	\$4,235	68.4%	0.0%	7.5%	7.7%	0.5%	11.6%
Bronte	\$4,348,311	\$3,941	37.5%	0.9%	7.0%	23.6%	3.0%	21.4%
<b>State</b>	<b>\$31,639,852,010</b>	<b>\$3,738</b>	<b>61.5%</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>11.7%</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>15.2%</b>

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.

\* Includes instruction and instructional leadership expenditures.

As seen in **Exhibit 2-3**, WVISD reported the second highest percentage of students identified as special education students when compared to its peer districts. Enrollment in bilingual/ESL is significantly lower than the 12.5 percent of students enrolled in bilingual/ESL statewide. WVISD ranks second in the percentage of students enrolled in career and technology education programs. WVISD reports the lowest percentage of students in gifted and talented education as compared to any of its peer districts, Region 15 or the state.

**Exhibit 2-3**  
**Student Enrollment by Program**  
**1999-2000**

District	Percent Bilingual/ ESL	Percent Career & Technology	Percent Gifted & Talented	Percent Special Education
----------	------------------------	-----------------------------	---------------------------	---------------------------

Veribest	4.3%	30.7%	6.5%	21.6%
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>35.7%</b>	<b>4.9%</b>	<b>17.3%</b>
Eden	4.6%	41.9%	8.4%	12.7%
Bronte	0.8%	23.5%	7.8%	14.0%
North Zulch	0.0%	23.2%	8.8%	10.7%
Region 15	7.3%	22.8%	7.5%	14.0%
<b>State</b>	<b>12.5%</b>	<b>18.6%</b>	<b>8.4%</b>	<b>12.1%</b>

Source: TEA, AEIS Reports, 1999-2000.

**Exhibit 2-4** shows the percentage of professional staff in various categories among its peer districts. WVISD has the highest percentage of teachers among its' peer districts but ranks next to last in the percentage of minority teachers employed. WVISD reports the second highest percentage of auxiliary staff compared to its peer districts. From the 2000 Fall PEIMS submission, WVISD reports no instructional aides. The percentage of teachers remains at approximately the same level in 2000-01 with about 62 percent of staff reported as teachers. Data for 1999-2000 is included in the table for peer comparison purposes.

Even though there is a superintendent in WVISD, there was zero percent central administration staff and zero percent educational aides reported in the 1999-2000 AEIS reports. AEIS also states that 4.5 percent of expenditures, or \$130,418 were designated for the central office. The 2000 PEIMS report includes a salary for the superintendent who is listed at an approximate full-time equivalent of 0.7. The superintendent is aware of this error and said the cause needs to be found and corrected.

**Exhibit 2-4**  
**Professional Staff**  
**WVISD and Peer Districts**  
**1999-2000**

<b>Professional Staff</b>	<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>North Zulch</b>	<b>Veribest</b>	<b>Eden</b>	<b>Bronte</b>	<b>Region 15</b>	<b>State Avg.</b>
Teachers	<b>64.1%</b>	58.8%	55.2%	52.1%	51.6%	51.0%	51.3%
Professional Support	<b>3.5%</b>	1.9%	4.2%	5.1%	2.6%	5.9%	7.3%
Campus Administration	<b>3.5%</b>	1.9%	2.8%	3.3%	2.6%	2.6%	2.6%

Central Administration	<b>0.0%</b>	3.7%	2.1%	1.5%	1.3%	0.9%	0.9%
Educational Aides	<b>0.0%</b>	9.3%	10.4%	8.7%	17.4%	11.5%	10.3%
Auxiliary Staff	<b>28.9%</b>	24.5%	25.2%	29.4%	24.5%	28.1%	27.6%
Percent Minority Teachers	<b>2.7%</b>	3.2%	7.6%	8.4%	0.0%	16.3%	26.1%

Source: TEA, AEIS Reports 1999-2000.

**Exhibit 2-5** shows teacher experience and turnover rates for WVISD and its peer districts. WVISD has the second lowest percentage of teachers with more than 20 years of teaching experience. WVISD, along with Eden ISD, reports no beginning teachers. WVISD has the second lowest rate of teacher turnover at 10.3 percent.

**Exhibit 2-5**  
**Teacher Experience and Turnover Rate**  
**WVISD and Peer Districts**  
**1999-2000**

	<b>Veribest</b>	<b>North Zulch</b>	<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>Bronte</b>	<b>Eden</b>	<b>Region 15</b>	<b>State Average</b>
Beginning Teachers	40.2%	15.8%	<b>0.0%</b>	5.1%	0.0%	6.9%	7.6%
1-5 Years Experience	19.1%	24.1%	<b>34.7%</b>	26.6%	22.4%	22.6%	27.0%
6-10 Years Experience	3.8%	12.7%	<b>24.5%</b>	22.8%	19.6%	17.7%	17.9%
11-20 Years Experience	25.4%	31.6%	<b>27.2%</b>	30.4%	32.0%	28.9%	26.2%
Over 20 Years Experience	11.5%	15.8%	<b>13.6%</b>	15.2%	26.0%	23.9%	21.2%
Average Years Experience	7.5	11.2	<b>10.5</b>	10.5	14.0	12.8	11.9
Average Years Experience	3.3	6.1	<b>5.9</b>	6.3	10.1	8.6	8.0

with the district							
Turnover	15.5%	20.0%	<b>10.3%</b>	11.6%	9.4%	13.6%	15.0%
Beginning Teacher Salary	\$30,764	\$25,544	<b>\$28,549</b>	\$24,815	\$27,039	\$24,334	\$25,588
Average Teacher Salary 6-10 years	\$33,205	\$35,813	<b>\$39,964</b>	\$31,330	\$40,080	\$32,498	\$34,632

Source: TEA, AEIS Reports, 1999-2000.

As **Exhibit 2-6** shows, with the exception of Eden ISD, WVISD has the lowest percentage, 10.7, of teachers with a Masters degree. This is also lower than both the state and Region 15 averages.

**Exhibit 2-6  
Teacher Degrees  
WVISD and Peer Districts  
1999-2000**

	<b>Eden</b>	<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>Bronte</b>	<b>North Zulch</b>	<b>Veribest</b>	<b>Region 15</b>	<b>State Avg.</b>
No Degree	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%	1.2%
Bachelor	93.5%	<b>86.4%</b>	84.8%	84.2%	78.4%	81.3%	74.1%
Masters	6.5%	<b>13.6%</b>	15.2%	15.8%	21.6	17.0%	24.3%
Doctorate	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.5%

Source: TEA, AEIS Reports 1999-2000.

District Teaching Permits are activated by the local school district and approved by the Commissioner of Education for a degreed person who is uniquely qualified to teach a particular assignment and does not hold any type of teaching credential. A district can activate a Temporary Exemption Permit for a certified, degreed teacher who is not certified for a particular classroom assignment. This exemption cannot be renewed. WVISD reports no teachers with special permits.

Under the state's school accountability system, TEA assigns annual ratings to each district and school based upon (1) TAAS, (2) attendance, (3) dropout rates and (4) data quality. In 1999, TEA added two new rating categories: Unacceptable: Data Quality, a district level rating, and Acceptable: Data Issues, a school level rating. The accountability system includes five ratings for districts: Exemplary, Recognized, Academically Acceptable, Academically Unacceptable and Unacceptable: Data Quality. To receive an Exemplary rating, at least 90 percent of all students, as well as 90 percent of African American, Hispanic, Anglo and Economically Disadvantaged students must pass the TAAS reading, writing and mathematics tests.

To achieve a Recognized rating, 80 percent of all students and each student group must pass the same TAAS reading, writing and mathematics tests. In 2000, to be rated Academically Acceptable, 50 percent of each student group must pass TAAS. Beginning in 2000, scores for students with disabilities, and from the TAAS Spanish version of reading and mathematics in grades 3 through 6, were included in the accountability calculations. Although the state accountability system also considers attendance and dropout rates, TAAS is the key-determining factor in ratings. According to TEA, failure to meet TAAS standards is the primary reason that a school is rated Low-performing.

**Exhibit 2-7** compares WVISD's accountability ratings to its peer districts over the past five years.

**Exhibit 2-7  
Accountability Ratings  
WVISD and Peer Districts  
1995-96 through 1999-2000**

	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>
Veribest	Recognized	Recognized	Exemplary	Recognized	Recognized
Bronte	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized	Acceptable
Eden	Acceptable	Recognized	Acceptable	Acceptable	Recognized
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Recognized</b>
North Zulch	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

*Source: TEA Accountability Reports 1995-96 through 1999-2000.*

WVISD elementary and high school were rated as Recognized in 2000. Fairview Accelerated, a shared alternative education arrangement with other districts, was rated as Acceptable under the alternative accountability



system. The Texas School Directory also lists six schools that serve students with special education needs. These schools are part of a cooperative of 18 school districts, The Small Schools Cooperative, that serves students with special needs in various neighboring districts. These schools are not individually rated because TAAS scores from students that attend these special campuses are sent back to each home district.

In 2001-02, the elementary principal will become principal for the entire district and move from the elementary school to the high school, which are located next to each other.

As seen in **Exhibit 2-8**, WVISD has a very low dropout rate as detailed in the 2000 AEIS reports. WVISD peer districts report a zero annual dropout rate.

**Exhibit 2-8  
Annual Dropout and Attendance Rate  
WVISD and Peer Districts  
1999-2000**

	<b>Bronte</b>	<b>Eden</b>	<b>Veribest</b>	<b>North Zulch</b>	<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>Region 15</b>	<b>State Avg.</b>
Dropout Rate	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	1.5%	1.6%
Attendance Rate	97.3%	96.0%	97.2%	96.3%	96.3%	95.8%	95.4%
Mobility Rate	68.5%	22.7%	27.5%	22.8%	26.1%	N/A	22.0%

*Source: TEA, AEIS Reports 1999-2000.*

Two of its peer districts report a higher attendance rate than WVISD. Attendance is a significant factor in the amount of funding received by a district. WVISD has a lower mobility rate than any of its peer districts and the state average. A student is considered mobile if he or she has been in membership at the school for less than 83% of the school year (i.e., has missed six or more weeks at a particular school. Bronte ISD reports a very high mobility rate and has reported an annual rate in excess of 35 percent since 1997.

## Chapter 2

# EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

### **A. CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE**

Instructional resources are the materials available to ensure successful learning, including curriculum guides, fiscal and human resources and other instructional materials and direction. For instruction to be effective, a school district must have a sound instructional management system. A district should have a high-quality, aligned curriculum, which directs the district's instructional program.

#### **FINDING**

WVISED uses a variety of methods and initiatives to ensure high performance on TAAS, including Saxon Math. One program, Accelerated Reader (AR), has had a significant impact on improved student performance. With this program, the district has made reading a number one district priority. AR is a computerized program that assists the teacher in recording the reading and comprehension levels of each student, helps the teacher develop individual plans and assists students in their reading. The program is designed to increase the number of books a student reads, and to gradually increase the difficulty level. The program also provides students with rewards for reading books and encourages students to take books home to read with their parents. While the district has not formally evaluated the effectiveness of the program, informal evaluations, performance on TAAS and teacher opinion, suggest that this program is successful in increasing reading comprehension.

WVISED has computerized its grading system, allowing teachers to quickly record and access students' grades. This allows teachers to immediately counsel students. The principal said that in parent conferences he could access student information quickly without having to get information from teachers. With the district's computer system, students can take the Accelerated Reader test at any time and in any classroom. They don't have to wait to go to the library to access a computer.

#### **COMMENDATION**

**WVISED has implemented several instructional initiatives, increased use of computers, the Accelerated Reader software and the Saxon Phonics and Math program that have improved overall student performance.**

## **FINDING**

In 2000-01, WVISD began reviewing and updating the district's curriculum guides. The district is also in the process of ensuring that all grade level curricula are vertically aligned. The Water Valley Elementary Campus Improvement Plan (WVEIP) states as a goal, "The curriculum at Water Valley Elementary will be coordinated within and between grade levels." The WVEIP delineates a process that includes teacher collaboration, coordination and training.

To achieve this goal, WVISD is a member of Regional Education Service Center V's (Region 5) Curriculum Leadership Cooperative (CLC) and purchased a set of curriculum guides at a cost of approximately \$600. These curriculum guides are aligned with both TEKS and TAAS. Schools can implement these guides in standard form or can customize each guide to fit their own instructional needs. More than 45 school districts are members of Region 5's cooperative. WVISD is in the process of customizing the curriculum guides to local level needs.

## **COMMENDATION**

**WVISD has made an outstanding commitment to develop, update and align all of the district's curriculum guides.**

### ***Student Performance***

Effective instruction depends upon adequate resources and support from the district's central office. The school administrative and instructional team must be qualified and active in planning and implementing the curriculum. TAAS performance, the primary factor in determining a district's accountability ratings, depends on effective instruction.

TAAS is administered in grades 3 through 8 and in grade 10. TAAS includes a reading and mathematics test in grades 3 through 8 and in grade 10 and a writing assessment in grades 4, 8 and 10. Science and Social Studies tests are included at grade 8, but are not included in determining accountability ratings. Because there are five tests administered in grade 8, this grade level usually has the lowest percentage of students passing all tests taken. The Spanish version of TAAS is given in grades 3 through 6.

On an incremental basis, between 2000 and 2003, changes will be made to the TAAS administration schedule, particularly at the high school level. By 2003, TAAS will be administered in grades 9, 10 and 11. Reading and mathematics tests will be added at grade 9. The exit level examination will be moved to grade 11 and will include science, social studies, English language arts and mathematics. A science test will be added to grade 5.

As seen in **Exhibit 2-9**, WVISD's test scores have increased by almost 22 percent from 1996 to 2000. This is similar to increases seen in Region 15 and the state overall. The percent passing all tests taken is about 6 percent higher than the state average and ranks third among its peer districts. WVISD has 91.8 percent of its students reported as taking TAAS as compared to the state average of 90.2 percent.

**Exhibit 2-9**  
**Percentage of Students Passing TAAS, All Tests Taken (Grades 3-8, & 10)**  
**1995-96 through 1999-2000**

<b>District</b>	<b>1995-96</b>	<b>1996-97</b>	<b>1997-98*</b>	<b>1998-99**</b>	<b>1999-2000**</b>	<b>Percent Change from 1995-96 to 1999-2000</b>	<b>Percent of Students Tested 1999-2000</b>
Eden	68.8%	79.6%	69.3%	82.9%	89.3%	29.8%	90.7%
Veribest	81.3%	85.0%	78.8%	92.0%	89.2%	9.7%	87.9%
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>70.3%</b>	<b>76.4%</b>	<b>66.7%</b>	<b>82.7%</b>	<b>85.7%</b>	<b>21.9%</b>	<b>91.8%</b>
North Zulch	51.2%	66.4%	63.5%	66.1%	83.2%	62.5%	93.9%
Bronte	80.1%	89.1%	78.4%	87.4%	82.6%	3.1%	89.9%
Region 15	69.0%	76.2%	73.6%	80.7%	82.2%	19.1%	90.6%
<b>State</b>	<b>67.1%</b>	<b>73.2%</b>	<b>73.1%</b>	<b>78.1%</b>	<b>79.9%</b>	<b>19.1%</b>	<b>90.2%</b>

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

*\*Recalculated from original posting to include special education and grade 3 and 4 Spanish TAAS.*

*\*\*Recalculated from original posting to include special education and grade 3-6 Spanish TAAS.*

## **FINDING**

In spite of a greater retention rate in the earlier grade levels than its peer districts and the state average, TAAS performance in grade 3 compares



Region 15	81	90	83	94							82	87
State	78	86	78	89							70	82
<b>Grade 7</b>												
WVISD	92	96	88	96							84	92
Region 15	84	85	77	92							73	82
State	83	84	72	88							68	79
<b>Grade 8</b>												
WVISD	82	85	74	81	87	95	76	90	70	80	63	67
Region 15	78	88	69	91	76	85	80	88	71	73	54	65
State	78	90	69	90	77	84	78	88	70	72	54	65
<b>Grade 10</b>												
WVISD	83	90	72	81	96	85					73	76
<b>Region 15</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>91</b>					<b>59</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>91</b>					<b>61</b>	<b>80</b>

Source: TEA, AEIS Reports 1995-96 and 1999-2000. \* Shaded areas indicate that those particular tests are not administered at those grade levels.

Included in **Exhibit 2-11** are the average retention rates in kindergarten through grade 3 for WVISD, its peer districts and the state.

**Exhibit 2-11**  
**Percentage of Students Retained by Grade Level**  
**In WVISD, Region 15, and State**  
**1995-96 and 1999-2000**

Grade Level	Water Valley	Veribest	Bronte	Eden	North Zulch	State Average
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K	*	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%
1	<b>9.5%</b>	0.0%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	5.9%
2	*	*	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%
3	*	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%

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

\*FERPA regulations prohibit identification of students under 5 percent.

While these percentages are based on few students, the pattern of retention in early grade levels was apparent in each of the prior years back to at least 1997. However, it is the consistent pattern of retention over time that brings into question the retention approach in WVISD. Interviews with teachers and the elementary principal noted that students' maturity levels often impede academic achievement. As contained in **Exhibit 2-10**, performance is not noticeably affected in grade 3 TAAS scores by this retention practice. There are few retentions reported after grade 3 in WVISD. Staff at the elementary school also said that the students often repeated the grade level with the same teacher although there are two teachers per grade level.

Neither the district nor campus improvement plans contain any specific references to retention. The elementary principal did not know of any formal follow-up for retained students in later years to determine the impact of the retention. The National Dropout Prevention Center (NDPC) and TEA, among others, have studied retention. In its Spring 2000 newsletter, the NDPC notes, "The evidence of retention practices negative effect on students' emotional development, social behavior, academic achievement and dropping out continues to be overwhelming." In 1994, a report by the TEA Task Force on Early Childhood and Elementary Education, titled *First Impressions*, urged Texas educators to eliminate the practice of retention.

With the passage of the 1999 social promotion law, TEC 28.0211, educators must implement strong accelerated programs for students who are retained. Most children without reading skills by the third grade have a difficult time catching up to their peers. The Early Childhood Task Force recommends schools identify student needs early in the school year. The task force also recommended schools use portfolios and checklists to show a student's academic progress over a period of time. Multiple assessment practices ensure students are identified early and provided with the necessary resources to succeed in later years.

School districts have implemented a wide variety of programs to address the needs of students who have been retained. They have developed more effective programs to identify and serve students at risk of failure.

**Recommendation 10:**

**Develop an instructional plan that specifically addresses the needs of students who have been retained.**

This plan should consider both the short and long-term effect of retention and should include an accountability component that provides for periodic assessment. An instructional plan for retained students will help teachers identify each student's specific needs. The district should list all available district resources in a coordinated fashion so teachers can more effectively select needed services for students.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent, principal and the kindergarten and first grade teachers develop an instructional plan that addresses the needs of students that have been retained.	November 2001
2.	The superintendent directs the principal and all teachers to list all available services for students (computer software programs, tutoring, before/after school programs, etc.) and makes these available to all teachers.	Spring 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented using existing resources.

**FINDING**

WVUSD is experiencing a declining student enrollment. As **Exhibit 2-1** shows, for 2000-01, WVUSD's enrollment was 315. Beginning in 1998-99, the district began to lose students at about 30 students per year. As a result, classrooms are getting smaller. The student to teacher ratio reported in the 1999-2000 AEIS report is lower than the state average. For grades kindergarten through grade 3 the student to teacher ratio is about 12 to 1. This compares to an approximate 19 students to one teacher at the state level.

Starting in 2001-2002, the high school and elementary school principal positions will be combined. The elementary school principal will assume the new position. In 2000-01, the elementary school principal said that there were two teachers per grade level in grades one through 4 and grade



6. **Exhibit 2-12** presents the number of students by grade level and the teacher-student ratios as of the end of 2000-01.

**Exhibit 2-12**  
**Students enrolled Per Grade Level and Teacher-Student Ratio**  
**As of 5/23/01**

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Number of Teachers</b>	<b>Teacher-Student Ratio</b>
K	17	1	17
1	26	2	13
2	21	2	10.5
3	21	2	10.5
4	23	2	11.5
5	21	1	21
6	28	2	14

*Source: Water Valley ISD Central Administration, 2001.*

One way to overcome a decline in enrollment is to restructure the grading system to mixed-age classes or to combine grade levels in one classroom. In the combined class setting, there is more than one grade level in a classroom. Combined classes usually include the required curriculum for each of the two grades represented, although some class activities may be conducted with children of both grades combined. This kind of grouping occurs frequently in small schools, and occasionally in larger ones when the number of children in different age groups fluctuates.

In mixed-age grouping, one can maximize personnel resources and implement flexible instruction that recognizes different student ability levels. Students are grouped so that the age span of the class is greater than one year. The terms mixed-age and multi-age grouping are used to emphasize the goal of using teaching and curriculum practices that maximize the benefits of interaction and cooperation among students of various ages. Students remain with the same teacher or teaching team for more than one instructional year. In mixed- or multi-age classes, teachers encourage children with different experiences and stages of development to turn to each other for help with all aspects of classroom activity, including reading and math. The multi-age environment is deliberately created for the benefit of children, and not necessarily because of financial needs or declining enrollment. The intention is to allow children of various ages and abilities to progress at their own individual rate rather than

according to specified objectives for a particular grade level. Mixed-age grouping has also been used to reduce retention rates.

In mixed-age classes, teachers use small, temporary groups of students who need the same kinds of instruction.

Several school districts have implemented a variety of approaches regarding mixed-age grouping. Oak Forest Elementary school in Houston ISD, for instance, has primary level classes that are organized into mixed age groups. Each class is made up of approximately equal numbers of kindergarten, first and second grade students. Entering kindergarten students are able to learn and grow with the same teacher through their primary years. Several organizations and Internet resources describe the benefits of a mixed-age classroom setting:

[www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC\\_Digests/](http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/)

[www.bctf.bc.ca/ResearchReports/2000ei02/report.html](http://www.bctf.bc.ca/ResearchReports/2000ei02/report.html)

[www.edletter.org/past/issues/1998-jf/multiage.shtml](http://www.edletter.org/past/issues/1998-jf/multiage.shtml)

**Recommendation 11:**

**Explore multi-age classes for grades 2 and 3 and for grades 4 and 5.**

The district could change the existing structure of two classes per grade level to include two sections of mixed-grade groupings. This will still result in the district being able to maintain an average class size, which is less than the state average. Given that there is a declining enrollment in WVISD, this approach can help ensure that class sizes do not drop below what can be financially justified in the near future.

**Exhibit 2-13** illustrates an example of a mixed-grade configuration that would eliminate one teaching position. Also, class ratios would increase, but remain below the state average. This example uses data from the 2001-01 school year.

**Exhibit 2-13  
Proposed Configuration Change**

<b>Grade Levels Combined</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Number of teachers</b>	<b>Teacher Student Ratio</b>
<b>Current Configuration</b>			
K	17	1	17.0

1	26	2	13.0
2	21	2	10.5
3	21	2	10.5
4	23	2	11.5
5	21	1	21.0
6	28	2	14.0
<b>Proposed Configuration</b>			
K	17	1	17
1	26	2	13
2 - 3	42	3	14
4 - 5	46	3	15.3
6	28	2	14.0

*Source: Water Valley ISD Central Administration 2001.*

### **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent and principal research the various instructional approaches associated with combined grade levels and multi-age grouping.	October 2001
2.	The superintendent, principal and teachers in grades 2, 3 and 4 visit some mixed-grade classrooms in other school districts that have implemented this grade configuration approach.	November 2001
3.	The superintendent develops a budget to support the multi-grade instructional approach.	January 2002
4.	The principal develops a campus improvement plan that delineates an implementation strategy for the multi-grade arrangement.	February 2002
5.	The superintendent presents the proposed arrangement to the board for consideration.	March 2002

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation is based on the reduction of one teaching position for a savings of \$40,637. The average salary for a teacher in WVISD is \$34,805 plus benefits (\$34,805 + 9 percent benefits

+ \$2,700 for health insurance). This recommendation cannot be fully implemented until 2002-03.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
Explore multi-age classes for grades 2 and 3 and for grades 4 and 5.	\$0	\$40,637	\$40,637	\$40,637	\$40,637

## **FINDING**

WVUSD has reported some data to PEIMS that is not accurate. Incorrect data included in the AEIS report include a zero percentage of central office staff coupled with 4.5 percent of expenditures being associated with central office administration. The information reported to PEIMS is used for a variety of purposes, including AEIS reports, the primary public reporting vehicle. Information in PEIMS is also used to calculate accountability ratings. Attendance rates reported through PEIMS determine state funding, and the percentage of economically disadvantaged students is used to calculate state and federal compensatory funding. The high school secretary is responsible for PEIMS data entry; this person is also responsible for producing report cards and for other general secretarial support. A central administration staff member is also responsible for data accuracy and for PEIMS submissions.

### **Recommendation 12:**

**Ensure the accuracy of PEIMS data by providing the PEIMS data coordinator and PEIMS data entry operator with appropriate training.**

Even though a small district has limited resources, the completeness and accuracy of PEIMS information is critical. Region 15 provides extensive PEIMS training that the district should use.

## **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent explores all training options and registers the coordinator and operator training.	September 2001
2.	The superintendent ensures that all staff responsible for PEIMS obtain adequate PEIMS training from Region 15.	Ongoing

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be accomplished using existing resources.

## FINDING

The 1999-2000 AEIS reports (**Exhibit 2-14**) shows that there were no students completing the recommended high school program in that year. The high school counselor, however, said that approximately 25 percent of the students completed the program in 1999-2000, and even more in 2000-01. The AEIS reports also show that WVISD reported that there were no students completing the recommended program in 1998-99. The counselor and the superintendent said because of the small number of students, it is difficult to provide all of the required classes for students to complete the recommended program. Many students end up having to take required courses, like health or physical education and are not able to take advanced placement courses or courses needed to complete the recommended high school program. In an interview, the superintendent said that this low percent was the result of poor planning.

**Exhibit 2-14**  
**Percent of Students Taking the Recommended High School Program**  
**WVISD and Peer Districts**  
**1999-2000**

	<b>Bronte</b>	<b>Eden</b>	<b>Veribest</b>	<b>North Zulch</b>	<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>Region 15</b>	<b>State Avg.</b>
Percent Taking Recommended High School Graduation Plan	24.2%	21.2%	0%*	90%	0%	23.8%	15%

*Source: TEA, AEIS Reports 1999-2000.*

*\*Less than five percent of students reported.*

The recommended high school program is a more rigorous academic program than the regular graduation plan. Under the recommended program, students must complete more credit hours in science and social studies than the regular graduation program; students must also complete Algebra I and II, and Geometry and complete two credits of a language other than English. Students completing the recommended high school program may qualify for scholarships. Some districts, including Grape Creek and Wall in Tom Green County, have made the recommended high school program the basic program for all students. The percentage of Grape Creek ISD students completing advanced courses, as reported in AEIS, is at or above the state average for the last two years.

### **Recommendation 13:**

**Adopt the state's recommended high school graduation program as the district standard for Water Valley High School students and ensure that appropriate data is reported through PEIMS to the Texas Education Agency.**

While not all students will complete the recommended high school program, establishing high expectations early will help motivate more students to complete this challenging program. Individual modifications can be made to this basic program to accommodate individual students' needs.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The counselor, with the support of the superintendent, encourages all students to take as many challenging courses as possible starting in grade 7.	September 2001
2.	The superintendent establishes the recommended high school program as standards.	September 2001
3.	The superintendent ensures that all courses included in the recommended high school program are offered at appropriate intervals to allow students to meet plan requirements.	Ongoing
4.	The superintendent arranges with local university representatives to present the importance of rigorous course work to high school students.	Ongoing
5.	The superintendent presents this plan to the board and obtains board approval.	Spring 2002
6.	The superintendent updates district and campus policy handbooks.	June 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

# Chapter 2

## EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

### **B. SPECIAL PROGRAMS (PART 1)**

Special education, gifted and talented education, bilingual and compensatory education are provided in Texas schools to meet the requirements of students with special needs. In addition, career and technology programs are offered to allow students to gain entry-level employment with the skills necessary to enter a high-skill, high-wage job or to continue with post-secondary education once they graduate from high school. This section reviews these programs.

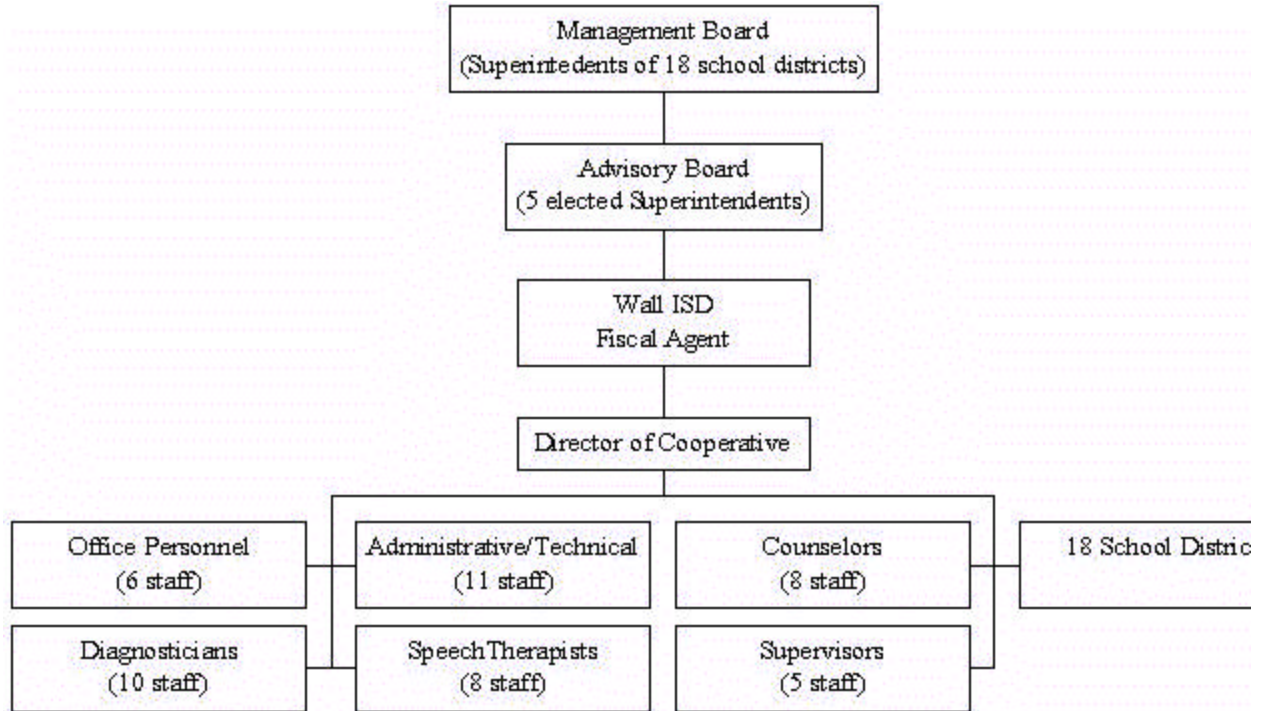
#### *Special Education*

The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires districts to provide appropriate public education for all children with disabilities regardless of the severity of the handicap. Education is to be provided in the least restrictive environment, and students with disabilities are to be included in state and district assessment programs. This law, which is designed to protect children and parents in the educational decision-making process, requires districts to develop an individualized education plan (IEP) for each child. The IEP should include the input of regular education teachers and be clearly aligned with those of children in general classrooms.

WVUSD is a member of the Small-Schools Cooperative (Cooperative). The Cooperative is one of 137 shared service arrangements in the state designed to assist member districts in serving and providing educational services to all students with disabilities, ages birth through 21. The Cooperative includes 18 school districts and serves approximately 1,500 students.

**Exhibit 2-15** presents the organizational chart for the Cooperative. The management board of the Cooperative is composed of the superintendents from each member school. The management board meets twice each year and elects members to serve on the Cooperative's advisory board. The advisory board, which meets monthly, is led by the superintendent of the Cooperative's fiscal agent and includes superintendents from four member districts. The advisory board's role is limited to decisions involving the daily operations of the Cooperative.

**Exhibit 2-15  
Small Schools Special Education Organization**



*Source: 1999-2000 WVISD Department of Special Education.*

The Cooperative provides a wide range of services that include initial student assessment, equipment, special units, staff training, software and legal updates. In addition, the Cooperative hires teachers and aides for multi-district classes and interpreters for the deaf, contracts with a child/adolescence psychiatrist, psychologists, counselors, physical therapists and occupational therapists. Homebound services are also provided. The Cooperative operates several multi-district classes designed to meet the needs of these students. These units are housed in various locations throughout the member districts.

The most valuable services mentioned by staff include the availability of expert diagnosticians, therapists and psychologists; training materials and literature related to various special education topics; and periodic updates to current state and federal regulations and laws. The Cooperative also provides special education units that meet the needs of all WVISD students. The director of the Cooperative said that district staff is committed to serving the needs of students, and shares this responsibility with the Cooperative staff. Cooperative staff also work closely with Region 15 to provide services to all member districts. In WVISD, the Cooperative houses a Vocational Training Facility for students receiving special education services.



The Cooperative provides a technology-based education system, INVEST Learning for every member district. The Cooperative purchased both the hardware and the software for each of the member districts. The program was installed on a server so additional computer stations can be added in the future.

There is a wide range between WVISD and its peer districts in the number and percentages of students receiving special education services and the number of special education teachers reported in the AEIS. **Exhibit 2-16** shows WVISD, its peer districts, Region 15 and state-level special education program enrollment information for 1998-99 and 1999-2000, as reported in the AEIS For 1999-2000. WVISD has the second highest percentage of students enrolled in special education, 17.3 percent, which is 5 percent higher than the percentage of students statewide who are identified as receiving special education services.

**Exhibit 2-16**  
**Number and Percent of Special Education Students and Teachers**  
**1998-2000**

District	Special Education Student Enrollment				Special Education Teachers (FTEs)			
	1998-99		1999-2000		1998-99		1999-2000	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Veribest	50	24.0%	50	21.6%	1.8	8.5%	2.7	10.4%
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>16.4%</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>17.3%</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>7.4%</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>4.2%</b>
Bronte	75	20.4%	72	14.0%	5.5	14.3%	6.0	15.1%
Eden	54	14.3%	44	12.7%	2.6	6.9%	2.7	7.6%
North Zulch	48	13.0%	38	10.7%	2.0	6.0%	2.5	8.0%
<b>Region 15</b>	<b>7,428</b>	<b>14.4%</b>	<b>7,178</b>	<b>14.0%</b>	<b>381.5</b>	<b>9.9%</b>	<b>377.2</b>	<b>9.7%</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>76,712</b>	<b>12.1%</b>	<b>482,427</b>	<b>12.1%</b>	<b>24,744</b>	<b>9.5%</b>	<b>25,784</b>	<b>9.6%</b>

*Source: TEA, AEIS Reports 1998-2000.*

**Exhibit 2-17** shows that WVISD ranks in the middle of the peer districts in actual expenditures per special education student as well as the percentage of actual expenditures. WVISD spends \$5,770 per special education student; this amount is about the same as the state average of

\$5,937 per student. WVISD also ranks in the middle as far as the percent of actual expenditures for special education.

**Exhibit 2-17**  
**Actual Expenditures for Special Education and**  
**Number of Students**  
**WVISD vs. Peer Districts**  
**1999-2000**

<b>District</b>	<b>Number of Students Enrolled</b>	<b>Actual Special Education Expenditures</b>	<b>Percent of Actual Expenditure</b>	<b>Per Student Expenditure</b>
Bronte	72	\$574,056	21.4%	\$7,973
Eden	44	\$296,748	12.4%	\$6,744
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>\$346,204</b>	<b>14.8%</b>	<b>\$5,770</b>
Veribest	50	\$206,396	15.3%	\$4,128
North Zulch	60	\$209,796	11.6%	\$5,521
<b>State</b>	<b>482,427</b>	<b>\$2,863,938,472</b>	<b>15.2%</b>	<b>\$5,937</b>

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

**FINDING**

Interviews with district special education teachers and the superintendent, a data review of the district's special education programs and input from parents and community through surveys and public forums, all indicate that an overall lack of communication exists between the Cooperative and the school-level special education program. District staff, as a whole, is not informed or trained in the specific needs of this student population. As a result, several observations were recorded regarding the quality of the program.

In 1999-2000, four teachers left the district; of these, only two were replaced. Because of this, the school districts had to make adjustments in the special education teaching staff. During 2000-01 two teachers that were previously general education teachers were assigned to the special education program. Both teachers had previous experience in special education. Both teachers said that there was a lack of communication regarding their assignment to the special education program. Though central administration staff made an effort to inform the teachers about

their new assignments in a timely manner, the process employed caused low morale among some of the teachers. Since both teachers were new to the special education program; they spent a lot of their time searching for curriculum materials. Though both teachers said that they usually found the material that they needed, they felt that the district and the Cooperative could have more actively assisted them.

For the 2001-02 school year, the district has assigned new teachers to the program. The principal and the superintendent said that there are now three special education teachers, one for elementary and two for high school.

The district currently does not promote or use inclusion practices. Special education and regular education teachers said that the district tried to implement this approach, but the regular education teachers did not get enough training regarding this practice. Also, appropriate staffing was not allocated to the program. The teachers said that they would like to implement inclusion, but feel that they do not have enough resources.

**Recommendation 14:**

**Improve communication and coordination to ensure that special education teachers have appropriate support from the Small-Schools Cooperative and school staff.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES**

1.	The superintendent establishes and leads a special education team made up of the school principal, the special education teachers, two regular teachers, and the vocational teachers to identify areas of need and develop a comprehensive improvement plan for the special education program.	September - November 2001
2.	The superintendent and the director of the Cooperative assess training needs, staffing needs and technology needs for the special education program.	February 2002
3.	The special education improvement team continuously monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of the program and suggests any improvements considered necessary.	Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented using existing resources.

**FINDING**

WVISED houses the Vocational Training unit that is managed by the Cooperative. This multi-district classroom provides instruction in pre-vocational and vocational skills for students receiving special education services. The program also provides participants the opportunity to apply these work skills in a community setting. Students in the unit may enroll in courses that are offered in WVISED's career and technology program.

TSPR interviews with district staff indicate that the vocational and general education teachers do not have adequate instructional support to assist special education students. The vocational teacher at WVISED, for instance, teaches students from the special education vocational unit. There is a lack of communication between the special education teacher in the vocational unit and the vocational teacher. The teacher is unprepared to modify his instructional approach to meet the needs of the students enrolled in the vocational unit.

Region 15 has invited several districts to participate in the 2001-02 Capacity Building Initiative (CBI). The program offers the opportunity to customize professional development and services to meet the focused needs of the district/campus. The locally designed professional development may be delivered to the entire staff on site, if desired. In addition, the program will use Region 15 special education funds to build the capacity in schools for serving students with disabilities in integrated settings. This is accomplished through the provision of professional development and training for regular and special education administrators and teachers in curriculum content, instructional methodologies and support structures. To participate, districts must send a letter of intent to participate. Participating campuses will complete a Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) Attitudes Staff Survey to be completed by participating campuses as a needs assessment tool. Several workshops and courses related to inclusion practices for special education are available at Region 15.

Other districts have also made significant efforts in ensuring that district staff is prepared to accommodate the needs of students with special needs in the regular or vocational education program. Tyler ISD's Special Education Department has taken measures to provide elementary and secondary teachers professional development opportunities to promote successful inclusive educational experiences for special education students. As a major initiative during the 1994-95 school year, Tyler ISD collaborated with the University of Texas at Tyler to present two college-level courses in inclusion strategies and collaboration techniques. The project was funded by a grant from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for approximately \$159,000. The goal of the Inclusive Education Teacher Training Project was to provide training to teachers at each of the elementary and secondary campuses in TISD so that students with

disabilities receive successful inclusive educational experiences. The courses offered included *Facilitating Inclusion*, which addressed characteristics of special learners, and the need for inclusive settings. TISD reimbursed qualified personnel \$90 to defray tuition costs. The University of Texas at Tyler also offered a \$100 scholarship to each qualifying participant. No grant funds were used for tuition.

**Recommendation 15:**

**Provide special education support services to the vocational and the regular education teacher.**

WVISED and the Small Schools Cooperative should ensure that quality training is provided for all teachers to enhance their ability to provide services to students enrolled in special education. The district should partner and use the extensive resources already available in Region 15. The district should also seek available state funding and establish special partnerships with local universities to provide special training for Water Valley ISD staff.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES**

1.	The superintendent and the director of the Cooperative assess training needs for the vocational and regular teachers.	February 2002
2.	The director of the Cooperative works with the superintendent to obtain the need training at Region XV.	Ongoing
3.	The Small Schools Cooperative and the superintendent jointly pursue state funding and local partnerships with area universities to ensure that inclusion practices at WVISED are improved.	Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be accomplished using existing resources.

**FINDING**

WVISED does not provide adequate, detailed pre-referral intervention strategies for regular education teachers. The Cooperative provides helpful information for teachers about assessment and referral transitions, but it does not focus enough attention on preventing unnecessary referrals. To serve the multiple needs of all students with disabilities, and to comply with IDEA's requirements, derived from Public Law 101-15, the 1997 amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, an effective special education program should implement pre-referral intervention practices in regular education. When a student experiences an

academic problem in the regular education program, an intervention can and should occur to solve the problem.

Though teachers provide services for students who are experiencing difficulties, these are not necessarily coordinated or reported using the pre-referral inventory. No campus-level committee exists to assess student's needs before they are referred to special education. WVISD's pre-referral process does not identify a designated coordinator at each school. Increased communication about pre-intervention practices is needed.

If a student receives additional services, such as one-to-one instruction, tutoring or other assistance from the classroom teacher, counselor or other school staff member, and improvement is not observed, a special education referral may be warranted. If effective pre-referral practices are not in place, teachers may duplicate services, like tutoring, that have already been provided to the student in the previous year when a special education intervention may be more appropriate. As a result, students may be identified for special education services too late to receive the full benefits of the services. Effective pre-referral practices can minimize the number of referrals to special education.

Several districts in Texas have implemented successful pre-referral systems. In Fort Worth ISD, the Special Education Department has established a series of pre-referral steps for teachers to take before referring a child for special education testing. When a teacher suspects a problem, support staff such as the counselor, psychologist or instructional specialist, work with the teacher to develop strategies that meet that particular child's needs. If, after a period of time, those strategies appear to have been ineffective, a meeting is held that includes an administrator, the teacher and support staff and the child's parent. Additional strategies are determined as well as a time to review their effectiveness. If this second set of strategies is ineffective, an ARD committee is convened. In 1997-98, before Fort Worth ISD implemented its pre-referral intervention practices, over 2,600 referrals to special education were made. After eligibility testing, only 60 percent of those students actually qualified for special education services. In 1998-99, the number of referrals decreased by 35 percent and 70 percent of those referred qualified for services. By 1999-2000 the referrals were 30 percent of what they had been in 1997-98 and 40 percent of those referred qualified. Through coordinated intervention, staff was able to assist students experiencing difficulties and better identify students with special needs.

**Recommendation 16:**

**Establish campus intervention teams at each school to develop and monitor pre-referral practices.**

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	Principal designates a Campus Intervention Team (CIT) coordinator and determines who will serve on the team.	September 2001
2.	The director of the Small School Cooperative arranges for staff development for all CIT members.	October 2001
3.	Principal conducts monthly meetings with the CIT to discuss the effectiveness of the team and to provide continuous feedback.	October 2001
4.	The principal informs parents about CIT procedures.	November 2001
5.	The director of the Small School Cooperative periodically evaluates the CITs to ensure they are actively involved in pre-referral activities and are making appropriate decisions.	Ongoing

## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

### *Gifted and Talented*

Texas state law requires all school districts to identify and provide services for gifted and talented students. Section 29.122 of the Texas Education Code states that school districts "shall adopt a process for identifying and serving gifted and talented students in the district and shall establish a program for those students in each grade level." In 1990, the State Board of Education (SBOE) adopted the *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students*. This plan is a guide for meeting the law's requirements. In 1996, the SBOE updated the plan to incorporate Texas Education Code Section 29.123 requirements. The updated plan forms the basis for program accountability for state-mandated services for gifted and talented students.

**Exhibit 2- 18** shows enrollment figures and actual expenditure amounts for the gifted and talented program for WVISD and its peer districts. WVISD ranks first among its peer districts in expenditure amounts at \$3,175 per student. WVISD reported almost \$1,000 more than Bronte and \$2,000 more than Eden in expenditures per student. WVISD reported far more than Veribest or North Zulch and about three times the state average expenditure per gifted/talented student.

### **Exhibit 2-18 Number and Percent of Gifted/Talented Students, Teachers and Actual Expenditures**

**WVISD and Peer Districts  
1999-2000**

District	G/T Student Enrollment		G/T Teachers		Expenditures for G/T	
	Number	Percent	Number*	Percent	Expenditure	Per Student
Eden	29	8.4%	1.6	4.6%	\$32,381	\$1,117
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>4.9%</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>\$53,968</b>	<b>\$3,175</b>
Bronte	40	7.8%	0.4	1.0%	\$81,073	\$2,027
North Zulch	31	8.8%	0.0	0.0%	\$8,695	\$280
Veribest	15	6.5%	0.0	0.0%	\$3,495	\$233
<b>Region 15</b>	<b>3,830</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>336,532</b>	<b>8.4%</b>	<b>5,853</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	<b>\$319,880,47</b>	<b>\$951</b>

*Source: TEA, AEIS and PEIMS 1999-2000.*

*\*Expressed in Full Time Equivalent.*



## Chapter 2

# EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

### **B. SPECIAL PROGRAMS (PART 2)**

In WVISD, gifted and talented elementary students are served through a pullout program for one hour per week. The program description states that instruction is a technology-based, thematic, multi-disciplinary approach, which includes language arts, social studies, science and math. In the middle school, students are provided opportunities for extended learning and advanced level thinking skills. In addition, gifted and talented students attend a "GT" class. In this class, opportunities to extend learning are provided. A portfolio for each student is kept and updated. High school students are served through the Advanced Placement and Honors courses. A portfolio is also kept for high school students and is updated by each instructor providing services. The district has established two gifted and talented committees, one at the high school and one at the elementary school. The school staff provides a description of procedures involving four stages of the identification process: nomination, screening, selection and reassessment.

### **FINDING**

Even though the district has taken several significant steps to provide services to gifted and talented students, such as establishing committees at the elementary and high school level, the district has not fully implemented *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students* (State Plan). During a 1998 visit, TEA District Effectiveness and Compliance (DEC) identified areas of weakness. The 1998 DEC visit showed that the district was not meeting all components of the State Plan regarding the gifted and talented education program. Specifically, the DEC report states that, at the time of the visit, a framework for a program evaluation for the gifted and talented program was being enhanced and updated; however, no evidence was presented that the district is actively evaluating the gifted and talented program. TSPR staff did not find any evidence that the district is evaluating the gifted and talented program.

The district does not have updated curriculum guides for any of the gifted and talented classes. Interviews indicated that gifted and talented curriculum is not appropriate. Instruction is computer driven. One teacher said that the material provided for gifted and talented students was not "deep" enough.

Region 15 held a Spring Authors Conference for students and a student seminar. In 2000-01, WVISD paid \$1,966 to be a member district.

Although the contract stipulates that Region 15 will assist the district with program evaluation and planning, Region 15 did not provide those services.

The principal said that there is no cooperation with neighboring districts regarding gifted and talented education and that increased communication with other schools in the area is needed. The district, however, does participate in a Gifted and Talented Cooperative with Region 15. Forty-two schools participate in this cooperative. This contract primarily allows teachers to receive certification training that is required by the state. Through this agreement, Region 15 should provide the following services:

- Assistance with district and regional planning;
- Assistance with program evaluation;
- Assistance with identification of potential student participants;
- Provide staff development;
- Provide technical assistance; and
- Assist the school district with the development of curriculum for the gifted and talented learner.

Staff in Region 15 said that the majority of services provided centers around the state-mandated training for gifted and talented certification required by TEA. The principal said that Region 15 has provided excellent services and has come out to the district to assist staff with the gifted and talented program. Region 15 also held a Spring Authors Conference for students and a student seminar.

Several Regional Service Centers have established cooperative relationships with neighboring districts. Regional Education Service Center XVII (Region 17) has established an Advanced Academic Cooperative. As a member, districts receive training, legal updates, demonstrations, on-site technical assistance, a resource library for gifted and talented education and advanced academics. Member districts also become members of the regional gifted and talented advisory council. Other services also are available. Member districts pay a fee per student, with a minimum of \$500 and a maximum of \$5,000 or \$7,500, depending on services requested. Region 5 also has established an Advanced Academic Services Cooperative with area schools.

**Recommendation 17:**

**Fully implement the *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students*.**

Full implementation of the *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students* will result in a cohesive program that effectively

addresses the concerns expressed by both parents and teachers. This recommendation can be accomplished in a number of ways. One approach is to develop the resources and approaches wholly within WVISD. By creating an internal task force of teachers and administrators, WVISD will have a greater ability to focus on the needed steps to full implementation of the State Plan. This five-member committee, which includes four teachers and one administrator, will be charged with developing a plan to fully implement the State Plan in WVISD. Another alternative is to actively pursue a relationship with neighboring districts to create an Advanced Academics Cooperative. Through this cooperative, districts could share teachers, curriculum and other resources. A summer exchange program would help gifted and talented teachers. Because the development of a cooperative arrangement is more long-term, the bulk of the implementation strategies and fiscal estimates are based on an internal development.

### **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent directs the elementary and the high school gifted and talented committee to conduct a needs assessment of the gifted and talented program.	October 2001
2.	The committee determines the extent to which each school in the district is implementing the recommendations in the <i>Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted and Talented Students</i> (State Plan).	Fall 2001
3.	The gifted and talented advisory committee develops a three-to-five year plan for achieving exemplary status as outlined in the State Plan and secures staff and board approval.	Ongoing
4.	The gifted and talented advisory committee develops measures to ensure that the district follows the State Plan and principals incorporate these measures into the campus improvement plans.	August 2002
5.	The superintendent approaches neighboring districts and Region 15 to create an Advanced Academics Cooperative that would create the means to share teaching staff, services and expertise.	Ongoing
6.	The Advanced Academics advisory committee contacts other school districts with exemplary, cost-effective, gifted and talented programs and other Regional Education Service Centers that have Advanced Academic Cooperatives.	Ongoing

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

***School to Career Education***

All students, whether they continue their education after high school or not, eventually go into the workplace. Texas Administrative Code (TAC) chapter 74 subchapter A requires school districts to offer career technology education courses selected from three of eight career and technology areas: agricultural science and technology, business, health science technology, home economics, technology/industrial technology, marketing, trade and industrial and career orientation.

This *State Plan for Career and Technology Education 2000-2002*, required under Texas Education Code (TEC) §29.182, was developed as a guide to assist school districts in their efforts to offer effective career and technology education (CATE) programs that prepare students for further education and eventual employment. The plan is based on the premise that a rigorous academic foundation contributes to success in school and in life, that all students should be provided equal opportunities to succeed, and that career and technology education should complement and enhance academic preparation by enabling students to apply academic principles to a variety of community and career situations.

**Exhibit 2-19** presents the number and percentage of students enrolled in career and technology courses in WVISD, its peer districts, Region 15 and the state. The percentage of students enrolled in career and technology, 35.7 percent, is similar to Veribest ISD. North Zulch and Bronte ISD's have lower rates, and Eden ISD has a higher percentage of students enrolled in career and technology courses at 41.9 percent. WVISD's \$1,061 expenditure per student is approximately the same as the state average and lower than the peer districts except for Veribest.

**Exhibit 2-19  
WVISD Actual Expenditures for Career and Technology and  
Number and Percent of Students and Staff  
WVISD vs. Peer Districts  
1999-2000**

District	Number and Percent of Students Enrolled		Number and Percent of CATE Teachers		Actual Career & Technology Expenditures	Percent of Actual Expenditure	Per Student Expenditure
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent			
North Zulch	82	23.2%	3.4	10.9%	\$135,455	7.5%	\$1,652
Bronte	121	23.5%	2.4	6.0%	\$186,346	7.0%	\$1,540

Eden	145	41.9%	3.3	9.3%	\$177,855	7.4%	\$1,227
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>35.7%</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>8.1%</b>	<b>\$131,595</b>	<b>5.6%</b>	<b>\$1,061</b>
Veribest	71	30.7%	2.7	10.3%	\$74,331	5.5%	\$1,047
<b>Region 15</b>	<b>11,645</b>	<b>22.8%</b>	<b>213.1</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>741,806</b>	<b>18.6%</b>	<b>11,445</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>\$795,455,669</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>\$1,024</b>

*Source: TEA, AEIS and PEIMS 1999-2000.*

WVUSD's career and technology education (CATE) program includes courses in Agricultural Science and Technology, Family and Consumer Services, Office Education and a few Tech Prep courses, primarily in the Business Office Education class. Though the vocational teacher did not provide a list of courses offered, a review of the 2000-01 calendar indicates that Personal and Family Development and several Agricultural Science classes were offered.

## **FINDING**

WVUSD lacks a comprehensive, updated CATE program that includes preparation in career areas that will enable students to gain entry-level employment in high-skill, high-wage jobs or continue their education. Only a limited number of options exist for students interested in technology education or other trade and industrial education. A review of sample curriculum guides for the Agricultural Science courses indicate that the majority of the curriculum guides used are ten to twelve years old. The Apparel course's textbook was published in 1990.

The Technology Education Essential Knowledge and Skills adopted in 1997 are guidelines to assist communities in planning, developing and implementing Technology Education programs. They provide a framework that describes what students should know and be able to do in six technology content areas and recommend a coherent sequence of courses for middle and high school programs. TEA defined these six areas as: Bio-related Technology, Computer Technology, Construction Technology, Energy Power, Manufacturing Technology and Transportation Technology. Sample trades include Electrical Engineering Technician, Electrician, Computer System Analysts, Computer Programmer and CAD Drafter. Some of these courses are not available in WVUSD.

Other trade and industrial education courses that are not currently available for WVISD students include graphic artist, plumber, criminal justice worker, photographer and cosmetologist.

The district does not do enough to inform students and parents of the advantages of the tech prep program and the benefits of earning college credit through cooperative and concurrent enrollment. The district's website, for instance, does not publicize options that are available to students through area colleges. The website does not provide links to distance learning opportunities nor to the Concho Valley School to Work/Tech Prep Program.

Tech prep courses are fully accredited and faculty members must meet the same accreditation standards as those required by four-year colleges and universities. The emphasis in tech prep courses is on teaching real-world applications of learning and on smaller class sizes that enhance faculty/student interaction.

Exemplary tech prep programs frequently offer day, evening and weekend classes and flexible time schedules. Self-paced classes and technologically delivered instructions are common. Student support services, such as basic skill assessment, career aptitude/interest assessments and learning labs/tutorial support, help guarantee success.

### **Recommendation 18:**

#### **Offer a more balanced school-to-career program that mirrors current job market needs.**

WVISD has the opportunity to strengthen a program that provides an enormous benefit to students. The district may replicate best practices used in central Texas by Austin Community College and the local public school districts in its service area. Austin Community College has publications and additional information sources available on the website for the School Relations Office at <http://www3.austin.cc.tx.us/highschl/>.

The district should develop cooperative agreements with neighboring schools to share teachers and programs. For instance, Water Valley can serve as a specialty vocational center in a specific subject area and allow students from a neighboring school to take classes. In turn, Water Valley students could enroll in Career and Technology courses in other schools that provide courses not offered in Water Valley.

### **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES**

1.	Counselors help students understand the benefits of tech prep courses.	September 2001
2.	The superintendent and the principal work closely with the Concho Valley School-to-Work/Tech Prep Program. The Vocational directors attend regular meeting to become familiar with the regions employment needs.	September 2001
3.	The superintendent, high school principal and vocational director approach neighboring districts to develop a cooperative agreement to share teachers and courses in the career and technology program.	October 2001
4.	The superintendent, high school principal and vocational director consider courses to be offered in each year based on course enrollment and subsequent education and work patterns of recent graduates.	Spring 2002
5.	The superintendent directs a change in course offerings.	Spring 2002
6.	The superintendent, high school principal and vocational director consider course enrollment and post-graduate plans to maintain an appropriate mix of school-to-career courses.	Ongoing
7.	The superintendent and counselors develop an awareness campaign for students, beginning in middle school, that promotes the advantages of technical training programs.	Ongoing

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented using existing resources.

### ***Compensatory Education***

In Texas, state-funded compensatory programs began in 1975 with the passage of House Bill 1126. In 1997, Section 42.152 of the Texas Education Code was amended to include reporting and auditing systems covering the appropriate use of compensatory education allotment funds. Senate Bill 1873 requires state compensatory funds, like federal Title I funds, to be supplemental in nature. State compensatory funds, distributed based on the number of economically disadvantaged students, allow a great deal of flexibility for identifying students and creating successful programs. Students are designated as economically disadvantaged because of eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch and breakfast programs.

The students served by the state compensatory program are designated as *at-risk*. The following are all identification criteria listed in TEA's

*Financial Accountability System Resource Guide* for identifying at-risk students. These criteria are available on the TEA website. Examples of these criteria include being retained for more than one year, failing two or more courses and not performing satisfactorily on TAAS. In addition to these two state and federal programs, several other state and federal funds are available for special instructional support.

## **FINDING**

WVVISD's campus improvement plans are not providing the detail and may not comply with legal requirements for compensatory education. While a TEA District Effectiveness and Compliance Report dated May 7, 1998 did not note any discrepancies, examination of the two Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs) found insufficient detail to account for compensatory funds expenditures. These plans do not specify if compensatory-funded resources are used to supplement, rather than supplant, the regular education program.

A review of the campus improvement plans shows these documents lack the detail required in state law. While the two campus plans reviewed contained specific performance statements and objectives in some cases, not all goals and attendant strategies were specific. For example in the elementary CIP, Goal 1, Strategy 3 includes an evaluation benchmark of "TAAS Reading scores will improve." In this same strategy, Title I teachers were noted as a resource, but no funding was identified for any of the various resources. The high school CIP contained more specific outcomes such as stating desired performance levels as measured by TAAS, but again lacked any detail regarding the source or use of state compensatory funds. As provided, it was difficult to determine if expenditures, which were often not included, were supplemental in nature. According to staff interviews, there will be only one principal (K-12) for 2001-02.

### **Recommendation 19:**

#### **Document specific compensatory education objectives, strategies and funding sources in campus improvement plans.**

This will provide clear direction for the compensatory education program, and ensure compliance with legal requirements.

## **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent develops campus improvement plans that meet state mandates for compensatory funds, and that clearly articulate continuing support for at-risk students across the	October 2001 - December 2001
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	two campuses.	
2.	The superintendent develops procedures to report the amount and use of supplemental funds received by each school.	Spring 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## Chapter 2

# EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

### C. ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND DROPOUT PREVENTION

Ensuring all students receive a quality education and graduate from high school should be the primary goal of all schools. Accurately tracking students who leave school is critical to the district's achieving this goal. TEA requires districts to report information on students who leave school. That information is used to determine a district's dropout rate. Districts must use the guidelines in the TEA Leaver Codes and Definitions to report information on students who withdraw from school. School districts must also develop a comprehensive dropout prevention plan that addresses how schools will work to prevent students from dropping out of school.

#### FINDING

Of the class of 1999, 92.1 percent of students graduated from high school. **Exhibit 2-20** shows that WVISD has a zero longitudinal dropout rate for the class of 1999. The district annual dropout rate of 0.4 percent is within the Exemplary range of below one percent. The percentage of students receiving a General Educational Development (GED) certificate as well as the longitudinal dropout rate, which includes grades 7 through 12, were also lower than the peer districts, Region 15 or the state average. Of the class of 1999, 5.3 percent were considered continuing students; these were students who had not passed TAAS or completed sufficient credits, but continued to work towards a high school diploma.

**Exhibit 2-20**  
**Selected Graduation Statistics**  
**WVISD and Peer Districts**  
**1999-2000**

District	Graduated Percent	Percent with GED	Continuing Students	Longitudinal Dropout
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>92.1%</b>	<b>2.6%</b>	<b>5.3%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
North Zulch	94.7%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Bronte	57.1%	11.1%	30.2 %	1.6%
Eden	96.7%	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%
Veribest	N/A*	N/A	N/A	N/A

<b>Region 15</b>	<b>82.3%</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>6.5%</b>	<b>7.6%</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>79.5%</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>8.0%</b>	<b>8.5%</b>

Source: TEA, AEIS Reports 1999-2000.

*\*The Veribest high school program has not been in existence for the period of time required for this calculation.*

WVUSD has provided many opportunities for students to remain in school and be successful. The principal said that the school identifies and personally meets with all potential dropouts, and conducts individual student performance analysis and individual student counseling.

### **COMMENDATION**

**WVUSD's dropout prevention efforts and direct contact with students and parents help ensure that WVUSD students are staying in school and graduating.**

### **FINDING**

The district is providing an AEP program for students that need an alternative educational setting. The district employs a retired teacher half time for the center and provides computers for self-directed self-paced instruction. The district is a member of the Fairview Accelerated Education Cooperative (Fairview), founded in 1994 and as such can send students to Fairview if necessary. Fairview serves students in ten school districts. Wall ISD acts as the fiscal agent for the cooperative. To date, 153 students have graduated from Fairview; all of whom were classified as at-risk.

In 1994, the district paid \$12,000 to become a member of the Fairview Cooperative. Until 2000-01, the district used the cooperative for students that needed an alternative learning arrangement. This year, however, the cooperative raised its fee to \$55 per student per day. As a result, WVUSD officials, though still a member of the cooperative, decided not to send students to Fairview. The district instead established its own Alternative Education Program (AEP). Housed in a separate building, the program operates for four hours a day. This half-day program employs a retired special education teacher and provides computers for self-directed, self-paced instruction. These students may need additional services provided through a more conventional AEP. Though the special education teacher is certified, she does not have specific training on AEP strategies.

Fairview employs six full-time teachers and one aide. The Small Schools Cooperative also provides two special education teachers to serve students in need of special services. Because it is a larger facility with an approximate enrollment of 40 students, Fairview can offer students a wider variety of instructional approaches and extra support services. Fairview offers a Child Care and Guidance Management and Services course and child care for pregnant and/or parenting students. WVISD is a small district, and the number of students served in the AEP is small. The students in the district's current half-day program are somewhat isolated in a small separate building and removed from social activities.

While the current arrangement may be more economical for the district, students may receive more services at Fairview than they do currently at the Water Valley Alternative Center.

**Recommendation 20:**

**Provide additional training for the special education teacher that is currently in charge of the Alternative Education Center.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES**

1.	The superintendent ensures the special education teacher obtains the necessary training and instructional materials for the AEP program.	Fall 2001
2.	The principal ensures that students in the AEP program have extra support and attention from the high school counselor.	September 2001 and Ongoing
3.	The special education teacher provides appropriate activities for students in the AEP and includes AEP students in school activities or field trips to ensure that students are not isolated completely from the rest of the school community.	September 2001 and Ongoing
4.	The principal directs the special education teacher to communicate and coordinate with regular education teachers to provide enhanced academic services.	September 2001 and Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented using existing resources.

# Chapter 2

## EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

### D. SAFETY AND SECURITY

One of the most critical issues facing school districts today is the need to provide safe and secure schools. Children and staff have a right to expect their schools to be free from harm and to be a secure environment that is conducive to learning. The 1995 Texas Legislature amended Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code to require each school to adopt a student code of conduct for discipline management and to establish consequences for misbehavior. The code also requires each school district to create an alternative education program for students who are misbehaving. In addition, the Texas Education Agency collects and publishes data from each school district that describes incidents of violent and criminal activity on school grounds.

In reviews of more than 30 school districts, TSPR has found that school districts are struggling to enforce state laws and that discipline is not evenly meted out across a district. *Keeping Texas Children Safe in School*, published by TSPR in 2000, is an attempt to help school officials think about safety and security on their campuses in new ways. According to the report, an effective program of safety and security begins with an understanding of three key elements:

- *Prevention*, which is the foundation for deterring crime and violence (such as published codes of conduct with clearly delineated expectations and punitive measures for violations);
- *Intervention*, which is assessing situations and acting before events go too far (such as reminding students of the consequences of misbehavior); and
- *Enforcement*, which is what occurs in the aftermath (such as moving a student to an alternative education program).

### FINDING

The WVISD elementary principal was not aware that the district had a Crisis Management Manual. During interviews with the high school principal, TSPR discovered the district Crisis Management Manual. The manual was obtained through Region 15, and contains the essential elements for responding to crisis. The elementary principal told TSPR the plan had not been shared with the elementary principal or staff.

WVISD also has current student code of conduct and student handbooks. The district requires students and parents to sign and return a form

enclosed in the student code of conduct handbook acknowledging they read and understood the rules and other contents of the handbook.

**Recommendation 21:**

**Provide a Crisis Management Manual and training to the elementary school principal and staff.**

All staff members should be provided access to the crisis management manual and training to ensure that everyone knows what to do if a crisis occurs.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent provides the Crisis Management Plan to the elementary principal.	October 2001
2.	The superintendent and principal develop a training session based on the districts Crisis Management Plan for all district staff.	November 2001
3.	The principal conducts training session for campus staff.	January 2002
4.	District administrators obtain training from Region 15 at least once a year or more often if needed.	Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# Chapter 3

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines the financial management functions of the Water Valley Independent School District (WVUSD) in six subsections:

- A. Fiscal Operations
- B. Budget
- C. Risk Management
- D. Cash and Investments
- E. Fixed Assets
- F. Purchasing

Financial management in school districts involves effective planning, budgeting and managing and the district's ability to maximize resources. A district's ability to perform these tasks affects its relationships with its employees, vendors, funding agencies and the local community. Financial management is most effective when resources are spent based on the district's established priorities, when internal controls are in place and operate as intended, when financial information is provided in a timely way and in useful formats and when staff resources and technology are allocated efficiently to maximize results.

### **BACKGROUND**

Texas law requires school districts to conduct school programs in accordance with the state constitution. The Texas Education Code (TEC) describes specific district requirements and authorizes Texas Education Agency (TEA) to establish standards for all school districts.

The state's contribution to public education is appropriated to school districts through three tiers of funding. Tier I funding is designed so that school districts and the state share in the basic cost of education. Funding allotments under the Tier I formula are based on weighted students in average daily attendance (WADA). WADA is a measure of special needs such as special education, compensatory education, bilingual education and gifted and talented programs. Tier I formulas also provide partial funding for school transportation. The state adjusts Tier I allotments based on the individual district's property tax base. Therefore, a district's property wealth factors significantly into the state funding formula.

Tier II funding rewards the local tax efforts made by a district by guaranteeing that tax effort in the current year will yield a minimum amount of money per WADA beyond the required local share in Tier I.

Texas Senate Bill 4 of 1999 added a new component to the education funding formula. Tier III funding allows local school districts to receive partial state funding for debt service requirements on previously issued bonds.

The Texas Constitution authorizes local governments, including school districts, to levy property taxes. School property taxes represent almost 60 percent of total property taxes levied in the state. Property taxes levied by school districts are important because they can significantly impact the amount of funding the state provides to individual districts. School districts levy two categories of property levies. The maintenance and operations (M&O) portion is used to cover routine operating costs of education, while the interest and sinking (I&S) portion is used for debt service to finance building programs.

WVUSD receives revenue from local, state and federal sources. On average, Texas school districts receive about 51.2 percent of their revenues from local property taxes, 44.3 percent from the state, and 3.5 percent from federal sources. The amount of state revenue the state sends to each district is proportional, based upon a district's property values. Districts with greater property wealth per pupil receive less from the state because they can generate more property taxes, while districts with lower property value per pupil receive more from the state.

Texas has a court-approved school finance system to equalize property wealth among school districts. The system requires wealthy districts to pay into a pool that, together with additional state funds, subsidizes poorer districts. Property rich districts purchase WADA from the poorer districts to equalize their own per student property values. WVUSD sells WADA to Austin ISD. By selling WADA, WVUSD increases its local revenue by the net difference between their per student cost and the per student cost of the wealthy district.

The Tom Green County tax assessor collects property taxes on behalf of the district and deposits them directly into the district's local maintenance account at Crockett National Bank, N.A. The county tax assessor also follows up on delinquent taxes for the district. During the previous tax year the district collected just over 98 percent of taxes due.

The district's adopted total tax rate has increased 7.9 percent from \$1.39 in 1997-98 to \$1.50 in 2000-01 (**Exhibit 3-1**).

**Exhibit 3-1**  
**Water Valley Adopted Tax Rates**  
**1997-98 through 2000-01**



1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change over Period
\$1.390	\$1.456	\$1.470	\$1.500	7.9%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1997-98 through 2001-01 and Tom Green County Appraisal District.

Property value per enrolled student has decreased in every peer district including WVISD for the past two years. During this period property value per student in WVISD decreased 10.7 percent. **Exhibit 3-2** compares the property value per student of WVISD to its peer districts from 1998-99 to 1999-2000, the last year that peer data was available.

**Exhibit 3-2**  
**Property Value Per Pupil**  
**WVISD and Peer Districts**  
**1998-99 through 1999-2000**

District	1998-99	1999-2000	Percent Change over Period
Eden	\$237,250	\$231,983	(2.2%)
Veribest	\$237,261	\$213,249	(10.1%)
<b>Water Valley</b>	\$170,287	\$152,102	(10.7%)
North Zulch	\$119,139	\$116,238	(2.4%)
Bronte	\$151,741	\$95,477	(37.1%)
<b>State</b>	<b>\$190,769</b>	<b>\$198,090</b>	<b>3.8%</b>

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1998-99 and 1999-2000.

WVISD and its peer districts receive the second highest percentage of their revenues from state sources (**Exhibit 3-3**). WVISD receives 67.2 percent of its revenue from the state, significantly higher than the state average.

**Exhibit 3-3**  
**WVISD, State and Peer District Revenue Sources**  
**as a Percentage of Total Revenues**  
**2000-01**

District	Local/Other	Percent	State	Percent	Federal	Percent
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	<b>Revenue</b>	<b>Local</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	<b>Federal</b>
Bronte	\$940,300	21.9%	\$3,150,153	73.4%	\$198,500	4.6%
Eden	\$1,436,149	48.2%	\$1,455,580	48.8%	\$89,500	3.0%
North Zulch	\$780,608	31.7%	\$1,629,861	66.1%	\$55,300	2.2%
Veribest	\$759,277	34.4%	\$1,390,800	63.1%	\$54,010	2.5%
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>\$884,991</b>	<b>30.7%</b>	<b>\$1,934,414</b>	<b>67.2%</b>	<b>\$59,000</b>	<b>2.0%</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>\$13,858,297,539</b>	<b>53.1%</b>	<b>\$11,377,498,894</b>	<b>43.6%</b>	<b>\$884,281,086</b>	<b>3.4%</b>

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.

The General Revenue Fund covers most of the district's funding needs, other than special funds such as special education and Food Services. Since 1997-98, WVISD's general revenue has decreased from all sources by 1.7 percent (**Exhibit 3-4**).

**Exhibit 3-4**  
**WVISD General Fund Revenue Sources**  
**1997-98 through 2000-01**

<b>Revenue Source</b>	<b>1997-98 (Actual)</b>	<b>1998-99 (Actual)</b>	<b>1999-2000 (Actual)</b>	<b>2000-01 (Budget)</b>	<b>Percent Change over Period</b>
Local and Intermediate	\$1,228,856	\$1,118,488	\$1,096,689	\$854,991	(30.4%)
State	\$1,608,802	\$1,661,454	\$1,752,321	\$1,930,014	20.0%
Federal	\$0	\$0	\$5,777	\$4,000	(29.4%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,837,658</b>	<b>\$2,779,942</b>	<b>\$2,854,787</b>	<b>\$2,789,005</b>	<b>(1.7%)</b>

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

\*Percent change between 1999-2000 and 2000-01 only.

The Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data reports the state revenues received after all adjustments, some of which have skewed the state revenues. For example, in fiscal 2000, the district received approximately \$117,000 for pay raises. This masks the effect the drop in enrollment has had on the state revenues.

# Chapter 3

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

### A. FISCAL OPERATIONS

School district financial managers collect, analyze and provide information to district decision-makers. Successful financial operations require qualified personnel with adequate separation of duties, an accounting system that provides timely and useful information on which to base operating decisions, and comprehensive policies and procedures that ensure proper management of the district's fiscal resources.

A district's fiscal operations staff collects, disburses and accounts for local, state and federal funds. An effective fiscal operation employs detailed policies and internal controls to process the district's daily business transactions efficiently and to provide accurate, complete and timely information to assist the administration and board in effective decision-making.

### FINDING

Business manager oversees the finance and accounting functions at WVUSD under the direct supervision of the superintendent. This position is responsible for tracking accounts receivable, depositing funds and reconciling district bank accounts, posting to the general ledger, purchasing, processing payroll and benefits. The Business manager has held the position since January 1995.

The superintendent is responsible for the daily management of the district's resources. Additionally, the superintendent monitors the budget to ensure that the district remains within its extremely tight financial constraints. The current superintendent has worked for the district since December 1999.

The accounting system used by the district is the Regional Service Center Computer Cooperative (RSCCC) system managed by the Regional Education Service Center XV (Region 15). It is a menu driven accounting system and includes all the modules necessary to allow the district to track critical financial components. The system contains the following modules:

- Accounts payable
- Accounts receivable
- Budget control
- Fixed assets
- General ledger maintenance

- Payroll processing, and
- Purchasing.

Although no system provides every report that a user may want, the RSCCC system does generate reports that assist the district in making quality financial decisions based on actual performance. The system is well supported by the staff at Region 15.

The Business manager reconciles all accounts on a monthly basis and, along with the superintendent, reviews any problems that arise immediately. If the business manager and the superintendent cannot rectify a problem, they contact Region 15 for assistance.

The district's finance support function is both organized and efficient. All records are maintained where they can be easily accessed. The Business manager generates financial reports regularly so that they may be incorporated into business decisions.

## **COMMENDATION**

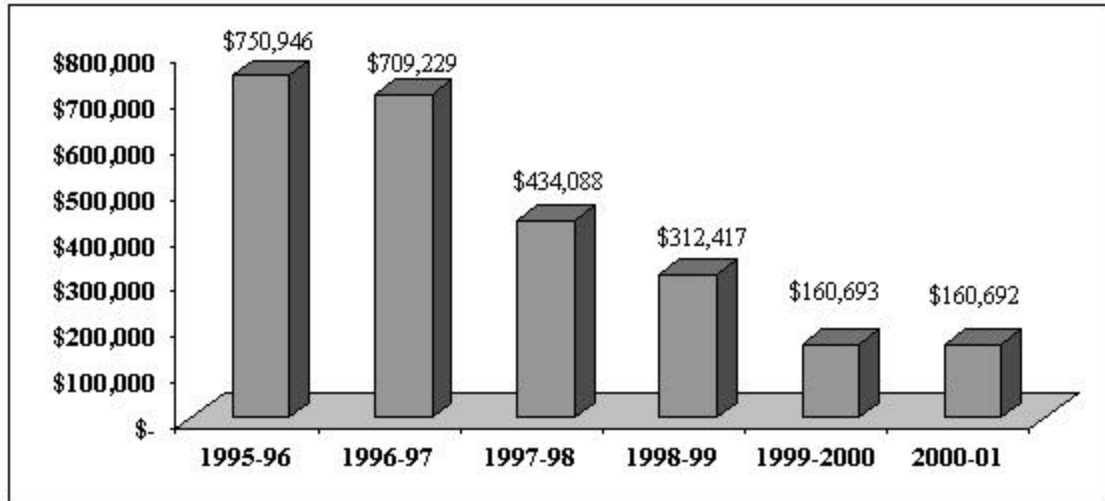
**The finance and accounting department at WVISD is efficient and organized.**

## **FINDING**

The school board and district administration have not focused on financial stability and the fund balance in the past. In January 2000, the board asked the new superintendent to prepare a report on the financial condition of the district. To that point, the board had been under the impression that the district had a healthy fund balance in excess of \$1 million. Between 1995-96 and 1999-2000, WVISD's fund balance has dropped consistently from a high of \$750,946 in 1996 to a low of \$160,692 in 2000 (**Exhibit 3-5**). The fund balance depicted as of August 31, 2001 is based on the beginning audited balance adjusted for budgeted expenses and revenues. The superintendent expects the fund balance to increase by approximately \$300,000 in 2000-01 as a result of its WADA sales to Austin ISD. These revenue numbers were not included in the budget since the amount had not been quantified. WVISD will have the final WADA numbers by the middle of August 2001.

### **Exhibit 3-5 WVISD**

**General Fund Balance 1995-96 through 2000-01**



*Source: TEA, PEIMS 1995-96 through 2000-01.*

Governmental funds such as WVISD's General Fund report the district's equity as a fund balance. A fund balance is the gross difference between the district's asset and liabilities as reflected on the balance sheet. It is the measure of the district's financial resources available for future use after it meets all current obligations.

The fund balance of a district's General Fund is significant since it is the primary fund that finances most of the district's activities and which receive state aid and local maintenance taxes. Agencies that rate school boards also use this information. The fund balance is the most accurate reflection of the district's financial strength, and decreases in the fund balance are generally a cause for concern.

**Exhibit 3-6** compares WVISD with its peer districts in terms of fund balance as of August 31, 1999. This is the most recent year that AEIS data is available for comparison purposes.

**Exhibit 3-6  
WVISD General Fund Balance Compared to Peer Districts  
As of August 31, 1999**

District	Fund Balance	Budgeted Monthly Expenditures
Bronte	\$1,566,004	\$178,075
Eden	\$742,668	\$222,261
North Zulch	\$630,681	\$222,778

<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>\$312,417</b>	<b>\$245,312</b>
Veribest	\$148,630	\$147,402

Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000.

**Exhibit 3-7** summarizes the annual contribution to the general fund balance for every student dollar of revenue collected and spent over the past five years. From 1995 through 1998, a portion of every dollar spent on students was taken from the general fund balance. Only in 1998-99 and 1999-2000 was the district able to contribute money back into the fund balance; however, the district had to use all excess dollars contributed to the general fund balance in those years to make up the deficit in food services. Consequently, the total fund balance continued to drop.

**Exhibit 3-7**  
**Per Student Dollar Contribution to General Fund Balance**  
**1996-97 through 2000-01**

	<b>1996-97</b>	<b>1997-98</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-01</b>
Revenues per Student	\$5,049	\$5,737	\$7,952	\$9,700	\$9,138
Expenditures per Student	\$5,810	\$6,666	\$7,257	\$8,483	\$9,138

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

The current superintendent has taken steps to reverse the district's dwindling fund balance. During the 2000-01 school year, he has reduced staff positions and tried to streamline the district's operations. In a small district, it is often difficult to streamline since many staff members, as a matter of necessity, perform several different tasks. Nevertheless, the district has been successful in reducing the district's annual payroll by about \$200,000.

Additionally, the district has reviewed and eased its transfer program. Initially, the district did not encourage students to transfer into WVISD. However, the fiscal reality is that the district's main revenue base comes from enrollment. The district did not anticipate the impact that Grape Creek ISD's new high school would have on its own enrollment. By easing the district's strict transfer policy, it hopes to attract additional students.

If the district meets its anticipated 2000-01 budget there should be little or no change to the fund balance. The anticipated 2000-01 fund balance for the district was calculated using the audited 1999-2000 fund balance of \$160,693 as a starting point. Budgeted 2000-01 revenues and expenditures

were then added and subtracted to derive the expected fund balance at August 31, 2001. Once the district has received its WADA sales, the district expects the fund balance to increase approximately \$300,000 since these revenues were not included in the budget.

The district does not have a formal fund balance management policy in place. In the past, the board has not understood how vital a strong fund balance is in maintaining the fiscal soundness of the district. The board does not review its fund balance on a regular basis to ensure it is adequate, nor does it project future expenditures based on the available fund balance. Without performing this analysis, the board cannot plan for future operations effectively. Additionally, the district does not have a formal procedure for the superintendent to inform the board about the status of the fund balance.

WVUSD has held less than one average month's expenditures in reserve for the past two school years. (**Exhibit 3-8**).

**Exhibit 3-8**  
**Analysis of WVUSD General Fund Balance**  
**1996 through 2000**

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	*2001
Ending Fund Balance	\$750,946	\$709,229	\$434,088	\$312,417	\$160,692	\$160,692
Average Expenditures per Month	\$187,003	\$193,669	\$222,185	\$224,178	\$245,312	\$239,867
Optimum Fund Balance	\$561,009	\$581,007	\$666,556	\$672,535	\$735,935	\$719,602
Above/(Below)	\$189,937	\$128,222	(\$232,468)	(\$360,118)	(\$575,242)	(558,910)

*Source: TEA, PEIMS 1995-96 through 1999-2001 and WVUSD Audited Financial Statements.*

*\*Projected Fund Balance as of August 31, 2001 not including revenue from WADA sales.*

**Recommendation 22:**

**Establish a fund balance management policy and develop administrative procedures to inform the board of fund balance status.**

This policy should establish goals concerning what the district's optimum fund balance should be at all times. It should include a means of attaining and maintaining the desired level. The policy should provide the superintendent with clear directions on how to increase revenue or decrease expenditures to meet the district's fund balance goals.

One of the essential elements of the policy should include procedures for informing the board as to the status of the fund balance. In every board packet, the superintendent should include a summary of the beginning fund balance, the revenues received during the month, the month's expenditures and the ending fund balance. The superintendent should explain and justify any significant events that have had a major impact on the fund balance during that month. Providing the board with information regarding the fund balance will ensure that the board and district administration are always cognizant of the district's financial position.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent drafts the fund balance management policy for review by the board.	November 2001
2.	The board reviews the policy and makes any necessary modifications.	December 2001
3.	The board approves the policy.	January 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.



# Chapter 3

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

### B. BUDGET

When a school district has financial difficulties, it must take strict measures to track and control its costs. An effective budgeting process is critical during this time. The district must ensure that budget cuts make sense and will not impair the ability to provide quality education to its students.

The budget process should occur in three phases (**Exhibit 3-9**).

**Exhibit 3-9**  
**Budget Cycle**

Phase	Schedule	Activity
Planning	Fall 2001	Define the goals and objectives of each campus and of the district as a whole.
Preparation	Spring/Summer 2002	Identify necessary expenditures that correspond with district goals and establish budgetary resource allocations.
Evaluation	Fall 2002	Determine the effectiveness of the budget in meeting the goals of the district. Repeat cycle.

*Source: Gibson Consulting Group, Inc.*

**Exhibit 3-10** presents a three-year history of WVISD's budgeted expenditures compared to actual expenditures.

**Exhibit 3-10**  
**Water Valley Actual versus Budgeted Expenditures**  
**1997-98 through 1999-2000**

Expenditure	Budgeted	Actual	Variance Favorable/ (Unfavorable)
<b>1997-98</b>			
Instruction and Instructional Related Services	\$1,519,966	\$1,517,537	\$2,429
Instructional and School	\$190,433	\$190,433	\$0

Leadership			
Support Services - Student Related	\$444,057	\$475,112	(\$31,055)
Food Services	\$211,918	\$211,918	\$0
Administrative Support Services	\$67,343	\$67,343	\$0
Support Services - Non Student Related	\$313,883	\$304,743	\$9,140
Debt Service	\$40,036	\$47,077	(\$7,041)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,787,636</b>	<b>\$2,814,163</b>	<b>(\$26,537)</b>
<b>1998-99</b>			
Instruction and Instructional Related Services	\$1,581,392	\$1,582,283	(\$891)
Instructional and School Leadership	\$199,749	\$199,138	\$611
Support Services - Student Related	\$323,688	\$322,343	\$1,345
Food Services	\$175,619	\$178,354	(\$2,735)
Administrative Support Services	\$124,861	\$123,988	\$873
Support Services - Non Student Related	\$307,272	\$305,093	\$2,179
Debt Service	\$76,601	\$71,537	\$5,064
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,789,182</b>	<b>\$2,782,736</b>	<b>\$6,446</b>
<b>1999-2000</b>			
Instruction and Instructional Related Services	\$1,638,959	\$1,608,037	\$30,922
Instructional and School Leadership	\$190,111	\$189,486	\$625
Support Services - Student Related	\$353,974	\$349,381	\$4,593
Food Services	\$185,622	\$185,194	\$428
Administrative Support Services	\$131,718	\$130,927	\$791
Support Services - Non Student Related	\$362,804	\$361,952	\$852

Debt Service	\$18,206	\$9,965	\$8,241
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,881,394</b>	<b>\$2,834,942</b>	<b>\$46,452</b>

*Source: M. Carol McDonald & Co. Audited Financial Statements for WVUSD, 1997-98, Story & Stovall, Certified Public Accountants Audited Financial Statements for WVUSD, 1998-99. Reed, McKee & Co. P.C., Certified Public Accountants Audited Financial Statements for WVUSD, 1999-2000.*

## **FINDING**

Water Valley lacks a comprehensive formal budget development process. The district has not created a budget calendar to provide the departments and campuses a timeline to follow. Although administrators and department heads submit a wish list to the superintendent, it was not clear that any follow-up discussions are scheduled to discuss these lists.

Preparing a formal budget calendar and distributing it to all district employees that have budgetary responsibilities typically initiates the annual budget process. The calendar should schedule specific dates for each task, detail each activity and identify the person(s) responsible for completing each task. A sample budget calendar is presented for reference in **Exhibit 3-11**.

### **Exhibit 3-11 Sample Budget Calendar**

<b>Scheduled Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Responsible Person</b>
September 7, 2001	Establish and conduct the first meeting of the Budget Planning Committee.	Superintendent
September 7, 2001	Prepare a preliminary budget calendar.	Budget Planning Committee
September 20, 2001	Present recommended budget calendar and guidelines to the board for approval.	Superintendent
January 21, 2002	Meet with staff to review budget procedures and release of preliminary allocations. and to distribute forms and	Principals and department heads

	printouts.	
February 1-25, 2002	Individual budgets developed and submitted to business office.	Superintendent, principals and administrators
March 15, 2002	Preliminary campus and department printouts are completed and delivered to principals and supervisors.	Superintendent
April 1, 2002	Campus budget reviewed by SBDM committee for approval of preliminary budgets and submission to business manager.	Principals
April 5, 2002	Budgets reviewed by Budget Planning Committee.	Superintendent
April 15, 2002	Finalize all preliminary budgets and prepare district budget.	Business manager
April 18, 2002	Preliminary budget presented to the board.	Superintendent and Business manager
May 15, 2002 - August 2002	Present necessary revised budget to board.	Superintendent and Business manager
August 15, 2002	Present final budget to board for approval.	Superintendent and Business manager

*Source: Based on Ricardo Independent School District Budget Calendar.*

### **Recommendation 23:**

**Create a Budget Planning Committee to identify the district's financial goals and constraints for the next five years and to prepare a budget calendar.**

The superintendent should establish the Budget Planning Committee. The committee should include the superintendent, Business manager, school principals, athletic director, Technology coordinator, Transportation supervisor, Food Services manager and two board members. The committee should meet during the first week of the new school year.

### **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent organizes the Budget Planning Committee.	October 2001
2.	The superintendent prepares a budget calendar with the	October 2001

	assistance of the Budget Planning Committee.	
3.	The district distributes the budget calendar to all personnel involved in the budget process.	November 2001

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

### **FINDING**

The district has used a different audit firm to perform its audit the last three years. The district had used M. Carol McDonald & Co for seven years prior to the death of the principal of the firm. Story & Stovall, Certified Public Accountants performed the 1998-99 audit. Reed, McKee & Co, P.C., Certified Public Accountants performed the 1999-2000 audit. The preliminary work required to review a district's books can be the most time consuming portion of the audit process and therefore, the most expensive.

### **Recommendation 24:**

**Prepare a request for proposals for audit services that includes a provision for an option to extend the contract term.**

It may be more cost effective for the district to use the same audit firm for at least two years. Using the same firm for multiple years would reduce the initial hours the firm spends to understand the accounting practices of the district. It also would provide continuity and allow the auditors to provide the district with additional direction in any compliance issues if necessary.

### **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The Business manager prepares request for proposal (RFP) to include a provision to extend the contract term and submits to superintendent for review.	January 2002
2.	The superintendent sends out the RFPs to audit firm candidates.	January 2002
3.	The superintendent receives responses to the RFP from audit firms.	February 2002
4.	The superintendent reviews the responses and makes a recommendation to board.	March 2002

5.	The board approves the external audit contract.	March 2002
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**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# Chapter 3

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

### C. RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk management includes the identification, analysis and reduction of risk through insurance and safety programs to protect the district's assets and employees. Workers' compensation is intended to protect district employees in case of work-related accidents and injuries. Property and casualty insurance protects the district from liabilities arising from property damage, bodily injury and other situations in which the district may be at risk. Additionally, the district contributes toward employee health insurance coverage.

### FINDING

The district was facing extremely high property and casualty insurance premiums upon renewal of its policy on June 6, 2001. Many insurance carriers have refused to provide insurance coverage to small rural school districts that do not have a fire hydrant on-site. Water Valley has a volunteer fire department but does not have a fire hydrant located on district property. The district's previous carrier, Trimble-Batjer Insurance Associates, LLP, informed the district that to renew coverage, WVISD would have to accept a 300 percent increase in premium. Therefore, the district voted in the May 9, 2001 board meeting to change its insurance carrier. As of June 6, 2001, the district will purchase its property and casualty insurance through the Texas Association of School Boards Risk Management Fund (TASB). **Exhibit 3-12** lists the district's commercial insurance policies as of June 6, 2001 to June 6, 2002.

**Exhibit 3-12**  
**Commercial Insurance Coverage**  
**2001-02**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Coverage</b>	<b>Deductible</b>	<b>Annual Premium</b>
Property & Casualty	Limit: \$11,000,000 (Includes wind, hurricane and hail)	\$1,000 \$10,000	\$19,800
Equipment Breakdown	Limit: \$11,000,000	\$1,000	\$583
Miscellaneous Property	Limit: \$500,000	\$1,000	Included

Direct Physical Loss, Replacement Cost Valuable Papers	Limit: \$100,000	\$1,000	Included
Direct Physical Loss, Replacement Cost EDP Equipment, Data & Media	Limit: \$250,000	\$250	\$560
Direct Physical Loss, Stated Value Fine Arts	Limit: \$100,000	\$1,000	Included
Direct Physical Loss, Replacement Cost Musical Instruments	Limit: \$100,000	\$250	\$220
General Liability	Limit: \$1,000,000 per occurrence	\$1,000	\$600
School Professional Liability	Limit: \$1,000,000 per occurrence, \$1,000,000 Annual Aggregate	\$1,000	\$2,500
Automobile			
Fleet Liability: Bodily Injury	Limit: \$100,000 per person, \$300,000 per occurrence	\$250	\$1,805
Property Damage	Limit: \$100,000 per occurrence	\$250	
Physical Damage: All vehicles Specified Perils Collision		\$250	\$541 \$723
Mobile equipment Specified Perils Collision		\$250	\$138 \$327
Crime	Limit: \$25,000	\$250	\$140
<b>Total - All Coverage</b>			<b>\$27,937</b>

*Source: Commercial Insurance Proposal for WVISD, TASB Risk Management, June 6, 2001 Invoice.*

## COMMENDATION



**The district monitors its property and casualty insurance premiums in an effort to control costs.**

**FINDING**

The district's health insurance costs per employee are the second highest among its peer groups. (**Exhibit 3-13**).

**Exhibit 3-13  
Peer District Comparison of Health Insurance Costs  
2000-01**

<b>District</b>	<b>Annual Health Insurance Cost</b>	<b>Number of Employees</b>	<b>Annual Per Employee Cost</b>
Bronte	\$129,735	76.6	\$1,694
Eden	\$380,191	68.6	\$5,542
North Zulch	\$74,185	53.8	\$1,379
Veribest	\$12,501	47.4	\$264
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>\$136,949</b>	<b>57.3</b>	<b>\$2,390</b>

*Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.*

The Texas Legislature established a statewide school employee health insurance plan for teachers and other employees of school districts in 2001. School districts with 500 or fewer employees-over 80 percent of the state's school districts-will be required to participate in the new state insurance plan beginning in the fall of 2002. Districts with between 501 and 1,000 employees may join the plan but must elect to do so before September 30, 2001. Districts with more than 1,000 employees may join in 2005, unless the Teacher Retirement System Board (TRS), who will be administering the plan, determines that an earlier opt-in is feasible. Districts not joining the state insurance plan still will receive state support to continue their locally determined insurance programs. All districts, whether participating in the state insurance plan or not, will receive from the state a \$75 a month per covered employee contribution for the district and \$1,000 a year "pass through" for each school employee.

All full-time employees and those part-time employees who are members of TRS are covered automatically by the basic state plan, which is considered catastrophic coverage. Districts and employees must contribute additional money to receive higher levels of coverage. To assist with these costs, the state will send each district \$75 per month, per covered employee and will give each employee an additional \$1,000 annually (\$83

a month) to pay for additional employee coverage, dependent coverage, compensation or any combination of the above. Part-time employees who are not TRS members may participate if they or the district pays the full cost.

Districts are required to make a minimum contribution of \$150 per employee per month. If a district is not making the minimum contribution, the state will help pay the local district share over the next six years. The state will phase out this hold harmless aid over the next six years. The state also will hold harmless districts that reach the Maintenance and Operations tax cap of \$1.50 for any tax effort over \$1.50 required to reach the minimum district effort of \$150 a month.

Districts contributing more than \$150 a month per employee may use the difference between their current expenditure per employee per month and the required \$150 a month minimum effort to provide additional insurance coverage or other employee compensation.

The details of the plan will be subject to contract negotiations with health insurance providers, actuarial estimates, and rules and guidelines set by TRS. TRS will have more details before July 31, so that districts with 501 to 1,000 employees can make a decision regarding participation before the September 30, 2001 deadline. Consequently, within the next year more than 80 percent of the districts in the state will be examining the options and making plans to transition to the new plan.

Because the Legislature was concerned about the effect that the termination or bidding of insurance contracts during this final year of coverage would have on a district's ability to obtain competitive bids for health insurance, the state has exempted the smaller school districts from the competitive bid requirements for health insurance coverages for the coming year.

Currently, the district employee benefit plan is self-funded. Therefore, WVUSD will not be required to participate in the state plan, but will have that option. The existing WVUSD plan includes medical insurance and a \$15,000 term life insurance provision. The district pays \$225 per month for each employee.

**Recommendation 25:**

**Form a committee composed of district employees and board members to manage the transition to the state provided health insurance program effectively.**

The committee should include three board members, the superintendent, Business manager, principal, two teachers from each campus, one Food Services worker, one counselor, the Transportation supervisor, one custodian and the school nurse. By including this cross section of district employees will ensure that the district addresses the majority of issues facing all employee groups. The superintendent must inform the board members about the insurance plan and the financial impact the plan will have on the district, particularly during the district's next budget planning process. The committee should consider the local market and evaluate how peer districts incorporate the new state program when determining the health insurance coverage it provides to its employees.

### **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent and Business manager select committee members.	November 2001
2.	The committee meets to study the state plan and designs a survey to identify employee health insurance needs.	December 2001
3.	The Business manager distributes the survey to all employees.	January 2002
4.	The superintendent's secretary compiles the survey results.	February 2002
5.	The committee reviews the survey results and prepares a recommendation for health coverage.	February 2002
6.	The superintendent sends out for three bids from health insurance carriers for the recommended levels of coverage.	March 2002
7.	The superintendent recommends the choice of health insurance coverage to the board.	March 2002
8.	The board approves the new coverage.	April 2002
9.	The new health insurance plan takes effect.	September 2002

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# Chapter 3

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

### **D. CASH AND INVESTMENTS**

Effective cash and investment management involves establishing sound banking relationships, developing accurate cash projections, managing cash receipts, controlling cash disbursements and investing funds in safe investment choices. The superintendent has the overall responsibility for the cash and investment management functions at WVISD.

WVISD maintains its deposits in five accounts at Crockett National Bank in San Angelo. All checks over \$500 require board approval and are included in the consent agenda after each board meeting. The depository contract is bid competitively every biennium. The current contract expires on August 31, 2001. Under the terms of the contract, the bank must pledge securities to cover the district's deposits. The district had awarded the bid for the next biennial depository contract to Crockett National Bank. The contract begins September 1, 2001, and will expire on August 31, 2003.

The district maintains its investments in two accounts - a local maintenance account at TexPOOL and a Certificate of Deposit account at Crockett National Bank. The Business manager and the superintendent oversee the management of these investment accounts.

### **FINDING**

The district does not maintain high balances in any of its clearing accounts. Each of the accounts set up with Crockett National Bank are interest-bearing accounts, although the annual interest rate for the smaller clearing accounts is less than 0.25 percent. The Business manager has a banking background and has introduced necessary cash management procedures into daily activities. Additionally, the superintendent has a strong financial control background.

State law requires a district to equalize its wealth per student in terms of weighted average daily attendance (WADA). A district may sell a percentage of its WADA to a less wealthy district as a means of equalization. The less wealthy district can then report the purchased WADA as its own in deriving its state fund allotment. WVISD collects WADA on behalf of Sterling City. The superintendent at Sterling City allows WVISD to retain the cash until the very last minute so that the district can earn additional interest income on the money.

### **COMMENDATION**

**The district optimizes its interest income by maintaining its cash balances as long as possible in higher interest earning accounts.**

# Chapter 3

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

### E. FIXED ASSETS

TEA defines fixed assets as items that are tangible in nature, long lived (with a life of longer than one year), of a significant value at purchase or acquisition time, and reasonable identified and controlled through a physical inventory system. According to TEA, if a purchase meets these criteria and costs \$5,000 or more, the item is considered a fixed asset and should be capitalized.

The Texas Education Agency's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide* requires assets costing \$5,000 or more to be recorded in the fixed-asset group of accounts. Items costing less than \$5,000 are recorded as operating expenses of the appropriate fund under TEA guidelines. These guidelines also allow school districts to establish lower thresholds for control and accountability purposes for equipment costing less than \$5,000. For example, computer and audiovisual equipment costing less than \$5,000 does not have to be accounted for in the fixed-asset group of accounts. However, some districts maintain lists of such assets for control and accountability purposes. WVISD set its threshold at \$5,000 in accordance with TEA guidelines.

### FINDING

The district is not reporting all pertinent fixed asset data in its accounting system. During the 1999-2000 external audit, auditors found that many items do not have an acquisition date. The district had not entered this data into the accounting system it uses to track its fixed assets. The district's failure to track asset acquisition dates will cause problems once the fixed asset accounting rules change under the newly adopted accounting rules. GASB Statement 34, issued June 1999, requires districts to report their capital assets after adjusting for depreciation. A capital asset is assigned a useful life, and then the cost of the asset is spread out over its useful life in the financial statements. For example, if an asset cost \$5,000 and is expected to be useful for 5 years, each year \$1,000 would be taken as a depreciation expense of the district. To track depreciation, the district must have some estimated life for each fixed asset valued over \$5,000. Presently, state and local governments, which include school districts, are not required to depreciate their assets. WVISD will have to comply with GASB 34 by September 1, 2001.

### Recommendation 26:

**Enter the acquisition date of each fixed asset into the Regional Service Center Computer Cooperative fixed asset module.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The Business manager queries RSCCC to identify assets that do not have acquisition dates.	October 2001
2.	The Business manager pulls the backup purchase data for each of these fixed assets from the files.	October 2001
3.	The Business manager enters the acquisition date into RSCCC.	November 2001
4.	The Business manager establishes a procedure for entering the acquisition date for each new acquisition.	November 2001 - Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

The district does not have a means of effectively tracking its fixed assets. Although the district maintains its fixed asset base using the fixed asset module of the RSCCC accounting system, the Business manager stated during on-site interviews that the district does not regularly review the information in the system to ensure it is correct and that the district still owns the asset. The district does not use a bar code system to keep track of the district's fixed assets. Bar coding systems offer an efficient way to tag and track fixed assets. Additionally, it could assist the district in knowing when or if anything is missing from inventory so that it could file an insurance claim. Bar coding systems exist that contain hardware and software compatible with RSCCC.

**Recommendation 27:**

**Perform an annual physical inventory and install a bar code system to track fixed assets.**

The district has hired RCI to perform an audit of the district's inventory. The district should tag all items currently on the fixed-asset list and all new purchases with bar codes. This will minimize the time needed for future physical inventories.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The Business manager develops formal procedures for the receipt and tracking of existing fixed assets and new purchases.	October 2001
2.	The Business manager contracts for the purchase of one bar code reader and required supplies.	January 2002
3.	The district contracts with RCI to audit the district's inventory.	January 2002
4.	The Business manager tags the existing fixed asset inventory and compare to RSCCC listing.	June - July 2002
5.	The Business manager reviews the process and ensures that all fixed assets have been tagged.	August 2002
6.	The district tags all new purchases and adds them to the RSCCC fixed asset database.	Ongoing

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

A bar code reader will cost about \$2,100. Supplies of bar code tags would require an annual cost of \$50.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
Purchase a bar code reader.	(\$2,100)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Yearly Supply Costs	(\$50)	(\$50)	(\$50)	(\$50)	(\$50)
Net Costs	(\$2,150)	(\$50)	(\$50)	(\$50)	(\$50)



# Chapter 3

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

### F. PURCHASING

An efficient purchasing function should ensure that a district purchases supplies, equipment and services vital to its educational mission from appropriate sources, in the correct quantity, at the lowest prices and in accordance with federal, state and local laws and policies.

In 1995, the Texas Education Code (TEC) was revised to include changes in state purchasing regulations designed to provide the best value to school districts through a competitive bidding process. Generally, when a district purchases items valued at \$25,000 or more in aggregate (or multiple like items with a cumulative value of more than \$25,000 in a twelve-month period), it must follow one of the following competitive bid processes:

- Competitive sealed proposals: vendors submit a written bid, and the district opens all submitted bids publicly to ensure fairness in the bidding process;
- Requests for proposals: vendors submit a written bid, and the district opens submitted bids as they come in;
- Purchases from the state catalogue: vendors that have completed competitive bid requirements at the state level and can sell products directly to districts;
- Procurements through an interlocal contract: board-approved agreements with a local entity that allows the district to purchase specific items from that entity's bid; or
- Design/build contracts: a district selects a vendor through a competitive bid to complete an entire project; it is the vendor's responsibility to obtain merchandise for the project.

In 1999, the Office of the Attorney General issued an opinion (Op. JC-37) stating that school district procurement through an interlocal agreement or a cooperative purchasing arrangement satisfies competitive bidding requirements.

School districts must advertise bids worth more than \$25,000, at least once a week, for two weeks in any newspaper published in the county in which the district is located. Districts must advertise bids worth between \$10,000 and \$25,000 in two successive issues of any newspaper in the district's county. The TEC requires advertisements to specify the categories of property to be purchased and to solicit vendors that are interested in supplying them.

WVISED does not have a great deal of storage capacity available. For this reason, it is unable to participate in the Region 15 purchasing cooperative. Region 15 orders supplies in bulk that WVISED does not have room to store. Therefore, the district keeps a limited amount of office supplies on hand and uses a garage to store the majority of these supplies. The elementary school and the high school also store a small amount of supplies.

The review team determined that the district's bid process is in compliance with state regulations. WVISED places an advertisement in the San Angelo Standard Times for the items that must be bid each year, including propane and fuel. The Food Services manager handles all food services purchases, and the district bids out all large quantities of food items.

### **FINDING**

The purchasing process at WVISED is relatively simple. When an item is required, a requisition order is completed and the Business manager is contacted to ensure that there is money available in the budget for the purchase. Once the budget has been verified, a purchase order is created. The superintendent then reviews the purchase order and verifies it against the budget again. If the superintendent determines that the purchase is justified and sufficient funds exist, the order is processed. If sufficient funds do not exist or if the superintendent determines that the purchase is not acceptable, the request is denied. The majority of all staff members interviewed felt that the purchasing process at WVISED was effective and that the turnaround time was relatively short.

### **COMMENDATION**

**The district ensures that all purchases are verified against the budget and completed in a timely fashion.**

### **FINDING**

WVISED provides each teacher with \$100 per year to use for classroom supplies. The teachers must fill out purchase requisitions for the expenditures but have some discretion to purchase items that will best enhance their individual classrooms. The supply allowance provides the teachers with a small degree of freedom in their classrooms. Many use this money for incentive items to reward their students for certain achievements. In focus groups, each teacher commented on the value of this policy.

### **COMMENDATION**

**The \$100 classroom fund provides teachers with the opportunity to make purchases that fit their unique teaching methods.**

# Chapter 4

## OPERATIONS

This chapter reviews the Water Valley Independent School District's (WVISED) operations in the following areas:

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

The objective of an effective facilities management program is to efficiently provide and maintain physical space that encourages student learning in a safe and clean environment. Facilities management includes facilities planning, construction management, maintenance, custodial services and energy management.

# Chapter 4 OPERATIONS

## A. FACILITIES

Water Valley ISD (WVISD) has two schools and a central office on contiguous land in Water Valley. The central office is a house owned by the district that was converted for office use. The district also owns three other houses. In 2001-02, after the elimination of the high school principal position, these houses will be used by the superintendent, the elementary/secondary school principal and the athletic director as part of their compensation packages. This practice is common in small school districts and considered necessary to attract quality candidates. There is no debt service on the houses, and the occupants pay utilities.

The original elementary school was built at the turn of the century. Major upgrades and expansions to the facility occurred in 1913, 1951 and 1974. Voters approved a \$2 million bond issue in 1981 for a new high school. The building was completed in the fall of 1983. In 1993, the band hall and concession stand were added. A new wing of 4 classrooms was added to the high school in the mid-1990s.

There is one district employee involved in the maintenance of the school facilities. He is also responsible for bus maintenance. In 2000-01, the district budgeted \$217,571 for plant operations and maintenance, a reduction from actual expenditures of \$270,094 in 1999-2000. Most of the decrease was in the cost of contracted services, which was higher in 1999-2000 than in previous years. On a per-student basis, WVISD budgeted less than all of its peer districts for plant maintenance and operations (**Exhibit 4-1**).

**Exhibit 4-1**  
**Peer Comparison of Plant Operations and Maintenance**  
**Expenditures per Student**  
**2000-01**

<b>District</b>	<b>Budgeted Expenditures</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>Expenditures per Student</b>
Bronte	\$542,500	514	\$1,055
Veribest	\$282,464	272	\$1,038
North Zulch	\$281,899	344	\$819
Eden	\$270,918	336	\$806

<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>\$217,571</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>\$691</b>
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*Source: TEA, PEIMS budget and enrollment data, 2000-01, function 51-plant maintenance and operations.*

Overall, parents are pleased with the district's facilities management. **Exhibit 4-2** presents results of a survey of parents on facilities planning and management questions. The only question with equal negative and positive responses was in regard to the involvement of the community in facilities planning. All other questions relating to maintenance, custodial and energy management functions had favorable responses.

**Exhibit 4-2**  
**WVUSD Parent Survey Responses**  
**Facilities Use and Management**

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
1	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	1.9%	28.3%	35.9%	26.4%	7.5%
2	Schools are clean.	17.0%	62.3%	13.2%	7.5%	0.0%
3	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	13.2%	50.9%	17.0%	17.0%	1.9%
4	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	11.3%	43.4%	24.5%	18.9%	1.9%
5	The district uses very few portable buildings.	17.0%	66.0%	11.3%	5.7%	0.0%
6	Emergency maintenance is handled expeditiously.	11.3%	41.5%	43.4%	1.9%	1.9%

*Source: TSPR parent survey, March 2001.*

**FINDING**

In June 1999, the district commissioned a comprehensive facilities evaluation and projected needs study. This study predicted a short-term decline in enrollment to 340 students in 2002-03, but increasing to 368

students by 2008-09 under the most conservative of the study's three growth scenarios. Enrollment in 2000-01, however, was only 315, including students in separate facilities. The study recommended replacing the elementary school, converting the high school to a middle school and building a new high school in the long term under the most aggressive growth scenario. The fundamental growth assumptions upon which these options were based are no longer valid.

According to the study, Water Valley Elementary school is an old facility that needs to be replaced. The facilities evaluation gave it a composite score of 46 percent out of a 100 points possible, based on the individual scores presented in **Exhibit 4-3**. No category of evaluation received higher than a 60 percent score out of a total possible score of 100 percent. Water Valley High School received a composite score of 65 percent.

**Exhibit 4-3**  
**Water Valley Elementary**  
**June 1999 Facilities Assessment**

<b>Assessment Categories</b>	<b>Score</b>
Educational Adequacy	41%
Safety and Health	57%
Accessibility	60%
Efficiency	43%
Flexibility	34%
Appearance	45%
<b>Composite Score</b>	<b>46%</b>

*Source: Facilities Evaluation and Projected Needs for WVUSD, Huckabee & Associates, Inc., June 1999.*

The study concluded that the elementary school does not effectively support a contemporary education program and should be replaced.

In April 2001, the district had a bond election for \$2.1 million, with hopes of receiving additional funds from the state Instructional Facilities Allotment (IFA) program. Under this program, which became effective September 1, 1997, the state financially helps school districts make debt service payments on qualifying bonds and lease-purchase agreements. Districts are allowed to apply for this assistance after voters have passed a bond election.

The district's April 7, 2001 bond election, which would have authorized the board to issue and sell \$2.1 million of bonds for a new elementary school, failed by a vote of 99 to 75.

One reason this election may have failed is the concern over the district's financial health. The district began plans to build a new school during a time of financial stress. Enrollment, however, has declined from 400 students in 1996-97 to 315 in 2000-01, far below the projected estimates. This decline has adversely affected state funding, which is based on enrollment.

The district's plans for a new elementary school also did not include an analysis of operating costs that would be incurred by the new facility, although the superintendent said the costs were considered in the decision process. There also were no plans or cost estimates for the continued use or demolition of the existing elementary school. This type of information is necessary for any construction project, but particularly during times of financial stress.

Districts can obtain funding through the IFA and the possible use of Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZAB) to renovate existing facilities. QZAB is a federally funded program created by the federal Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997, which provides federal tax credits to lenders who purchase bonds from issuing school districts. The tax credits allow the authorized district to obtain interest-free funding; the district does not pay interest on the amount borrowed.

From 1998 through 2000, the state of Texas received QZAB allocations for \$32.8 million, \$34.8 million and \$32.5 million, respectively. In 1999, Congress and the President extended the program through 2001 to support an additional \$400 million in school improvements. There is an \$8 million limit per QZAB application, and the debt must be repaid within 12 years. A district is entitled to only one application per calendar year. Any funding not allocated by December 31 of each year is rolled over into the next year for new applications. As of November 13, 2000, \$19.2 million of the 2000 allocation was available.

To apply for QZAB, the district superintendent must complete the application and include a written assurance from a business partner designating a contribution of 10 percent to the total project to create a new academic program at the qualified school. The 10-percent contribution may include cash, property, equipment, professional services or volunteer services. The school may partner with a single private entity or with several entities to reach the 10-percent threshold. The bond proceeds must benefit an individual school located within a federally designated Empowerment Zone, a federally designated Enterprise Community or any



other school with at least 35 percent of its student population eligible for the federal free and reduced-price lunch program.

The application may be made for a bond, a personal property lease purchase agreement or a time warrant (loan). Bonds must be authorized and issued under the authority of Texas Education Code Chapter 45 subchapter A. A lease purchase must be qualified under Local Government Code Section 271.005 pertaining to personal property. A time warrant must meet the requirements of Texas Education Code Section 45.103. QZAB-approved funds must be used for renovating or repairing a classroom facility or purchasing equipment such as computers and networking hardware used to improve an academic program.

To achieve QZAB designation, a district must meet the program's proof of eligibility, provide an assurance of a private business contribution and submit the district's program intent. The application must be filed and the designation must be approved prior to the district issuing its QZAB debt. The application process takes approximately 30 days from the date of submission to TEA to final approval. Upon receipt of QZAB designation, the district will have 180 days to issue the bonds. The QZAB designation will lapse if the bonds are not issued within the allocated time.

#### **Recommendation 28:**

#### **Develop a fiscal impact analysis of new versus renovated facility operating costs and explore funding available through the federal QZAB program.**

Effective school districts analyze the impact of new facilities on each line item of operating costs. While energy and other efficiencies are achieved through new construction, adding space can increase operating costs. If the district is confident that renovating the existing facility is the most appropriate course of action, the district should explore funding available through the federal QZAB program.

Before deciding to build, the district should identify and quantify the incremental operating costs of any future facilities. These costs will include utilities, maintenance, custodial services, grounds keeping and insurance. Cost estimates should also include the refurbishment and/or demolition costs of the existing facilities and the impact on operating costs of these actions. This process will provide district management, the board and the community more information with which to evaluate the financial feasibility of future bond projects.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent and board designate a citizen committee to prepare estimates of construction and operating costs for a new or renovated facility for a five-year prospective period.	October 2001
2.	The superintendent and the Business manager identify rehabilitation and repair projects at the elementary school that could be presented for funding through QZAB bonds.	November 2001
3.	The superintendent obtains information from the Texas Education Agency about the QZAB program and begins the application process.	November 2001
4.	The citizens committee develops cost estimates.	November 2001 - March 2002
5.	The citizens committee and superintendent present costs estimates to the board for review and approval.	April 2002
6.	If appropriate, the superintendent pursues the QZAB funding for the renovation project.	May 2002

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented using existing resources.

### **FINDING**

The district had a comprehensive facilities evaluation and projected needs study performed in June 1999. This study predicted declining enrollment in the short term but increasing enrollment in the long term. The study also recommended replacing the elementary school immediately and converting the existing high school to a middle school and building a new high school in the long term.

Since the bond issue failed and enrollment has declined beyond what was projected in the June 1999 study, the district does not have a current plan to match the current enrollment. Nor has the district prepared revised likely scenarios of enrollment projections.

Many school districts update their facilities plans annually to reflect changes in key planning variables.

### **Recommendation 29:**

**Update facility plans based on revised enrollment projection scenarios.**

The district should request the facilities consultant to update enrollment projections based on three scenarios: a continuing decline in enrollment, flat enrollment and moderate growth. These scenarios may result in different facility strategies from those presented in the original plan.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent contacts the facilities consultant to request an update of the 1999 facilities study.	October 2001
2.	The facilities consultant updates the study.	December 2001
3.	The superintendent and board evaluate all funding options available to the district.	January 2002
4.	The superintendent and board review the strategic options presented in the consultant's report and decide on a facilities strategy for the district.	February 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The original facilities study cost \$4,000. It is assumed that an update of that study would be approximately one-half the cost of the original work. The district should provide the facilities consultant three projection scenarios of status quo, enrollment decline and a moderate enrollment increase. This request will help ensure that the results will be useful to the district. If enrollment growth exceeds these estimates, the district can resort to the original study that projected higher enrollment growth.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
Update the facilities plans based on revised enrollment projection scenarios.	(\$2,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

**FINDING**

WVUSD does not maintain an inventory of its space, limiting its ability to plan and measure efficiency. The facilities study conducted in 1999 did not capture this information, but reported information on facility capacity.

A facilities inventory has several important benefits. It documents what space the district has, which is the first step in facilities planning. Information obtained on classroom capacity and utilization is important for scheduling and determining additional space needs. Square footage

data also is important to measuring overall space utilization, and can also be used to compare maintenance, custodial and energy costs over time.

Many school districts maintain an inventory of facilities. It is common and necessary practice for effective facilities management.

**Recommendation 30:**

**Develop and maintain a facilities inventory.**

A facilities inventory should track the following items:

- Facility name
- Date of initial construction
- Site size (acres)
- Gross square feet - permanent space
- Gross square feet - portable buildings
- Total gross square feet
- Student capacity - permanent space
- Student capacity - with portable buildings
- Current enrollment
- Capacity variance - permanent space
- Capacity variance - total space

This information will help the district monitor the efficient use of its facilities and provide a starting point for its facilities planning efforts. Using existing financial data and this inventory, the district could develop and report statistics on maintenance cost per square foot, utilities cost per square foot, custodial cost per square foot and the number of square feet of coverage per full-time-equivalent custodian. These statistics should be analyzed over time to evaluate efficiency in these areas.

A similar schedule of district-owned land could also be maintained. This schedule can include the lot description, date purchased, cost and number of acres.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent and maintenance worker gather or measure square foot data for each district facility.	October 2001
2.	The superintendent develops the facilities inventory and submits it to the board for review.	November 2001
3.	The superintendent updates the facilities inventory at the beginning of each school year and after any changes are made to the facilities.	Ongoing

4.	The superintendent and board monitor facility use and facility cost performance measures using square footage data.	Ongoing
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**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

The district's energy management performance contract is not cost effective. In July 1996, the district entered into a ten-year performance contract with Honeywell for energy retrofits. Services in this performance contract included lighting retrofits, energy management controls system and minor HVAC retrofits to be performed or installed in the district by Honeywell. In return for a one-time investment for the cost of the upgrades and a monthly fee, Honeywell guaranteed net energy and operational savings of \$34,783 over a ten-year period. To date, no utility savings have been achieved, but net guaranteed savings of approximately \$4,200 have been paid by Honeywell. The financial provisions of this contract began in February 1997.

During the first three years of the contract, the district has not achieved any savings guaranteed, and Honeywell has had to pay the district the guaranteed amount. In August 2000, Honeywell sent a letter to the district attempting to end the contract by agreeing to pay the district each year for the next seven years the guaranteed net savings. Under this arrangement, Honeywell would no longer be obligated to perform yearly energy audits and maintenance on the equipment the company installed and issue energy management reports.

**Exhibit 4-4** presents the financial terms of the remaining six years of the Honeywell agreement. The guaranteed total savings include operating cost savings credit of \$5,367 per year. This amount was mutually agreed to in the contract. The cash savings represent the net of debt service payments on the capital improvements, annual service fees paid by the district to Honeywell and guaranteed annual utility savings.

**Exhibit 4-4  
Terms of Honeywell Performance Contract**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Guaranteed Cash Savings</b>	<b>Guaranteed Total Savings</b>
2001-02	(\$1,608)	\$3,759
2002-03	(\$953)	\$4,629

2003-04	(\$272)	\$5,533
2004-05	\$437	\$6,474
2005-06	\$1,173	\$7,452
2006-07	\$1,940	\$8,469
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$716</b>	<b>\$36,315</b>

*Source: Honeywell Energy Management Contract, May 28, 1996.*

As of April 2001, the superintendent was considering whether to accept Honeywell's offer to terminate the contract. The terms of this offer do not adequately compensate the district for the guaranteed savings. **Exhibit 4-5** presents the terms of the Honeywell proposal. Honeywell is proposing to pay a flat amount of \$13,012 for the remainder of the contract, representing guaranteed annual cash savings of \$16,219 minus the annual fee of \$3,207.

**Exhibit 4-5**  
**Terms of Honeywell Proposal to Terminate the Contract**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Guaranteed Cash Savings</b>	<b>Guaranteed Total Savings</b>
2001-02	\$(4,972)	\$395
2002-03	\$(4,972)	\$610
2003-04	\$(4,972)	\$833
2004-05	\$(4,972)	\$1,065
2005-06	\$(4,972)	\$1,307
2006-07	\$(4,972)	\$1,558
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$(29,832)</b>	<b>\$5,768</b>

*Source: Honeywell Energy Management Contract, May 28, 1996.*

The guaranteed savings in Honeywell's proposal is significantly less than amounts guaranteed in the energy management contract, which escalate each year. Moreover, by terminating the contract, Honeywell will be avoiding its own costs of servicing the account.

**Recommendation 31:**

**Negotiate up-front buy-out of the Honeywell energy management contract.**

Given the district's financial condition, management could pursue a cash buy-out option instead of agreeing to Honeywell's yearly payment of the net savings. This approach would terminate all responsibilities under the contract and provide better protection for the district. The district could also negotiate terms that reflect the guaranteed savings in the initial contract.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent proposes an alternate buy-out agreement to Honeywell.	November 2001
2.	The superintendent and Honeywell negotiate an agreement to terminate the performance contract.	December 2001
3.	The board approves the agreement to terminate the performance contract.	January 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The district can counter offer with a cash buy-out based on the present value of future guaranteed savings in the Honeywell contract. The present value of guaranteed utility savings for years five through ten based on the energy management contract is \$110,958. This amount should not be offset by the annual service fee since Honeywell will no longer provide services. An up-front buy-out does not create additional savings to the district, but advances the receipt of funds to 2001-02. The district could retire its debt or continue to make debt service payments over the remaining six years.

**FINDING**

The district's facilities are not energy efficient and lead to high energy consumption costs. Compared with its peers, WVISD has the highest utility costs (**Exhibit 4-6**). The elementary school is highly energy inefficient due to its age and physical layout. The halls of the elementary school are not temperature controlled because of the building configuration.

**Exhibit 4-6  
WVISD Utilities  
1998-99 and 1999-2000**

School Districts	1998-99	1999-2000
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>\$84,102</b>	<b>\$85,815</b>
Eden ISD	\$73,472	\$80,223
Bronte ISD	\$72,079	\$76,711
North Zulch	\$74,818	\$69,735
Veribest	\$43,976	\$62,739

*Source: TEA PEIMS data, 1998-99 and 1999-2000.*

*Note: 2000-01 PEIMS budget data does not include detail line item for utilities.*

In its January 1999, "Energy Efficient School Partnership Report," the State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) recommended Water Valley replace electric heating equipment, replace an electric water heater, track and maintain energy costs and consumption in a monthly Energy Tracking Review and establish a districtwide Energy Conservation Policy. The district does not track energy usage or cost data on a square footage basis to evaluate energy efficiency.

The district does not participate the Lone Star Program run by SECO. This program provides loans for energy conservation measures that are paid back through energy savings. If energy savings are not achieved, the state pays the debt service through its guarantee.

If the Honeywell contract agreement is terminated, there would be no risk to the district in pursuing an arrangement with SECO. In January 1999 a SECO energy audit reported that \$10,800 could be saved annually for an \$83,000 investment.

**Recommendation 32:**

**Consider participating in the SECO loan program to reduce energy costs.**

The district could pursue the SECO program to determine whether any cost-effective measures can be implemented. This program provides a risk-free option to school districts to improve energy efficiency.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**



1.	The superintendent contacts vendors interested in the SECO program to make a proposal to the district.	October 2001
2.	The superintendent evaluates the proposals and selects the one with the highest potential cost savings.	November 2001
3.	The superintendent requests approval from the board to issue debt to finance the energy conservation measures.	December 2001
4.	The superintendent tracks and reports energy usage and cost statistics on a square footage basis.	Beginning Each Month in January 2002

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# Chapter 4

## OPERATIONS

### **B. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY**

The 1987 Texas Legislature recognized the importance of technology in education and directed the State Board of Education to develop a 1988-2000 Long-Range Plan for Technology. This plan called for the establishment of a statewide electronic transfer system (now known as TENET), expansion of integrated telecommunications systems (T-STAR) and a center for research in educational technology (TCET).

Subsequent legislation created the Technology Allotment, which now provides approximately \$30 per student per year in state funding for technology.

House Bill 2128 of the 1993 Legislature created the Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund (TIF). This fund derives revenues from the Telecommunications Utilities Account and the Commercial Mobile Service Providers Account to provide \$150 million in grant funds each year for ten years to public education, higher education and telemedicine centers for computer infrastructure, distance learning and training.

Another grant fund that is available to public school districts is the Technology Integration in Education (TIE) grant, which provides funding for teaching and learning, educator preparation, administration and support and technology infrastructure. This state-level focus on technology in education has allowed some of even the smallest school districts to develop state-of-the-art computer networks and computer labs.

Constantly changing technology in school districts has prompted the need to better manage investment in technology that grows increasingly complex. Well-managed administrative technology and information services are essential if school districts are to use and maintain both hardware and software efficiently. Technology management is now a key factor in virtually every school district decision.

WVUSD has an outstanding computer network with current computer equipment at its schools. The district spent approximately \$91,859 on technology operating expenditures in 1999-2000, excluding capital equipment, and expenditures are up from \$50,376 in 1996-97. A majority of the increase is due to the designation of an instructional technology teacher and allocation of salary to technology. The district also has a full-time Technology coordinator who manages the network, handles hardware and software installations and troubleshoots for school staff.

The district uses Region 15's business software and the Resource Service Center Computer Cooperative (RSCCC) to support its business and student information operations. All of the district's personal computers are on a Local Area Network (LAN). Region 15 also provides technical support for hardware and software the district cannot resolve.

## **FINDING**

The district has effectively used Technology Infrastructure Fund (TIF) grants and Technology in Education (TIE) grants, as well as other grant programs such as the Accelerated Reader and E-Rate grant program. The TIF and TIE grants are obtained through Region 15. **Exhibit 4-7** presents a summary of the grants obtained for the 2001-02 school year.

**Exhibit 4-7  
WVUSD Grants for Technology**

<b>Grant</b>	<b>Amount</b>
TIE	\$50,000
TIF	\$50,000
Accelerated Reader 2000	\$15,000
Accelerated Reader 2001	\$28,500
E-Rate	\$8,209
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$151,709</b>

*Source: WVUSD grant applications and award notices.*

The accelerated reader grants are for instructional purposes, but a portion of the funds may be used for instructional technology. As a result of the district's efforts to pursue these funds, much of the technology equipment in the school district is less than three years old.

## **COMMENDATION**

**The district has been effective in obtaining grants to improve technology.**

## **FINDING**

WVUSD does not have a disaster recovery plan for technology, exposing the district to unacceptable risks in the event of a catastrophe.

The district prepares daily tape backups centrally, and these backups are stored in a fireproof vault at the central office. One stand-alone application, Quickbooks is not backed up centrally, but is backed up by the user at the PC. Quickbooks is used to record activity fund transactions and is not on the district's network. With the exception of Quickbooks data back-ups, the daily back-up plan is acceptable. However, in the event the district's hardware were destroyed by fire, tornado or other catastrophic event, there is no alternate site to operate the district's computer systems until the hardware is replaced.

**Exhibit 4-8** lists some of the key elements of an effective disaster recovery plan. WVISD does not need to develop a comprehensive disaster recovery plan, but should draw on these best practices to identify the essential elements of what is needed for a 300-student district. The most important items to be addressed are the reciprocal agreement with a neighboring school district and documentation of action plans in the event of an emergency.

**Exhibit 4-8  
Key Elements of a Disaster Recovery Plan**

<b>Step</b>	<b>Details</b>
Build the disaster recovery team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify a disaster recovery team that includes key policy makers, building management, end-users, key outside contractors and technical staff.</li> </ul>
Obtain and/or approximate key information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an exhaustive list of critical activities performed within the district.</li> <li>• Develop an estimate of the minimum space and equipment necessary for restoring essential operations.</li> <li>• Develop a timeframe for starting initial operations after a security incident.</li> <li>• Develop a list of key personnel and their responsibilities.</li> </ul>
Perform and/or delegate key duties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an inventory of all MIS technology assets, including data, software, hardware, documentation and supplies.</li> <li>• Set up a reciprocal agreement with comparable organizations to share each other's equipment or lease backup equipment to allow the district to operate critical functions in the event of a disaster.</li> <li>• Make plans to procure hardware, software and</li> </ul>

	<p>other equipment as necessary to ensure that critical operations are resumed as soon as possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish procedures for obtaining off-site backup records.</li> <li>• Locate support resources that might be needed, such as equipment repair, trucking and cleaning companies.</li> <li>• Arrange with vendors to provide priority delivery for emergency orders.</li> <li>• Identify data recovery specialists and establish emergency agreements.</li> </ul>
Specify details within the plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify individual roles and responsibilities by name and job title so that everyone knows exactly what needs to be done.</li> <li>• Define actions to be taken in advance of an occurrence or undesirable event.</li> <li>• Define actions at the onset of an undesirable event to limit damage, loss and compromised data integrity.</li> <li>• Identify actions necessary to restore critical functions.</li> <li>• Define actions to re-establish normal operations.</li> </ul>
Test the plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Test the plan frequently and completely.</li> <li>• Analyze the results to improve the plan and identify further needs.</li> </ul>
Deal with damage appropriately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a disaster actually occurs, document all costs and videotape the damage.</li> <li>• Be prepared to overcome downtime on your own; insurance settlements can take time to resolve.</li> </ul>
Give consideration to other significant issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't make a plan unnecessarily complicated.</li> <li>• Make one individual responsible for maintaining the plan, but have it structured so that others are authorized and prepared to implement it if needed.</li> <li>• Update the plan regularly and whenever changes are made to your system.</li> </ul>

*Source: National Center for Education Statistics, "Safeguarding Your Technology." (Modified by TSPR).*

Some school districts execute a reciprocal agreement with a neighboring district or area business to use its equipment for a short period of time until the district's hardware is replaced. Region 15 does not offer this service.

**Recommendation 33:**

**Develop a disaster recovery plan for technology.**

Implementing a disaster recovery plan reduces the risk of losing important data. The amount of data that must be tracked and stored as an integral part of the daily operation of a school district is massive. It would be virtually impossible for a district the size of WVISD to reproduce this data in a timely fashion.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES**

1.	The Technology coordinator develops a disaster recovery plan with assistance from Region 15 and attempts to find a neighboring district to secure a reciprocal agreement.	October 2001
2.	The superintendent and board approve the disaster recovery plan and reciprocal agreement.	November 2001
3.	The Technology coordinator tests the disaster recovery plan, documents recovery procedures and implements the agreement.	December 2001

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

The location of the district's Web server inside its Local Area Network (LAN) exposes the district to the risk of unauthorized access by intruders. WVISD has a Web server that is used to host its Website. Anyone accessing the district Website does so through this server. The server is inside the district's network, allowing for the possibility of intrusion into other district systems.

As part of its technology services package, Region 15 can host a member district's Web server outside the district's network and outside Region 15's network as well. Veribest ISD and Christoval ISD take advantage of this service, which is the most common approach used by the region's smaller districts.

**Recommendation 34:**

**Use Region 15 Web hosting services to locate the district's Web access outside its Local Area Network.**

This arrangement will minimize the risk of unauthorized intrusions into the district's network, operating and applications systems.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The Technology coordinator contacts Region 15 to identify the steps needed to implement the regional Web hosting service.	October 2001
2.	The Technology coordinator submits the plan to the superintendent for approval.	October 2001
3.	The Technology coordinator works with Region 15 to implement the remote Web hosting service.	November 2001
4.	The Technology coordinator identifies an alternate use for the district's Web server.	November 2001

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Region 15 offers this service at no additional charge. Accordingly, this recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

The Technology coordinator does not approve all software purchases, so the coordinator does not know what software programs have been purchased and by whom. Teachers are allowed to purchase instructional or other software for classroom use without the coordinator's approval. This software is not loaded on the network, but may reside on the teacher's computer.

The district does not maintain a list of software licenses, nor does it centrally store the supporting license documentation. While performing service on computers, the Technology coordinator has removed unauthorized software on three occasions during the past two years. District policy, EFE(Local) - Copyrighted Material, states that, "district employees shall not accomplish multiple simultaneous use of a program without permission or unless the purchase agreement allows a specified multiple use of the single copy." However, the policy is silent on the requirement for software licenses or the limitations of software that can be placed on district computers.

The lack of licenses for software creates the risk of fines for unauthorized use. Further, software not approved by the Technology coordinator cannot be supported if problems arise.

**Recommendation 35:**

**Adopt a policy that requires Technology coordinator approval for all software purchases and licenses for all software on district computers.**

Implementing this recommendation will minimize the risk of unlicensed software in the district.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent drafts a policy stating that all software purchases must be approved by the Technology coordinator.	September 2001
2.	The board adopts the software approval policy.	October 2001
3.	The superintendent sends a memo to all district employees informing them of the new policy.	October 2001
4.	The Technology coordinator maintains a list and supporting documentation of licenses for all authorized software used by the district.	October 2001
5.	The Technology Coordinator periodically reviews the district's personal computers to ensure that only authorized software is used.	Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented using existing resources.

**FINDING**

The district maintains its computer inventory on the Regional Service Center Computer Cooperative (RSCCC) system provided through Region 15. This inventory provides basic information on fixed assets, including item number, catalog number, description, vendor name, account code and unit cost. All fixed assets are included on this list, which is generally printed out by room. A separate report showing only computer equipment cannot be generated.

This inventory does not contain information that is relevant to managing district technology such as information relating to the processor, memory,



storage capacity, date of purchase, serial number, warranty period, network connectivity, primary use and software that resides on the system. This information would be useful in maintaining existing equipment, planning future purchases and upgrades and retiring obsolete equipment.

No other complete physical inventories of the computer equipment exist. The district does prepare the partial audit required for the TIF grant program. The district is planning to hire a firm to conduct a physical inventory of fixed assets.

**Recommendation 36:**

**Maintain a separate, detailed inventory of computer equipment and software licenses.**

Maintaining a computer inventory with adequate performance data and maintenance history will help the district manage its investment in technology. This inventory could also be used to track service calls on specific equipment.

The contractor conducting the inventory should leave the district with a machine-readable file, in a spreadsheet or database format, so the district can maintain the inventory using this template in the future. The district should also request that all of the necessary information described above is captured on the physical inventory.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The Technology coordinator develops specifications for taking the physical inventory and sends them to the contractor.	October 2001
2.	The contractor performs the fixed asset inventory and collects the additional information on computer equipment.	November 2001
3.	The Technology coordinator maintains the computer inventory.	November 2001 - Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

The WVISD Technology coordinator does not receive sufficient technical training. All technology coordinators in Region 15 meet once every three months to discuss new developments and issues in technology. Other than

attending these meetings, the WVISD Technology coordinator has not received any formal training.

This position is responsible for a wide range of hardware, network and software support and requires a broad set of technical skills. Training is particularly needed in Windows 2000 and Windows NT.

Region 15 does not offer Windows 2000 or Windows NT training, but officials are considering offering training in these programs in the future.

**Recommendation 37:**

**Require the Technology coordinator to attend 12 hours of formal technical training each year.**

Formal technical training will help ensure that the district's Technology support services are sufficient to meet the district's requirements. The additional training also could include topics not offered by Region 15.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The Technology coordinator identifies local vendor options for Windows 2000 and Windows NT training.	October 2001
2.	The superintendent approves the request for training.	October 2001
3.	The Technology coordinator attends training and shares relevant information with district staff.	November 2001

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The additional training cost assumes that a private company in San Angelo will offer the needed training. Based on estimates from Cal-Tech, a local vendor recommended by Region 15, the cost of three 2-hour training sessions for one person is \$95 per session, for a total of \$285.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
Require Technology coordinator to attend 12 hours of formal technical training each year.	(\$285)	(\$285)	(\$285)	(\$285)	(\$285)

**FINDING**

QuickBooks accounting software is installed on the Business manager's computer and not the network. This software is used for the activity fund record keeping. The data is stored on the local drive of the computer and is not backed up when the Technology coordinator backs up the network daily.

All business data could be on the district's server so data can be backed up each day.

**Recommendation 38:**

**Maintain QuickBooks data on the network.**

Maintaining Quickbooks data on the network will prevent the risk of loss of district financial data. Access to this file can be restricted by a password.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The Technology coordinator moves QuickBooks data to a network drive.	September 2001
2.	The superintendent develops a password for use by the superintendent and the business manager to access the Quickbooks file.	September 2001

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented using existing resources.

# Chapter 4

## OPERATIONS

### C. TRANSPORTATION

The Texas Education Code (TEC) authorizes but does not require each Texas school district to provide transportation for students between home and school, from school to career and technology training locations, for co-curricular activities and for extracurricular activities. The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires a school district to provide transportation for students with disabilities if the district also provides transportation for students in the general population, or if students with disabilities require transportation to receive special education services.

The TEC states that a school district is eligible to receive state funding for transporting regular and special program students between home and school, and career and technology students to and from vocational training locations. The Texas Legislature sets funding rules, and TEA administers the program. Local funds must pay for transportation costs that the state does not cover.

State funding for regular education transportation is limited to transportation for students living two or more miles from the school they attend. For the regular program, TEA reimburses a local district for qualifying transportation expenses according to a prescribed formula. This funding formula is based on linear density, which is the ratio of the average number of regular program students transported daily to the number of miles operated daily for those students. TEA uses this ratio to assign each school district to one of seven groups, with each group receiving a different per-mile reimbursement. TEA evaluates group assignments every year. To assign groups and funding for the next biennium, TEA calculates linear density using operations data from the first school year of the previous biennium. In 1999-2000, WVUSD was in the lowest linear density group, which entitled the district to a reimbursement of \$0.68 per mile for regular education route miles. The district's actual cost was \$1.19 per mile in 1999-2000.

All transportation to and from school for special programs, except certain field trips, is eligible for state reimbursement. The Texas Legislature set a maximum rate of \$1.08 a mile for reimbursement for special program transportation. This reimbursement rate is higher than WVUSD's actual cost of \$.89 a mile for special program transportation in 1999-2000.

Co-curricular trips take students to activities that are considered part of the student's required curriculum and usually take place during school hours. Extracurricular transportation takes students to events during and after school and on weekends. Extracurricular transportation consists largely of transportation to and from athletic events and Interscholastic League competition. No state funding is provided for extracurricular transportation.

Each school district is responsible for the capital cost of purchasing school buses. Districts may purchase school buses through the Texas General Services Commission under a state contract. Districts also may choose a lease-purchase method to obtain buses.

The WVISD Transportation Department transported an average of 199 students a day between school and home on regular routes and six students a day on special education routes in 1999-2000. WVISD owns a fleet of 11 buses, nine of which are used. Five buses are used on routes; one is used as a spare; three are used for out-of-town trips and two are used for spare parts only. In 1999-2000, WVISD operated a total of 93,449 miles of regular transportation and 33,120 miles of special education transportation.

The TEA School Transportation Operations Reports for 1996-97 through 1999-2000 provide a five-year history of the transportation service's cost and mileage. These reports are intended to track all costs and mileage related to transportation, including services not funded by the state. **Exhibit 4-9** presents transportation operations costs from 1996-97 through 1999-2000.

**Exhibit 4-9**  
**WVISD Regular and Special Program Transportation Operation**  
**Costs**  
**1995-96 through 1999-2000\***

Item	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	Percent Change
<b>Total Operating Costs</b>						
Regular Program	\$56,522	\$73,569	\$123,220	\$98,456	\$111,295	96.9%
Special Program	\$23,807	\$29,763	\$54	\$21,532	\$29,542	24.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$80,329</b>	<b>\$103,332</b>	<b>\$123,274</b>	<b>\$119,988</b>	<b>\$140,837</b>	<b>75.3%</b>
<b>Annual Miles</b>						

Regular Program	76,016	75,811	87,612	93,493	93,449	22.9%
Special Program	46,018	49,765	0	22,854	33,120	(28.0%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>122,034</b>	<b>125,576</b>	<b>87,612</b>	<b>116,347</b>	<b>126,569</b>	<b>3.7%</b>

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operation Reports, 1995-96 through 1999-2000.

\*These are operating costs excluding debt service and capital outlay.

As the above chart shows, total costs increased by 75.3 percent between the 1995-96 and 1999-2000 school years and total miles increased by 3.7 percent. For the regular program, costs increased by 96.9 percent, and miles increased by 22.9 percent. For the special program, costs increased by 24.1 percent and miles decreased by 28 percent. The decrease in mileage for special programs is due to some students attending school at Carlsbad State School.

The Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) reports that WVUSD has 17.3 percent special needs children compared to 12.1 percent statewide.

**Exhibit 4-10** presents the actual transportation costs by expenditure type for 1999-2000. The budget for 2000-01 charged to transportation a total of \$98,399, but this figure does not include all expenditures. Some transportation costs for extracurricular and other student activities is charged to a different function code.

**Exhibit 4-10**  
**WVUSD Budgeted Transportation Costs by Type of Expenditure**  
**1999-2000**

Object	Total Budgeted Expenditure
Salaries and Benefits	\$96,114
Purchased and Contracted Services	\$15,290
Supplies and Materials	\$21,200
Other Operating Expenses	\$8,233
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$140,837</b>
Debt Service	\$10,000

Capital Outlay	\$385
<b>Total Operating and Capital Costs</b>	<b>\$151,222</b>

Source: TEA, *School Transportation Operation Reports, 1999-2000*.

## FINDING

WVISED uses cameras to monitor student discipline. All buses have a camera casing, and two actual cameras are rotated through the fleet as needed. The superintendent said the cameras are a worthwhile investment because they help reduce discipline problems on the bus. He said discipline on the bus is not a problem and credits the cameras.

## COMMENDATION

**WVISED uses cameras to monitor and control student discipline on the bus.**

## FINDING

Water Valley ISD has an aging fleet that is expensive to maintain. Of its eleven buses, five are more than 10 years old, and three are more than 15 years old. The WVISED Transportation supervisor told TSPR that two of the 11 buses are inoperable. The active fleet is therefore nine buses. In addition to the buses, the district also owns a 12-passenger Chevrolet van.

**Exhibit 4-11** provides the details of the district's fleet of buses. The average age of WVISED's buses is 11.3 years.

### **Exhibit 4-11 WVISED School Bus Fleet Inventory 1999-2000**

<b>Bus Number</b>	<b>Number of Passengers</b>	<b>Model and Year</b>	<b>Age of Vehicle</b>	<b>Reported Odometer Mileage</b>
1	65	Blue Bird 1992	9 years	59,264
2	19	GMC 1991	10 years	121,499
3	65	International 1986	15 years	122,402
4	71	Blue Bird 1994	7 years	72,511
5	71	Blue Bird 1996	5 years	46,340
6	72	Blue Bird 1990	11 years	86,123

7	32	Carpenter 1997	4 years	25,216
8	71	Ford 1982	19 years	55,731
9	71	GMC 1984	17 years	61,019
10	16	GMC 1984	17 years	70,216
11	72	Blue Bird 1991	10 years	113,895

*Source: Transportation manager, WVISD.*

The district does not have a vehicle replacement plan in place. The industry accepted life of a school bus is 200,000 miles of service. If a school district operates each school bus on average 20,000 miles per year, the typical service life is 10 years. Outside of age and mileage, other factors and the cost of maintenance should also be considered in establishing a district policy on replacement of buses. Not all buses operate the same number of miles each year. Some types of service (routes with many stops and many daily student riders) may cause more wear and tear on a bus. WVISD does not have a formal preventive maintenance program, so buses cannot be expected to provide a longer service life. The cost of maintenance per vehicle should also be monitored to determine when a vehicle should be replaced to save operating costs.

In 1999-2000, the nine active school buses in the WVISD fleet averaged almost 14,100 miles per bus. During the same time, WVISD operated a total of 126,569 odometer miles. Assuming a service life of 200,000 miles and a good maintenance program, the average bus should be in service 15 years.

**Recommendation 39:**

**Sell surplus buses and adopt a bus procurement plan to replace buses every 15 years or 200,000 miles.**

Based on its current needs, WVISD should have a fleet of no more than eight buses. All surplus buses should be sold. Any bus that is not available for service should not be listed on the WVISD school bus inventory. Other school districts in Tom Green County have a spare bus ratio of 30 to 40 percent. WVISD requires five buses for routes between home and school. Three other buses will provide one bus for a spare and will allow two buses for out-of-town field trips.

The superintendent should develop a schedule that replaces buses on a 15-year cycle. A 15-year replacement plan for eight buses can be accomplished by purchasing one bus per year, skipping every third year.



The plan should be adopted by the board and funds committed to support the schedule. While buses represent a large capital investment for small districts, there are many benefits to replacement plans. Replacement plans introduce new buses into the fleet on a regular basis. The buses with the highest cost of maintenance can be replaced. Regular purchase of buses can prevent the purchase of multiple buses in any one year, spreading out capital costs.

The vehicle replacement plan should be implemented immediately to sell the three oldest buses (1982 and two 1984) and replace the remaining 1984 model bus. If funds are not available for a new bus, WVISD should investigate purchasing a used school bus. There are markets for used school buses; WVISD may find opportunities to purchase used buses with less than 200,000 mile of service and additional years of vehicle life.

### **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent and Transportation supervisor develop a bus replacement plan to be approved by the board.	October 2001
2.	The board approves the bus replacement plan and commits funds to implement it.	November 2001

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The cost of purchasing used buses (\$3,000 per purchase) is expected to be partially offset by savings from reduced maintenance materials and supplies. In 2001-02, there will be some revenue (\$1,000) from selling the three oldest buses.

Beginning in 2002-03, WVISD will purchase two buses over each three-year period. Given WVISD's current financial condition, this fiscal impact assumes that WVISD will buy used buses that are newer and in better condition for \$3,000. Industry experts indicated that good used buses can be purchased for approximately \$2,000; however, to be conservative \$3,000 was used.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
Sell surplus buses.	\$1,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Adopt a bus procurement plan to replace buses every 15 years or 200,000 miles.	\$0	(\$3,000)	(\$3,000)	\$0	(\$3,000)
Net (Costs)/Savings	\$1,000	(\$3,000)	(\$3,000)	\$0	(\$3,000)

## **FINDING**

WVUSD provides a minimum level of driver training. The district trains drivers to get their commercial drivers license (CDL) and sends drivers to a state-required 20-hour training course provided by the Region 15 Educational Service Center (RESC). The certification course includes instruction in each of the ten units comprising the Course Guide for School Bus Driver Training in Texas developed by Southwest Texas Quality Institute (SWTQI). The Texas Administrative Code recommends the following hourly allocations for each unit:

- Introduction-- 1 hour
- Student Management--2.0 hours
- Know Your Bus--2.0 hours
- Traffic Regulations--1.5 hours
- Responsible Driving--4.0 hours
- Emergency Evacuation--2.0 hours
- First Aid--1.5 hours
- Procedures for Loading and Unloading Students--2.5 hours
- Special Needs Transportation--1.5 hours
- Awareness of the Effects of Alcohol and Other Drugs--1.5 hours
- Summary and Written Test--1.0 hours

This level of driver training is similar to other small districts in Tom Green County. Providing additional training or annual retraining in small districts is difficult due to limited resources. Grape Creek ISD recently contracted with a Transportation employee of San Angelo ISD to provide four hours of driver safety training.

In the transit industry, training is one of the simplest ways to coordinate agency resources. The Gulf Coordinating Council in Galveston and Brazoria counties developed a safety committee dedicated to promoting safety regulations for operating passenger and cargo vehicles in the community. The committee developed driver safety standards and works to coordinate training efforts among agencies to maximize their resources. Examples of coordinated training provided include computer training for member agency administrative staff; passenger assistance (PASS) training and driver safety training drivers of member agencies, and transit bus emergency evacuation training for drivers, operators and supervisors of member agencies.

### **Recommendation 40:**

**Coordinate with other districts in Tom Green County to expand driver training.**

The small districts within Tom Green County would have a difficult time expanding driver training or providing annual retraining. However, coordination can offer additional training opportunities.

The superintendents of the districts of Tom Green County, including San Angelo ISD, could meet to discuss options for coordinating driver training and retraining. The districts could work together to identify safety standards for drivers and use the standards to develop an appropriate expanded training curriculum. A sponsor district could offer the expanded training classes once or twice a year, and the other districts could pay for their drivers to attend the classes.

San Angelo ISD would be the most likely candidate to provide the training and may be amenable to the idea because the district has already provided some training to Grape Creek ISD drivers by contract, and it has a training staff.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent and the Transportation supervisor meet with other Tom Green County school districts to identify consolidated training and retraining opportunities for bus drivers.	November 2001
2.	Bus drivers attend eight hours of required training or retraining each year.	Ongoing beginning January 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This fiscal impact assumes that training will cost the same as the eight-hour training course provided to Grape Creek ISD by the employee of San Angelo ISD, which was \$15 per hour for a total of \$120.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
Coordinate with other districts in Tom Green County to expand driver training.	(\$120)	(\$120)	(\$120)	(\$120)	(\$120)

# Chapter 4

## OPERATIONS

### **D. FOOD SERVICES**

Inefficient food service management and cost control can harm student performance by reducing funds available for the classroom. Moreover, inadequate nutrition can reduce students' concentration and academic achievement. A well-managed food service department is critical to the health and academic success of all students.

The mission of a school food service program is to provide an appealing and nutritionally sound breakfast and lunch to students and to operate on a cost-recovery basis. Several success factors can be used to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of a school food service operation. These include a high ratio of meals per labor hour (MPLH), minimum food cost and waste, maximum participation in breakfast and lunch programs, high nutritional value and a variety of meals, minimal wait times for student service and financial self-sufficiency.

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

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

The U.S. Congress enacted the National School Lunch Program in 1946 to safeguard the health and well being of the nation's school children and to encourage the domestic consumption of agricultural products. The food service program is funded through a combination of federal subsidies for students from low-income families and the personal contribution of students who are able to pay. The federal government also provides

schools with surplus food products through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The Food Services Department consists of the Food Service manager and three full-time food service workers. The district formerly had five full-time staff members but eliminated one position for the 2000-01 school year. The Food Services manager reports directly to the superintendent. Given the size of the district, WVISD Food Services employees cook, heat, chill and serve pre-prepared and made-from-scratch foods. These employees also perform stocking, dishwashing, cashiering and kitchen clean-up at various times during the day.

**Exhibit 4-12** summarizes the daily staffing patterns for the Food Services Department

**Exhibit 4-12**  
**WVISD Food Service Department**  
**Staffing Patterns**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Hours Worked per Day</b>
Food Service Manager	8.0
Food Service Worker	8.0
Food Service Worker	8.0
Food Service Worker	8.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>32.0</b>

*Source: WVISD Food Service Department.*

The district participates in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs. The student body at WVISD is 38.7 percent economically disadvantaged. These students qualify for either free or reduced-price breakfast and lunch. Of the 38.7 percent of students who are eligible for free and reduced-price lunches, 77.6 percent qualify for free lunches with the remaining 22.4 percent qualifying for the reduced-price lunches.

The federal government reimburses the district based on the degree of student participation in the program. **Exhibit 4-13** compares the reimbursement rates that WVISD has received for the breakfast program since 1998-99.

**Exhibit 4-13**  
**Federal Reimbursement Rates**

**Free and Reduced-Price Breakfast  
1998-99 through 2000-01**

<b>Program</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-01</b>
Regular Price	\$0.2000	\$0.210	\$0.21
Reduced-Price	\$0.7725	\$0.790	\$0.82
Free	\$1.0725	\$1.09	\$1.12

*Source: Mealtimes Operation Report, 1998-99 through 2000-01.*

**Exhibit 4-14** compares the reimbursement rates from 1998-99 through 2000-01 for the lunch program.

**Exhibit 4-14  
Federal Reimbursement Rates  
Free and Reduced-Price Lunch  
1998-99 through 2000-01**

<b>Program</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-01</b>
Regular Price	\$0.1800	\$0.19	\$0.19
Reduced-Price	\$1.5425	\$1.58	\$1.62
Free	\$1.9425	\$1.98	\$2.02

*Source: Mealtimes Operation Report, 1998-99 through 2000-01.*

When comparing WVISD to its peer districts in terms of the total percentage of students who qualify for the free and reduced-price programs, the district falls in the middle of the group. **Exhibit 4-15** illustrates the economically disadvantaged population for each peer district from 1996-97 through 2000-01. In 2000-01, 38.7 percent of WVISD's student population was classified as economically disadvantaged. This compares to a state average of 49.2. In addition to the decreased enrollment in WVISD, the percentage of students eligible to receive free and reduced-price meals has decreased between 1999-2000 and 2000-01 by 14 percent.

**Exhibit 4-15  
Economically Disadvantaged Student Population  
WVISD Compared to Peer Districts  
1996-97 through 2000-01**

<b>District</b>	<b>1996-97</b>	<b>1997-98</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-01</b>
Bronte	32.4%	56.3%	47.3%	64.5%	60.1%
Eden CISD	51.2%	55.3%	56.8%	55.2%	55.1%
<b>Water Valley</b>	<b>39.8%</b>	<b>43.8%</b>	<b>42.9%</b>	<b>45.0%</b>	<b>38.7%</b>
North Zulch	41.7%	36.8%	48.0%	43.5%	37.2%
Veribest	40.9%	41.4%	45.2%	40.7%	30.5%

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

## **FINDING**

The district has made an effort to cut staff as a means of controlling costs in the Food Services Department. One position was eliminated at the beginning of the 2000-01 school year.

The number of meal equivalents served per day is calculated using a standard industry methodology. Each lunch served equals one meal equivalent. According to the standard, two breakfasts equal one meal equivalent. The average daily meal equivalents served by the WVISD Food Service Department is 240 as shown in **Exhibit 4-16**.

### **Exhibit 4-16 Average Meal Equivalents 2000 - 2001**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Meals Served</b>	<b>Daily Meal Equivalents</b>
Breakfast	58	29
Lunch	211	211
<b>Total Daily Meals</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>240</b>

*Source: WVISD Mealtime Operations Summary Reports and Meal Participation Report.*

**Exhibit 4-17** summarizes the guidelines used by TSPR to evaluate the staffing levels at WVISD.

### **Exhibit 4-17 Recommended Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH)**

<b>Number of Meal Equivalents</b>	<b>Meals Per Labor Hour</b>
Up to 100	8/10
101-150	9/11
<b>151-250</b>	<b>10-11/12</b>
251-300	13/15
301-400	14/16
401-500	14/17
501-600	15/17
601-700	16/18
701-800	17/19
801-900	18/20
>901	19/21

*Source: Managing Child Nutrition Programs: Leadership for Excellence by Josephine Martin and Martha T. Conklin.*

The district's current level of staffing, 32 hours per day, translates to 7.5 meals per labor hour which is below the recommended efficiency level. The district anticipates that an additional food services full-time position will be eliminated when another employee retires. This change will bring the number of staffing hours down to 24 per day, which translates to 10 meals per labor hour.

#### **COMMENDATION**

**WVUSD is effectively managing its food service staffing levels by not planning to refill the position left open by retirement.**

#### **FINDING**

The cafeteria at WVUSD is located in the elementary school. It serves both the elementary and high school campuses. The cafeteria staff has set aside a small area of the cafeteria that they call "Wildcat Corner" that is reserved for the senior class. This area consists of a small group of tables set apart in one corner of the cafeteria that provides the seniors with their own special place. One of the many challenges a school cafeteria faces is retaining participation as the students get older. The Wildcat Corner



provides the seniors a place of honor where they can socialize with their classmates and still eat in the cafeteria.

#### **COMMENDATION**

**The "Wildcat Corner" encourages high school seniors to eat in the cafeteria.**

#### **FINDING**

The district has taken innovative steps to encourage participation in its breakfast program. Each morning, the superintendent delivers grab-and-go breakfasts consisting of breakfast burritos to the high school. The review team was told that this is an extremely popular program that sells out each morning. It gives the students an opportunity to develop a closer relationship with the superintendent. This is an effective program that encourages student interaction with district administration, which is one advantage of small districts.

#### **COMMENDATION**

**The district operates a breakfast burrito program at the high school to increase Food Services revenues.**

#### **FINDING**

WVUSD has implemented a point-of-sale ("POS") system. The system, which uses the Comalex Café Terminal Software, is on the state-approved bid list. This software provides the following benefits:

- Convenient pre-payment options;
- Maintains confidentiality for free and reduced-price students;
- Provides a clear audit trail;
- Reduces processing time to less than 2 seconds to sell a meal;
- Reduces labor hours with automated reports; and
- Reduces possibility for double counting.

POS software increases student participation. With the inherent confidentiality of the system, students who are eligible for the free and reduced-price program are not differentiated from the other students. Students, regardless of what program they participate in have their own code that they enter into a keypad. Increased participation translates into increased federal reimbursement, which translates into additional cash flow.

The Café Terminal software is designed to automate sales activity, meal and eligibility counts and state claim form preparation. It processes cafeteria sales quickly, tracks all meals and items sold and generates a variety of reports. It is a Windows-based software application that can meet the district's needs at a reasonable cost.

WVUSD has reported significant improvements in its cash maintenance. The system has eliminated missing money. The tracking system also has eliminated the practice of students not paying the proper amount because it holds student specific data.

The system has significantly streamlined the district's reporting requirements. The system generates the reports needed to document participation rates to the federal government for the federal reimbursement program. The Business manager is provided a daily printout to review that takes no additional time to produce. The Food Services manager told the review team that the system's reporting feature has eliminated approximately two labor hours a day. The district has been able to increase its efficiency levels and will be able to reduce its staff by one additional person.

**COMMENDATION**

**WVUSD has purchased a POS that has reduced its daily labor hours and streamlined its federal reimbursement reporting.**

**FINDING**

During interviews, the review team was told many times that the quality of the food in the cafeteria is less than optimal. **Exhibit 4-18** presents the results from teachers' survey on the food quality at WVUSD. Of the teachers surveyed, 52.9 percent expressed their dissatisfaction with the way the food was presented and how it tastes. Less than half of the teachers agreed that the food was served warm.

**Exhibit 4-18  
WVUSD Teacher Survey Results**

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
63.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	0.0%	35.3%	11.8%	35.3%	17.6%
64.	Food is served warm.	0.0%	47.1%	29.4%	17.6%	5.9%

*Source: TSPR Teacher Survey, March 2001.*

In discussions with the Food Services manager, the review team was told that the department prepared meals from scratch regularly. Somehow, this is not being properly communicated to staff and students.

**Recommendation 41:**

**Revise written menus to identify meals made from scratch.**

The Food Services Department prepares monthly menus for distribution to staff and students. If the department would advertise those meals that are prepared from scratch, the misconception currently held that all meals are prepackaged frozen food could be revised. For example, on the days when lasagna is being prepared, the menu should read "Homemade Lasagna" instead of simply "Lasagna." Once the number of items identified as homemade increases, the current dissatisfaction with food preparation may improve.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The Food Services manager lists all entrees that are made from scratch on the menu for the coming month.	October 2001
2.	The Food Services manager tracks the percentage of meals made from prepared foodstuffs compared to the number of meals made from scratch.	November 2001 and Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

The district has a number of vending machines operating right outside the cafeteria during the serving times. The sale of non-cafeteria items not only directly competes with Food Services Department's efforts to provide nutritious meals to students, but it is a direct violation of the federal law governing the National School Lunch Program. Under that law, the sale of candy and other foods of minimal nutritional value are prohibited in food service areas during lunch periods.

The Better Nutrition for School Children Act of 2001, introduced in the Senate in April 2001, expands the prohibition against selling soft drinks and other foods with minimum nutritional value in schools participating in the National School Lunch Program anywhere on school property during

lunch or breakfast. The Agricultural Secretary has been requested to examine whether sales or donations of soda on school property should be banned or restricted on school property at other times during the day as well.

**Recommendation 42:**

**Disable the vending machines located outside the cafeteria during serving hours.**

The vending machines should be turned off when the cafeteria is serving food and 30 minutes before and after the breakfast and lunch periods. The district cannot afford to be found in violation of the National School Lunch Program. The district should assign a staff member to ensure the vending machines have been disabled every day.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent assigns the responsibility for overseeing the vending machines to a staff member. The responsibility can be rotated among staff members each month.	September 2001
2.	The principal turns off the vending machines 30 minutes before the first serving period each day.	September 2001 and Ongoing
3.	The principal turns the vending machines on 30 minutes following the last serving of the day.	September 2001 and Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

The WVISD Food Services Department has been operating at a deficit for many years. **Exhibit 4-19** summarizes the Food Services special revenue funds as reported in the 1997-98 through 1999-2000 audited financial statements.

**Exhibit 4-19  
Audited Financial Statements  
Food Services Special Fund  
1997-98 through 1999-2000**

School Year	Total Revenue	Total Expenditures	Fund Balance
-------------	---------------	--------------------	--------------

1997-98	\$107,711	\$211,918	(\$104,207)
1998-99	\$104,427	\$178,354	(\$73,927)
1999-2000	\$105,684	\$185,194	(\$79,510)

Source: WVISD Audited Financial Statements 1997-98 through 1999-2000.

The district has budgeted the Food Services Department to operate at a \$53,880 deficit during the 2000-01 school year. It is virtually impossible to operate a department at a profit when food and payroll costs exceed the total revenue from all sources. **Exhibit 4-20** presents the budgeted expenses by category and the percentage of total revenue and expenditures.

**Exhibit 4-20**  
**Budgeted Food Services Revenue and Expenditures**  
**2000-2001**

<b>Revenues</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Local Revenue	\$30,000	33.6%
State Matching	\$4,400	4.9%
Federal Revenue	\$55,000	61.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$89,400</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Payroll Related Expenditures	\$62,500	43.6%
Food Supplies	\$75,000	52.3%
Non-food Supplies	\$5,500	3.8%
General Supplies	\$200	0.1%
Miscellaneous Fees	\$80	0.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$143,280</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Difference</b>	<b>(\$53,880)</b>	

Source: WVISD 2000-2001 Budget.

During interviews with the San Angelo ISD director of Food Services, it came to light that San Angelo is paying a substantially lower unit price than the smaller districts in Tom Green County. For example San Angelo ISD can purchase green beans at 30 cents, while the smaller districts are paying 37 cents. This represents a 23.3 percent difference.

**Recommendation 43:**

**Enter into a countywide food-purchasing cooperative.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The Food Services managers of all Tom Green County school districts meet to discuss forming a purchasing cooperative.	October 2001
2.	A committee is formed to set goals and objectives of the cooperative.	November 2001
3.	The committee develops recommendations.	January 2002
4.	District superintendents present the committee's recommendations to their respective boards.	January 2002
5.	The boards approve the formation of the cooperative	January 2002
6.	The county enters into an interlocal food purchase agreement	February 2002
7.	The county enters into an interlocal food purchase agreement	February 2002
8.	The committee publishes for food bids.	March 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

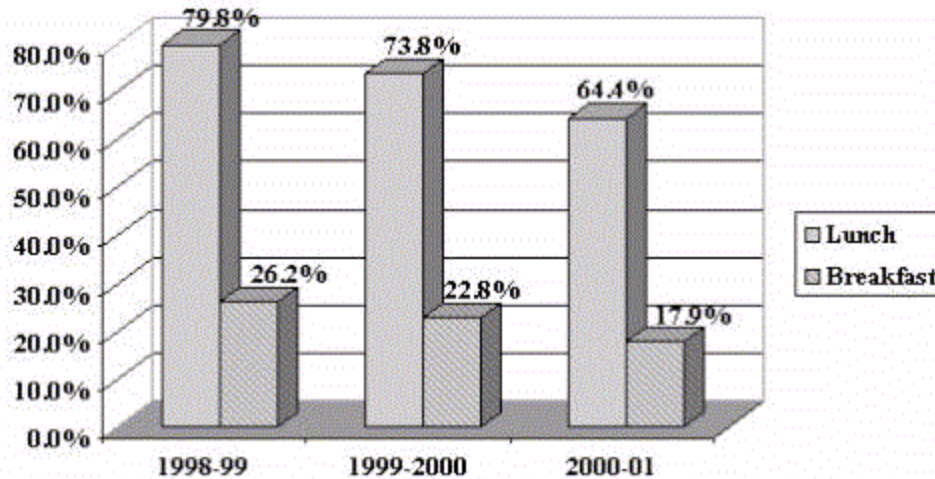
If the district can realize a net savings of at least 15 percent of its total food costs, it would realize a savings of \$11,250, based on the 2000-01 budget food supplies expenditure of \$75,000 shown in **Exhibit 4-20**.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
Enter into countywide food purchasing cooperative.	\$11,250	\$11,250	\$11,250	\$11,250	\$11,250

**FINDING**

The student participation rate in the meals provided by the district has been steadily decreasing over the last three years. **Exhibit 4-21** compares the breakfast and lunch participation rates during this period.

**Exhibit 4-21**  
**Average Lunch Participation Trend Analysis**  
**1998-99 through 2000-01**



*Source: WVISD Mealtime Meal Participation Report.*

Breakfast participation rates are always significantly lower than the lunch rates. However, a 30 to 35 percent participation rate should be easily attained. The district must address the negative trend in participation rates at WVISD.

There are a number of innovative programs that the district could select that would encourage greater participation. San Angelo ISD has an extremely successful Food Services program that continually operates at a profit and is not a financial drain on the district. One particular program that San Angelo ISD has implemented would work well at WVISD.

- **Two lunch entrees per day:** San Angelo ISD provides a choice of two lunch entrees each school day at every campus. The district would optimize its use of commodities by using similar ingredients in the same amounts each day but preparing them differently. For example, the menu choices one day might include tacos and sloppy joes. Both recipes use ground beef and are similar to prepare. The incremental food costs of providing this choice has been less than 2 percent in San Angelo and participation rates have increased by 5 percentage points since the program was introduced. In order to raise the participation level at WVISD, the cafeteria must provide its students with good quality food and some level of food choice.

**Recommendation 44:**

**Encourage increased meal participation in district cafeterias.**

One way to accomplish this is by incorporating the choice of two daily lunch entrees into the menu offered to WVISD students. Another might be the expansion of the grab-and-go breakfasts to the elementary level.

Unless the district raises its participation rates, it will continue to operate at a deficit and require general funds to cover its shortfall. These general funds simply are not available. If the current deficit continues, the district will completely deplete its fund balance by the middle of the 2001-02 school year.

To determine the best strategies for increasing participation, the district might consider organizing a committee of students and staff to research various approaches, menus and serving options that might encourage participation. It should not be difficult for the district to strive for raising its participation in the breakfast and lunch programs.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The Food Services manager meets with the superintendent, principal and teachers to develop strategies to increase overall meal participation.	September 2001
2.	The Food Services manager develops a four-week menu cycle to include two lunch entrée choices each day using the San Angelo Food Services department as a model.	October 2001
3.	The Food Services manager expands the district's grab-and-go breakfast burrito program to also be offered at the elementary school.	October 2001
4.	The principal distributes notices to parents and students regarding the new meal program options.	October 2001
5.	The principal announces the new breakfast program options to all students and encourages participation.	October 2001

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Today the district is serving an average of 240 meal equivalents, 29 breakfasts and 211 lunches. Increasing the breakfast and lunch program participation to 60 breakfasts and 250 lunches would result in 31 additional breakfasts and 39 additional lunches each day.



The district has adequate staff to meet the increased number of meal equivalents. The only additional cost to the district will be the incremental food costs.

Each breakfast is estimated to result in an additional \$1 in revenues based on a rough average of elementary and high school full-priced meal rates and federal reimbursement rates. Lunches are estimated at \$1.50 using the same process.

31 breakfasts x \$1 x 180 days =	\$ 5,580
39 lunches x \$1.50 x 180 days =	<u>\$10,530</u>
	\$16,110
Less 52.3 percent for food costs =	<u>\$ (8,426)</u>
	\$ 7,684

First year increases are reduced by one half to allow for full implementation.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
Encourage increased meal participation in district cafeterias.	\$3,842	\$7,684	\$7,684	\$7,684	\$7,684

# Appendix A

## PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

### *Demographic Data*

Number of respondents: 55

1.	<b>Gender (Optional)</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>				
		11.3%	32.1%	56.6%				
2.	<b>Ethnicity (Optional)</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Anglo</b>	<b>African-American</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Other</b>	
		22.6%	67.9%	0.0%	5.7%	0.0%	3.8%	
3.	<b>How long have you lived in Water Valley ISD?</b>		<b>No Response</b>	<b>0-5 Years</b>	<b>6-10 Years</b>	<b>11 Years or More</b>		
			5.7%	30.2%	26.4%	37.7%		
4.	<b>What grade level(s) does your child(ren) attend?</b>	<b>PK</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
		0.0%	9.4%	13.2%	7.5%	9.4%	1.9%	9.4%
		<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
		7.5%	11.3%	13.2%	11.3%	13.2%	17.0%	17.0%

### **A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION & MANAGEMENT**

<b>Survey Questions</b>		<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	9.4%	43.4%	28.3%	13.2%	5.7%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	7.5%	34.0%	34.0%	18.9%	5.7%
3.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	18.9%	30.2%	24.5%	15.1%	11.3%
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective	8.9%	30.2%	30.2%	15.1%	5.7%

business manager.					
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## B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5. The district provides a high quality of services.	13.2%	39.6%	20.8%	24.5%	1.9%
6. Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	3.8%	45.3%	32.1%	17.0%	1.9%
7. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	11.3%	35.8%	24.5%	20.8%	7.5%
8. The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	11.3%	28.3%	34.0%	20.8%	5.7%
9. The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
a) Reading	26.4%	58.5%	5.7%	9.4%	0.0%
b) Writing	22.6%	62.3%	9.4%	5.7%	0.0%
c) Mathematics	22.6%	56.6%	9.4%	11.3%	0.0%
d) Science	20.8%	58.5%	9.4%	9.4%	1.9%
e) English or Language Arts	18.9%	58.5%	11.3%	11.3%	0.0%
f) Computer Instruction	18.9%	52.8%	11.3%	17.0%	0.0%
g) Social Studies (history or geography)	17.0%	64.2%	13.2%	5.7%	0.0%
h) Fine Arts	13.2%	32.1%	15.1%	26.4%	13.2%
i) Physical Education	18.9%	45.3%	15.1%	15.1%	5.7%
j) Business Education	7.5%	41.5%	28.3%	20.8%	1.9%
k) Vocational (Career and Technology)	7.5%	26.4%	35.8%	24.5%	5.7%

	Education					
	l) Foreign Language	5.7%	34.0%	26.4%	20.8%	13.2%
10.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a) Library Service	13.2%	35.8%	13.2%	34.0%	3.8%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	18.9%	43.4%	18.9%	13.2%	5.7%
	c) Special Education	11.3%	43.4%	30.2%	11.3%	3.8%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	3.8%	11.3%	49.1%	22.6%	13.2%
	e) Dyslexia program	0.0%	9.4%	58.5%	22.6%	9.4%
	f) Student mentoring program	9.4%	28.3%	35.8%	17.0%	9.4%
	g) Advanced placement program	22.6%	34.0%	22.6%	13.2%	7.5%
	h) Literacy program	13.2%	9.4%	54.7%	15.1%	7.5%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	3.8%	18.9%	43.4%	20.8%	11.3%
	j) Summer school programs	7.5%	18.9%	45.3%	18.9%	9.4%
	k) Alternative education programs	3.8%	26.4%	43.4%	20.8%	5.7%
	l) "English as a Second Language" program	1.9%	5.7%	62.3%	20.8%	9.4%
	m) Career counseling program	11.3%	26.4%	41.5%	17.0%	3.8%
	n) College counseling program	11.3%	32.1%	34.0%	18.9%	3.8%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	7.5%	22.6%	43.4%	18.9%	7.5%
	p) Drop out prevention program	1.9%	13.2%	52.8%	20.8%	11.3%
11.	Parents are immediately	15.1%	20.8%	26.4%	22.6%	15.1%

	notified if a child is absent from school.					
12.	Teacher turnover is low.	17.0%	49.1%	18.9%	5.7%	9.4%
13.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	11.3%	47.2%	18.9%	18.9%	3.8%
14.	A substitute teacher rarely teaches my child.	13.2%	24.5%	20.8%	28.3%	13.2%
15.	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	17.0%	52.8%	20.8%	7.5%	1.9%
16.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	11.3%	37.3%	22.6%	18.9%	9.4%
17.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	45.3%	49.1%	0.0%	3.8%	1.9%
18.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	17.0%	26.4%	28.3%	20.8%	7.5%
19.	The district provides a high quality education.	20.8%	37.7%	17.0%	18.9%	5.7%
20.	The district has a high quality of teachers.	20.8%	39.6%	17.0%	20.8%	1.9%

### C. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
21.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	15.1%	35.8%	13.2%	26.4%	9.4%
22.	District facilities are open for community use.	13.2%	37.7%	32.1%	15.1%	1.9%
23.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help	9.4%	22.6%	30.2%	30.2%	7.5%

	student and school programs.					
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#### **D. Facilities Use and Management**

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
24.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	1.9%	28.3%	35.9%	26.4%	7.5%
25.	Schools are clean.	17.0%	62.3%	13.2%	7.5%	0.0%
26.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	13.2%	50.9%	17.0%	17.0%	1.9%
27.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	11.3%	43.4%	24.5%	18.9%	1.9%
28.	The district uses very few portable buildings.	17.0%	66.0%	11.3%	5.7%	0.0%
29.	Emergency maintenance is handled expeditiously.	11.3%	41.5%	43.4%	1.9%	1.9%

#### **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.	7.5%	54.7%	13.2%	22.6%	1.9%
31.	Board members and administrators do a good job explaining the use of tax dollars.	7.5%	20.8%	34.0%	24.5%	13.2%

#### **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.	1.9%	17.0%	50.9%	26.4%	3.8%
33.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	5.7%	17.0%	56.6%	15.1%	5.7%
34.	The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	1.9%	24.5%	45.3%	15.1%	13.2%
35.	Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	3.8%	37.7%	30.2%	15.1%	13.2%

#### G. PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
36.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	20.8%	66.0%	7.5%	5.7%	0.0%
37.	Textbooks are in good shape.	17.0%	66.0%	7.5%	9.4%	0.0%
38.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	15.1%	34.0%	9.4%	30.2%	11.3%

#### H. FOOD SERVICES

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
39.	My child regularly purchases his/her meal from the	24.5%	54.7%	5.7%	15.1%	0.0%

	cafeteria.					
40.	The school breakfast program is available to all children.	22.6%	56.6%	17.0%	3.8%	0.0%
41.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	11.3%	17.0%	17.0%	30.2%	24.5%
42.	Food is served warm.	17.0%	20.8%	26.4%	20.8%	15.1%
43.	Students have enough time to eat.	13.2%	22.6%	26.4%	28.3%	9.4%
44.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of the day.	13.2%	56.6%	22.6%	7.5%	0.0%
45.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	18.9%	30.2%	35.8%	15.1%	0.0%
46.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	18.9%	49.1%	17.0%	13.2%	1.9%
47.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	24.5%	26.4%	22.6%	17.0%	9.4%
48.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	20.8%	37.7%	28.3%	11.3%	1.9%

## I. TRANSPORTATION

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
49.	My child regularly rides the bus.	11.3%	26.4%	28.3%	17.0%	15.1%
50.	The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	9.4%	22.6%	39.6%	13.2%	15.1%
51.	The length of the student's bus ride is reasonable.	7.5%	37.7%	47.2%	5.7%	1.9%
52.	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	15.1%	39.6%	24.6%	15.1%	5.7%
53.	The bus stop near mv	15.1%	43.4%	34.0%	5.7%	1.9%



	house is safe.					
54.	The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	15.1%	47.2%	30.2%	5.7%	1.9%
55.	Buses arrive and depart on time.	11.3%	41.5%	37.8%	5.7%	1.9%
56.	Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	15.1%	41.5%	34.0%	7.5%	1.9%
57.	Buses seldom break down.	17.0%	37.7%	35.9%	9.4%	0.0%
58.	Buses are clean.	13.2%	34.0%	43.4%	7.5%	1.9%
59.	Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	11.3%	20.8%	56.6%	9.4%	1.9%
60.	The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	7.5%	37.7%	51.0%	3.8%	0.0%

## J. SAFETY AND SECURITY

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
61.	Students feel safe and secure at school.	20.8%	60.4%	11.3%	7.5%	0.0%
62.	School disturbances are infrequent.	18.9%	56.6%	13.2%	11.3%	0.0%
63.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	22.6%	60.4%	11.3%	5.7%	0.0%
64.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	15.1%	41.5%	18.9%	20.8%	3.8%
65.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	9.4%	37.7%	11.3%	39.6%	1.9%
66.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with	13.2%	17.0%	51.0%	9.4%	9.4%

	principals and teachers.					
67.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	13.2%	18.9%	54.7%	5.7%	7.5%
68.	A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	15.1%	54.7%	20.8%	7.5%	1.9%
69.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	13.2%	47.2%	5.7%	22.6%	11.3%
70.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	5.7%	43.4%	13.2%	35.8%	1.9%

#### **K. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY**

<b>Survey Questions</b>		<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
71.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	13.2%	49.1%	26.4%	9.4%	1.9%
72.	Computers are new enough to be useful to teach students.	18.9%	54.7%	22.6%	1.9%	1.9%
73.	The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	17.0%	47.2%	22.6%	9.4%	3.8%
74.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	11.3%	28.3%	34.0%	22.6%	3.8%
75.	Students have easy access to the Internet.	11.3%	49.1%	24.5%	11.3%	3.8%

# Appendix A

## PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The additional comments below reflect the perceptions and opinions of parent survey respondents.

- I am not too sure how things are run in the school. I have never been to an open house. I don't know everyone at school. My kids enjoy school here. I am contacted quickly when my children need discipline at school. I am given choices of discipline. I have yet to make it to a board meeting. The only times my kids have been on the bus are for school trips.
- I believe, since the new superintendent arrived at Water Valley, things have improved in all areas. In the past, I would rather home school than subject my kid to an educational system of the prior administration. The vision was to get my kid educated and let the future go.
- I believe we have in place the best administrative team in the history of Water Valley schools. My daughter is the 4th generation that has been involved here at the school. The future is bright but accountability and communication are important.
- I feel like the education program is aimed for more advanced students and that the slower students are just written off as a bad seed. I also feel that too much time is spent on UIL's that is needed to help the slower, less advanced students.
- I feel there is too much emphasis on sports and not enough on academics and the arts. There are no art classes offered at all for students who are interested in this area of education. I sometimes feel we are always just a little bit behind the times.
- I feel very lucky to have my daughter enrolled at Water Valley. She feels safe and is getting a good education.
- I have watched closer than some as to this school's growth and decline. I believe we are in a severe decline under the current leadership. The children are no longer a focus for most of the embittered staff. We had a good system and it slipped away. Parents are not included or educated as to the changes involving their children. Thank You.
- I would like to see a bus monitor put on each bus. They have elementary children riding with high school children, and I think they need more supervision than just the bus driver. My daughter is in the 2nd grade and it makes me uncomfortable to put her on a bus with high school age kids and no supervision. I take her back and forth to school because of that. Thank you.

- Not as good a school as they try to be.
- The district is very closed mouth about anything happening at school. Instead of telling things straightforward. They tend to do everything behind the tax payers backs. Nothing is ever placed out in the open.

# Appendix B

## TEACHER SURVEY RESULTS

### *Demographic Data*

Number of respondents: 17

1.	<b>Gender (Optional)</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>				
		5.7%	23.5%	70.6%				
2.	<b>Ethnicity (Optional)</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Anglo</b>	<b>African-American</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Other</b>	
		0.0%	94.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.9%	
3.	<b>How long have you been employed by Water Valley ISD?</b>		<b>1-5 Years</b>	<b>6-10 Years</b>	<b>11-15 Years</b>	<b>16-20 Years</b>	<b>20+ Years</b>	
			23.5%	47.1%	23.5%	0.0%	5.9%	
4.	<b>What grade(s) do you teach this year?</b>	<b>PK</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
		5.9%	11.8%	5.9%	17.6%	17.6%	23.5%	11.8%
		<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
		11.8%	41.2%	41.2%	41.2%	52.9%	47.1%	35.3%

### **A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

<b>Survey Questions</b>		<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	17.6%	47.1%	23.5%	11.8%	0.0%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	11.8%	52.9%	0.0%	29.4%	5.9%
3.	School board members work well with the superintendent.	0.0%	29.4%	17.6%	47.1%	5.9%
4.	The school board has a good image in the	0.0%	17.6%	29.4%	47.1%	5.9%

	community.					
5.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	11.8%	41.2%	5.9%	29.4%	11.8%
6.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	23.5%	29.4%	23.5%	11.8%	11.8%
7.	Central administration is efficient.	17.6%	70.6%	0.0%	11.8%	0.0%
8.	Central administration supports the educational process.	17.6%	58.8%	11.8%	11.8%	0.0%
9.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	23.5%	23.5%	29.4%	23.5%	0.0%

## **B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT**

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
10.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	17.6%	52.9%	5.9%	23.5%	0.0%
11.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	17.6%	41.2%	11.8%	29.4%	0.0%
12.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	5.9%	64.7%	11.8%	17.6%	0.0%
13.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	5.9%	47.1%	17.6%	29.4%	0.0%
14.	The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	0.0%	64.7%	23.5%	11.8%	0.0%
15.	The curriculum guides	0.0%	52.9%	35.3%	11.8%	0.0%

	are appropriately aligned and coordinated.					
16.	The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	0.0%	47.1%	41.2%	11.8%	0.0%
17.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
	a) Reading	29.4%	52.9%	11.8%	5.9%	0.0%
	b) Writing	0.0%	88.2%	11.8%	0.0%	0.0%
	c) Mathematics	17.6%	82.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	d) Science	11.8%	76.5%	5.9%	5.9%	0.0%
	e) English or Language Arts	5.9%	88.2%	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%
	f) Computer Instruction	0.0%	88.2%	11.8%	0.0%	0.0%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	h) Fine Arts	5.9%	52.9%	5.9%	35.3%	0.0%
	i) Physical Education	5.9%	76.5%	11.8%	5.9%	0.0%
	j) Business Education	0.0%	70.6%	29.4%	0.0%	0.0%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	0.0%	58.8%	29.4%	11.8%	0.0%
	l) Foreign Language	0.0%	64.7%	17.6%	17.6%	0.0%
18.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a) Library Service	0.0%	41.2%	5.9%	47.1%	5.9%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	0.0%	76.5%	17.6%	5.9%	0.0%
	c) Special Education	11.8%	76.5%	5.9%	5.9%	0.0%

	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	0.0%	11.8%	64.7%	11.8%	11.8%
	e) Dyslexia program	0.0%	41.2%	47.1%	5.9%	5.9%
	f) Student mentoring program	0.0%	41.2%	35.3%	17.6%	5.9%
	g) Advanced placement program	5.9%	76.5%	17.6%	0.0%	0.0%
	h) Literacy program	0.0%	23.5%	76.5%	0.0%	0.0%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	0.0%	23.5%	47.1%	23.5%	5.9%
	j) Summer school programs	0.0%	29.4%	41.2%	17.6%	11.8%
	k) Alternative education programs	0.0%	70.6%	5.9%	17.6%	5.9%
	l) "English as a second language" program	0.0%	17.6%	53.0%	17.6%	11.8%
	m) Career counseling program	0.0%	52.9%	41.2%	5.9%	0.0%
	n) College counseling program	0.0%	88.2%	11.8%	0.0%	0.0%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	0.0%	29.4%	35.3%	29.4%	5.9%
	p) Drop out prevention program	0.0%	41.2%	47.1%	5.9%	5.9%
19.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	5.9%	23.5%	29.4%	29.4%	11.8%
20.	Teacher turnover is low.	23.5%	52.9%	17.6%	5.9%	0.0%
21.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	17.6%	52.9%	23.5%	5.9%	0.0%
22.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	17.6%	41.2%	29.4%	11.8%	0.0%
23.	Teachers are rewarded	0.0%	5.9%	41.2%	41.2%	11.8%



	for superior performance.					
24.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	0.0%	35.3%	41.2%	23.5%	0.0%
25.	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	0.0%	94.1%	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%
26.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	5.9%	41.2%	11.8%	35.3%	5.9%
27.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	29.4%	58.8%	5.9%	0.0%	5.9%
28.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	17.6%	58.8%	5.9%	5.9%	11.8%

### 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.	5.9%	64.7%	5.9%	11.8%	11.8%
30.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	0.0%	23.5%	35.3%	41.2%	0.0%
31.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	0.0%	64.7%	23.5%	11.8%	0.0%
32.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	0.0%	29.4%	29.4%	35.3%	5.9%
33.	The district has an effective employee	0.0%	5.9%	64.7%	29.4%	0.0%

	recruitment program.					
34.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	5.9%	70.6%	5.9%	5.9%	11.8%
35.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	17.6%	76.5%	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%
36.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	0.0%	5.9%	29.4%	47.1%	17.6%
37.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	0.0%	41.2%	35.3%	23.5%	0.0%
38.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	0.0%	41.2%	35.3%	23.5%	0.0%
39.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	0.0%	47.1%	5.9%	35.3%	11.8%

#### **D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
40.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	11.8%	76.5%	5.9%	5.9%	0.0%
41.	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	0.0%	11.8%	0.0%	52.9%	35.3%
42.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school	0.0%	64.7%	11.8%	17.6%	5.9%

	programs.					
43.	District facilities are open for community use.	5.9%	64.7%	11.8%	17.6%	0.0%

#### E. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
44.	The district plans for facilities far enough into the future to support enrollment growth.	0.0%	23.5%	47.1%	29.4%	0.0%
45.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	0.0%	35.3%	29.4%	23.5%	11.8%
46.	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	0.0%	0.0%	88.2%	0.0%	11.8%
47.	The quality of new construction is excellent.	0.0%	17.6%	82.4%	0.0%	0.0%
48.	Schools are clean.	0.0%	76.5%	5.9%	17.6%	0.0%
49.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	0.0%	70.6%	17.6%	11.8%	0.0%
50.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	5.9%	70.6%	5.9%	17.6%	0.0%
51.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	11.8%	82.4%	0.0%	5.9%	0.0%

#### F. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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52.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	0.0%	29.4%	35.3%	23.5%	11.8%
53.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	5.9%	35.3%	47.1%	11.8%	0.0%
54.	Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	5.9%	47.1%	23.5%	23.5%	0.0%

### 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.	0.0%	76.5%	17.6%	5.9%	0.0%
56.	Purchasing acquires high quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	5.9%	52.9%	41.2%	0.0%	0.0%
57.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	5.9%	82.4%	5.9%	5.9%	0.0%
58.	Vendors are selected competitively.	0.0%	41.2%	58.8%	0.0%	0.0%
59.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	17.6%	70.6%	5.9%	5.9%	0.0%
60.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	23.5%	64.7%	11.8%	0.0%	0.0%
61.	Textbooks are in good shape.	5.9%	82.4%	5.9%	5.9%	0.0%
62.	The school library	0.0%	35.3%	11.8%	47.1%	5.9%

	meets student needs for books and other resources.					
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## H. FOOD SERVICES

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
63.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	0.0%	35.3%	11.8%	35.3%	17.6%
64.	Food is served warm.	0.0%	47.1%	29.4%	17.6%	5.9%
65.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of the day.	0.0%	88.2%	0.0%	11.8%	0.0%
66.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	5.9%	64.7%	11.8%	11.8%	5.9%
67.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	5.9%	70.6%	5.9%	5.9%	5.9%
68.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	5.9%	58.8%	11.8%	17.6%	5.9%
69.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	0.0%	58.8%	23.5%	17.6%	0.0%

## I. SAFETY AND SECURITY

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
70.	School disturbances are infrequent.	5.9%	52.9%	5.9%	23.5%	5.9%
71.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	11.8%	70.6%	17.6%	0.0%	0.0%
72.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	0.0%	47.1%	5.9%	29.4%	17.6%
73.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	0.0%	47.1%	11.8%	35.3%	5.9%
74.	Security personnel	0.0%	29.4%	58.8%	0.0%	11.8%

	have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.					
75.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	0.0%	17.6%	58.8%	5.9%	17.6%
76.	A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	5.9%	64.7%	11.8%	11.8%	5.9%
77.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	11.8%	47.1%	23.5%	5.9%	11.8%
78.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	0.0%	47.1%	23.5%	23.5%	5.9%

## J. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
79.	Students regularly use computers.	5.9%	94.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
80.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	5.9%	47.1%	11.8%	29.4%	5.9%
81.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	5.9%	58.8%	5.9%	29.4%	0.0%
82.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	11.8%	82.4%	0.0%	5.9%	0.0%
83.	The district meets student needs in classes in computer fundamentals.	0.0%	76.5%	11.8%	11.8%	0.0%
84.	The district meets student needs in classes	0.0%	41.2%	47.1%	11.8%	0.0%

	in advanced computer skills.					
85.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	17.6%	70.6%	5.9%	5.9%	0.0%

# Appendix B

## TEACHER SURVEY RESULTS

### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The additional comments below reflect the perceptions and opinions of teacher survey respondents.

- I am concerned with losing 5 minutes of teaching time every Friday because the bell never rings on time. This adds up to almost a week of learning lost in the first period.
- Atmosphere is one of not caring due to lack of student supervision.
- It is obvious the educational emphasis is one of athletics. One-third of the JH/HS staff are coaches.
- As a parent I am very concerned with the non-existence of any discipline in JH/HS campus. I would not want any children to attend this campus without some major improvement.
- I do not feel that teachers/staff have a great amount of input into the educational planning. Our Site Based committees usually follow the agendas as set forth by administration within set time restraints and priorities. Often our perspectives and implementation seem more reactive then proactive. Improving communication between staff and administration, parents, students and community at large would be helpful for best use of resources and to provide an even stronger educational environment.
- I felt that it was important for those compiling the information from this survey to understand that I am an elementary teacher with children in high school. It was difficult to answer some questions because given the opportunity, I would have chosen different answers for the campuses, but instead went with the answer which showed improvement needed. Most of these questions least with inefficiencies in my own children's education rather than the elementary campus. However, at this point, I feel it is also important to say that our current administration is addressing many of these inefficiencies and campus administration will be changed so that improvements will be on going for the year.
- I have worked at no other school so I have nothing with which to make a continuing comparison. Since I am still at Water Valley one must draw the conclusion that I like the school or I would not still be there. The main problem we have seems to be lack of parental involvement - indifference. There are lots who do care and are supportive but some students would get a better education if their parents felt education was important.



- Most of the teachers at Water Valley High School are already doing the jobs of two people and have 6-7 preps a day for the classes we teach. Smaller schools need more assistance where personnel is concerned, especially on the high school level.
- Poor communication between school and parents.
- Too much emphasis is put on athletics.
- Departments work against each other.
- Insufficient training for support staff.
- Teacher morale is low due to reduction in force. Discipline is very low in middle and high school. Scheduling is very difficult due to the fact that 1/3 of middle and high school staff are coaches. Scheduling is also hampered by the fact that several teachers have a very small number of students in several of their classes. High school/middle school staff does not attempt to work a curriculum with elementary causing lack of continuity through the grades in subject matter and support is needed in other subjects besides athletics.
- The socio-economic status of over half the students in the district is a hindrance to many of these students. Many do not have parent support in academic expectations. Under the circumstances, the educational performances are good. The elementary staff works very hard to help students who are having problems.
- There are many things that I do not know about our district. Even though I teach here, I do not know a lot of the things that go on. I have gone to board meetings before. But some times they go into 'executive session' and you never know what's really decided. I love our school; but, with enrollment dropping, I am worried about our future.
- Water Valley ISD, like most other districts, has a few areas that need improvement. However, we are moving in the right direction. For a while, past board members created problems by overstepping their authority. However, that particular group is now in the minority. Our board is trying to let our superintendent do his job.

# Appendix C

## STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS

### *Demographic Data*

**Number of respondents: 39**

1.	<b>Gender (Optional)</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>			
		2.6%	41.1%	56.4%			
2.	<b>Ethnicity (Optional)</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Anglo</b>	<b>African-American</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Other</b>
		7.7%	79.5%	0.0%	5.1%	0.0%	7.7%
3.	<b>What is your classification?</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Junior</b>	<b>Senior</b>			
		0.0%	43.6%	56.4%			

### **SURVEY QUESTIONS**

#### **A. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement**

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
1.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	5.1%	51.3%	20.5%	20.5%	2.6%
2.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	5.1%	51.3%	30.8%	10.3%	2.6%
3.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
	a. Reading	23.1%	46.2%	20.5%	7.7%	2.6%
	b. Writing	23.1%	48.7%	12.8%	12.8%	2.6%
	c. Mathematics	33.3%	51.3%	10.3%	5.1%	0.0%
	d. Science	30.8%	53.8%	5.1%	7.7%	2.6%
	e. English or Language Arts	25.6%	51.3%	12.8%	5.1%	2.6%

	f. Computer Instruction	25.6%	46.2%	17.9%	5.1%	5.1%
	g. Social Studies (history or geography)	17.9%	56.4%	20.5%	2.6%	2.6%
	h. Fine Arts	2.6%	41.0%	20.5%	23.1%	12.8%
	i. Physical Education	43.6%	43.6%	7.7%	2.6%	2.6%
	j. Business Education	20.5%	25.6%	38.5%	12.8%	2.6%
	k. Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	5.1%	28.2%	46.2%	15.4%	5.1%
	l. Foreign Language	10.3%	38.5%	23.1%	20.5%	7.7%
4.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a. Library Service	5.1%	41.0%	17.9%	28.2%	7.7%
	b. Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	12.8%	56.4%	17.9%	7.7%	5.1%
	c. Special Education	15.4%	35.9%	38.5%	7.7%	2.6%
	d. Student mentoring program	2.6%	23.1%	43.6%	25.6%	5.1%
	e. Advanced placement program	23.1%	51.3%	15.4%	10.3%	0.0%
	f. Career counseling program	15.4%	30.8%	33.3%	17.9%	2.6%
	g. College counseling program	10.3%	33.3%	33.3%	23.1%	0.0%
5.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	38.5%	48.7%	2.6%	7.7%	2.6%
6.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	2.6%	41.0%	7.7%	38.5%	10.3%
7.	The district provides a high quality education.	15.4%	51.3%	17.9%	10.3%	5.1%
8.	The district has a high quality of teachers.	15.4%	30.8%	35.9%	12.8%	5.1%

## B. Facilities Use and Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9.	Schools are clean.	23.1%	38.5%	10.3%	20.5%	7.7%
10.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	17.9%	56.4%	12.8%	10.3%	2.6%
11.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	10.3%	51.3%	23.1%	7.7%	7.7%
12.	Emergency maintenance is handled in a timely manner.	7.7%	53.8%	28.2%	7.7%	2.6%

## C. Purchasing and Warehousing

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13.	There are enough textbooks in all my classes.	17.9%	43.6%	10.3%	20.5%	5.1%
14.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	12.8%	76.9%	7.7%	2.6%	0.0%
15.	Textbooks are in good shape.	7.7%	48.7%	15.4%	25.6%	2.6%
16.	The school library meets students needs for books and other resources.	5.1%	30.8%	17.9%	35.9%	10.3%

## D. Food Services

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
17.	The school breakfast program is available to all children.	12.8%	61.5%	12.8%	10.3%	2.6%

18.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	2.6%	10.3%	12.8%	23.1%	51.3%
19.	Food is served warm.	5.1%	25.6%	15.4%	28.2%	25.6%
20.	Students have enough time to eat.	0.0%	5.1%	15.4%	35.9%	43.6%
21.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	7.7%	76.9%	15.4%	0.0%	0.0%
22.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	7.7%	33.3%	15.4%	35.9%	7.7%
23.	Discipline and order are maintained in the schools cafeteria.	10.3%	59.0%	23.1%	7.7%	0.0%
24.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	10.3%	48.7%	12.8%	23.1%	5.1%
25.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	15.4%	35.9%	17.9%	17.9%	12.8%

### E. Transportation

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
26.	I regularly ride the bus.	0.0%	2.6%	35.9%	10.3%	51.3%
27.	The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	0.0%	5.1%	76.9%	10.3%	7.7%
28.	The length of the bus ride is reasonable.	2.6%	7.7%	71.8%	7.7%	10.3%
29.	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	5.1%	23.1%	69.2%	0.0%	2.6%
30.	The bus stop near my house is safe.	7.7%	23.1%	66.7%	0.0%	2.6%
31.	The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	7.7%	23.1%	64.1%	0.0%	5.1%

32.	Buses arrive and depart on time.	5.1%	7.7%	66.7%	12.8%	7.7%
33.	Buses arrive early enough to eat breakfast at school.	7.7%	12.8%	64.1%	5.1%	10.3%
34.	Buses seldom break down.	2.6%	17.9%	69.2%	7.7%	2.6%
35.	Buses are clean.	5.1%	12.8%	56.4%	10.3%	15.4%
36.	Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	5.1%	12.8%	66.7%	5.1%	10.3%

### F. Safety and Security

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
37.	I feel safe and secure at school.	10.3%	46.2%	17.9%	15.4%	7.7%
38.	School disturbances are infrequent.	5.1%	38.5%	25.6%	23.1%	7.7%
39.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	41.0%	43.6%	5.1%	7.7%	2.6%
40.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	5.1%	5.1%	20.5%	38.5%	30.8%
41.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	2.6%	17.9%	23.1%	41.0%	15.4%
42.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	5.1%	17.9%	69.2%	0.0%	7.7%
43.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	5.1%	10.3%	74.4%	2.6%	7.7%
44.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	12.8%	43.6%	38.5%	2.6%	2.6%

45.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	2.6%	25.6%	23.1%	30.8%	17.9%
46.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	2.6%	15.4%	66.7%	10.3%	5.1%

### 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.	12.8%	38.5%	12.8%	28.2%	7.7%
48.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	5.1%	46.2%	15.4%	25.6%	7.7%
49.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	15.4%	51.3%	15.4%	12.8%	5.1%
50.	The district offers enough classes in computer fundamentals.	12.8%	38.5%	28.2%	17.9%	2.6%
51.	The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.	10.3%	25.6%	41.0%	23.1%	0.0%
52.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	15.4%	43.6%	12.8%	25.6%	2.6%

### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The additional comments below reflect the perceptions and opinions of student survey respondents.

- I believe that our school is no longer about learning and teaching but whether or not a student is "properly" dressed. Rules in our

dress code seem to change daily. It all depends on the teacher's opinion of what is and isn't tacky! Does that seem fair?

- I think that the dress code should be in the handbook and not changed when the principal (or authorized personnel) is having a bad day or doesn't like you. Also ALL students should have to follow the same dress code with no exceptions to "rich" or "popular" students!
- I believe that we should have a better athletic facility, including weight room and field house.
- I also think that the cafeteria food has much room for improvement.
- The discipline is not fair at ALL! Everything they do at this school is so unfair.
- The cafeteria is really really BAD!
- The teachers are not fair because if a teacher's kid gets into trouble nothing happens at all.
- This school is just not fair!
- We don't have security guards. Water Valley is a good place except for the few rude, self-centered people that work and attend this school.
- Within Water Valley, there are several people, groups and faculty members whom do not care about "all" of the students, and make it harder on certain kids to shine, in a matter of speaking. Athletes and involved parents are the only thing that really matter. Academics have no serious meaning. As long as the Wildcat is bigger and badder, that's alright. Reality is, in the future athletics will not matter, it's academics. There are good teachers, but then there are bad ones as well. WE should just take time out and make every student count, not just athletes and faculty members children. Professionally, that should be done anyway, but this is done supposedly without knowing, or not at all, BULL! All of these students should be given the same treatment and benefits.
- It isn't a bad school. Some of the teachers do work hard to prepare us for college. The only real problems I see are the politics. Your last name, who you are related to. Some of the teachers can be very judgmental of who you are and what they "think" you've done. I think next year will be a much better year because the rules will be enforced more fairly.
- I disagree on many of the teaching and disciplining practices of Water Valley High School. There isn't fair and equal punishment. Students are known for their name only. They are not seen as an individual, only as whether they are popular, or their parents have money, or they are the most athletic or the smartest. This behavior is normal amongst children and teens, but should this be the outlook of the administration and teachers?



- Need a longer lunch period and off campus lunch for juniors and just like all the other schools in our district.
- All of the faculty and administration is against each other. As in the rules they can't all agree on the same rules. Also, the cafeteria is in the elementary a block away and the food is always cold and not enough of it.
- Off campus lunches should be permitted at least for seniors, Food is terrible!!!
- Food is horrible.
- We should have off campus lunch.
- Should leave state for senior trip.
- Should be offered art.
- Lunch burgers should consist of at least 10% meat.
- Suspend people instead of ISS.
- No dress code.
- I believe that the quality has declined in the last few years. Getting a good education doesn't seem as important to many people now.
- It is as fair as the student wants it to be.
- I think this school gives too many people too many chances! Like, for example, one kid skipped school once and got ISS. Well the kid did it again and got ISS again. That kid in particular always talks back to teachers, and is also very disrespectful toward the faculty. But the kid still gets to be A Big distraction to me as a student. I as a student do not think that it's fair for that student to keep being disrespectful and get away with so much.
- There are some good things about Water Valley ISD though. Most teachers are sweet and caring and really help you when you need help. But there are one or two teachers that don't treat students right! They treat "the popular" people's kid better than anyone else.
- OFF CAMPUS LUNCHESES!! (yeah baby)
- Flip flops legalized!
- Hair dying (any color) legalized!
- People should be able to express themselves through whatever means. Whether it be clothes (to an extent) hair, shoes, make-up!
- Better cafeteria food sounds good!!
- Get rid of ISS just suspend and get it over with.
- Have more foreign languages! and Art!
- I think Water Valley is super.
- Discipline is unfair. The teacher is always right the student is always wrong. Not allowed to express individuality.
- The educational performance is good. Our teachers work hard to help us make it in the world.
- Seniors should have off campus lunch.
- Better food.
- This school is bad. The teachers often bring their home lives to school and take it out on the kids. Most of them are rude. They

want respect but yet they do not want to give it. They gossip about the children within earshot of the kids. The teachers are not good role models, they're not even good people. Some take the kids and say awful things. The discipline is not good. The punishments are not fair and just. This school and teaching staff is an insult to the educational system. Thank you for letting me voice my thoughts.

- I don't believe that the school is fair. The staff only say something about the "out" crowd. If you are popular and well off you have no problems at school. Also, the kids are mean and hateful and if you say something to them to defend yourself you are the one getting in trouble. Because you are not the well liked student. If you try to become active in something such as sports you are made fun of and laughed at. If you want in a sport and coach don't like you then he/she will not let you on the team. On the other hand if you are well liked and "popular" the coach will let you on the team. I do have to say there are teachers that are caring and know what you mean by the unfairness. They are willing to talk with you and help you out with your problems. Some of them even offer their homes to students who have a rough life at home. I have been going to this school since first grade. With these examples I have been through I believe that things should be changed for other students in the future.
- I feel that Water Valley is a pretty good school. I have no problems with Water Valley. I think we need a dance team or something other than just having cheerleaders, too.

# Appendix D

## DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR AND SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY

### *Demographic Data*

Number of respondents: 5

1.	<b>Gender (Optional)</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>				
		0.00	40.0%	60.0%				
2.	<b>Ethnicity (Optional)</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Anglo</b>	<b>African-American</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Other</b>	
		0.00%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.00	
3.	<b>How long have you been employed by Water Valley ISD?</b>		<b>No Answer</b>	<b>1-5 years</b>	<b>6-10 years</b>	<b>11-15 years</b>	<b>16-20 years</b>	<b>20+ years</b>
			20.0%	40.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%
4.	<b>Are you a(n):</b>	<b>No Answer</b>	<b>Administrator</b>	<b>Clerical Staffer</b>	<b>Support Staffer</b>			
		20.0%	40.0%	0.0%	40.0%			
5.	<b>How long have you been employed in this capacity by Water Valley ISD?</b>		<b>No Answer</b>	<b>1-5 years</b>	<b>6-10 years</b>	<b>11-15 years</b>	<b>16-20 years</b>	<b>20+ years</b>
			20.0%	40.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%

### SURVEY QUESTIONS

#### 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.	20.0%	40.0%	20.0%	0.0%	20.0%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions	20.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%

	and desires of others.					
3.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	0.0%	80.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	20.0%	60.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
5.	Central administration is efficient.	20.0%	60.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
6.	Central administration supports the educational process.	0.0%	80.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
7.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	0.0%	40.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%

### **B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement**

<b>Survey Questions</b>		<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
8.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	0.0%	80.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
9.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	20.0%	40.0%	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%
10.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	20.0%	60.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
11.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	20.0%	40.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
12.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
	a. Reading	20.0%	60.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%

	b. Writing	0.0%	80.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
	c. Mathematics	0.0%	80.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
	d. Science	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	e. English or Language Arts	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	f. Computer Instruction	20.0%	40.0%	0.0%	40.0%	0.0%
	g. Social Studies (history or geography)	20.0%	60.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	h. Fine Arts	0.0%	60.0%	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%
	i. Physical Education	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	j. Business Education	20.0%	40.0%	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%
	k. Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	0.0%	40.0%	40.0%	20.0%	0.0%
	l. Foreign Language:	0.0%	60.0%	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%
13.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a. Library Service	20.0%	60.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
	b. Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	40.0%	40.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
	c. Special Education	0.0%	80.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	d. Head Start and Even Start programs	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	e. Dyslexia program	0.0%	20.0%	80.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	f. Student mentoring program	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	g. Advanced placement program	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	h. Literacy program	0.0%	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	i. Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	0.0%	80.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%

	j. Summer school programs	0.0%	40.0%	40.0%	20.0%	0.0%
	k. Alternative education programs	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	l. English as a Second Language program	0.0%	0.0%	80.0%	20.0%	0.0%
	m. Career counseling program	0.0%	60.0%	0.0%	40.0%	0.0%
	n. College counseling program	20.0%	40.0%	0.0%	40.0%	0.0%
	o. Counseling the parents of students	0.0%	60.0%	0.0%	40.0%	0.0%
	p. Dropout prevention program	0.0%	60.0%	0.0%	40.0%	0.0%
14.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	0.0%	80.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
15.	Teacher turnover is low.	0.0%	80.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
16.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	20.0%	60.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
17.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
18.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	0.0%	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%	0.0%
19.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
20.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	20.0%	60.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%

21.	The student-teacher ratio is reasonable.	0.0%	80.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
22.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
23.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	20.0%	60.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%

### 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.	0.0%	60.0%	0.0%	40.0%	0.0%
25.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	0.0%	60.0%	0.0%	40.0%	0.0%
26.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	0.0%	40.0%	20.0%	40.0%	0.0%
27.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	0.0%	60.0%	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%
28.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	0.0%	40.0%	40.0%	20.0%	0.0%
29.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	0.0%	60.0%	0.0%	40.0%	0.0%
30.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	0.0%	80.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
31.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for	0.0%	20.0%	60.0%	20.0%	0.0%

	promotion.					
32.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	0.0%	20.0%	80.0%	0.0%	0.0%
33.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	0.0%	60.0%	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%
34.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	0.0%	60.0%	0.0%	0.0%	40.0%

#### D. Community Involvement

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
35.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	0.0%	80.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
36.	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	0.0%	20.0%	20.0%	60.0%	0.0%
37.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	0.0%	60.0%	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%
38.	District facilities are open for community use.	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

#### 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	0.0%	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%	0.0%



	planning.					
40.	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
41.	Schools are clean.	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
42.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
43.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	20.0%	80.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
44.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	20.0%	80.0%	0.0%	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.	0.0%	60.0%	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%
46.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
47.	The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	0.0%	40.0%	40.0%	20.0%	0.0%
48.	Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%

#### G. Purchasing and Warehousing

Survey Questions	Strongly	Agree	No	Disagree	Strongly
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		<b>Agree</b>		<b>Opinion</b>		<b>Disagree</b>
49.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	0.0%	80.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
50.	Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	40.0%	40.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
51.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	40.0%	40.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
52.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	20.0%	60.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
53.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	40.0%	40.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
54.	Textbooks are in good shape.	40.0%	40.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
55.	The school library meets students' needs for books and other resources for students.	40.0%	40.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%

## H. Safety and Security

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
56.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	40.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%
57.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	0.0%	40.0%	20.0%	40.0%	0.0%
58.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
59.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with	0.0%	20.0%	80.0%	0.0%	0.0%

	principals and teachers.					
60.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	0.0%	20.0%	80.0%	0.0%	0.0%
61.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
62.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	20.0%	60.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%

### I. Computers and Technology

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
63.	Students regularly use computers.	20.0%	80.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
64.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	20.0%	40.0%	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%
65.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	0.0%	40.0%	40.0%	20.0%	0.0%
66.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	20.0%	60.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
67.	The district meets students' needs in computer fundamentals.	20.0%	60.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
68.	The district meets students' needs in advanced computer skills.	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	80.0%	0.0%
69.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	20.0%	80.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

## **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

The additional comments below reflect the perceptions and opinions of administrative and support staff survey respondents.

- We have a great school. We have had few problems over the years up until the last few. Our problems come from the area of the school board. Look at the turnover here in the last two years. We have a few with personal agendas they thought needed attention.