

Transmittal Letter

September 22, 2003

The Honorable Rick Perry, Governor
The Honorable David Dewhurst, Lieutenant Governor
The Honorable Thomas R. Craddick, Speaker of the House
Chief Deputy Commissioner Robert Scott

Fellow Texans:

I am pleased to present this report on the progress of the Glen Rose Independent School District (GRISD) in implementing my Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) recommendations.

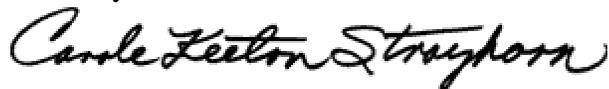
In February 2002, I released the results of my review of the district's operations. This review offered 64 recommendations that collectively could save GRISD taxpayers a net of more than \$4.1 million by 2006-07. The review also noted a number of GRISD's exemplary programs and model services provided by district administrators, teachers and staff.

In April 2003, we returned to check on how well the district's leadership put these proposals into practice. Over the last year, GRISD has implemented, or is in the process of implementing, 56 of the proposals, or 88 percent. The district has saved a net of more than \$1.6 million to date, and expects those savings to reach more than \$8 million over five years; more than double the Comptroller's estimated savings.

This report is available on my Web site at www.window.state.tx.us/tspr/glenrosepr/.

Thanks for all that you do for Texas.

Sincerely,



Carole Keeton Strayhorn
Texas Comptroller

c: Senate Committee on Education
House Committee on Public Education
The Honorable Kip Averitt, CPA, State Senator, District 22

Progress Report

Glen Rose Independent School District

September 2003

Introduction

In October 2001, Comptroller Carole Keeton Strayhorn began a comprehensive review of the Glen Rose Independent School District (GRISD) at the request of GRISD's Board of Trustees. In February 2002, the Comptroller issued a final report detailing 64 recommendations that could result in a net savings of more than \$4.1 million by 2006-07 if fully implemented. During April 2003, TSPR staff returned to assess the district's progress in implementing the recommendations.

Since 1991, TSPR has recommended more than 7,600 ways to save taxpayers more than \$780 million over a five-year period in 100 school reviews throughout Texas. TSPR also conducts follow-up reviews of districts that have had a least one year to implement recommendations. These 60 subsequent reviews show that more than 90 percent of TSPR's combined proposals have been acted upon, saving taxpayers more than \$135 million, with the full savings estimated to grow in the future.

Improving the Texas School Performance Review

Comptroller Strayhorn, who took office in January 1999, consulted school district officials, parents and teachers from across Texas and carefully examined past reviews and progress reports in an effort to make the TSPR more valuable, even vital, to the state's more than 1,000 school districts. With the perspective of having served as a teacher, and later a school board president, the Comptroller vowed to steer TSPR toward being more accountable to local school districts and the communities they represent.

Comptroller Strayhorn began by establishing new criteria for selecting school districts for future reviews.

Priority is given to districts judged poor performing? academically or financially? and to hands-on reviews that will benefit the greatest number of students.

Recognizing that only about 51 cents of every education dollar is spent on instruction, Comptroller Strayhorn's goal is to drive more of every education dollar directly into the classroom. In addition, no longer are school districts' best practices and exemplary models buried inside individual TSPR reports. Instead, Comptroller Strayhorn has ordered TSPR to share best practices and exemplary programs quickly and

systematically among all the state's school districts and with anyone who requests such information. There is simply no reason for a district that has solved a problem well to keep the solution to itself. Comptroller Strayhorn has directed TSPR to serve as an active clearinghouse of the best and brightest ideas in Texas public education. Best practices identified in the original review are now included in the Comptroller's best practices database, *A+ Ideas for Managing Schools (AIMS)*, which is accessible on the Web at www.aimsdatabase.org.

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

- ensure students and teachers receive the support and resources necessary to succeed;
- identify innovative options to address core management challenges;
- ensure administrative activities are performed efficiently, without duplication and in a manner that spurs education;
- develop strategies to ensure the districts' processes and programs are continuously assessed and improved;
- understand the links among the districts' functional areas and determine ways to provide a seamless system of services;
- 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 there is a business in the Yellow Pages that can do that job better and at a lower cost.

Finally, Comptroller Strayhorn has opened her door to Texans who share her optimism about TSPR's potential. Suggestions to improve school reviews are welcome at any time. The Comptroller is a staunch believer in public education and public accountability.

Detailed information can be obtained from TSPR by calling 1-800-531-5441 extension 5-3676, or by visiting the Comptroller's Web site at www.window.state.tx.us.

TSPR in Glen Rose ISD

GRISD experienced significant changes over the past 30 years. Prior to the 1970s, the district was rural, poor and relatively isolated. In the early 1970s, Somervell County granted Texas Utilities the right to build one of the state's few nuclear power plants, Comanche Peak Steam Station. Construction of the power plant brought construction workers to the

county, made the district one of the most property wealthy districts in the state and increased the student population.

As the 36th-wealthiest Texas school district in 2002-03, GRISD built fine facilities and developed a comprehensive education system that attracts teachers and families from the nearby Dallas/Fort Worth area. Taxes are among the lowest in the state at \$1.075 per \$100 valuation. Texas Utilities, the largest single taxpayer in the district, supplies more than 90 percent of GRISD's taxes. Even under the utility deregulation approved by the Texas Legislature in 1999, the district will continue to have more than five times the property wealth of the average school district in Texas. For 2002-03, property values are \$1,064,251 per student, or more than five times higher than the state average of \$239,436.

The Comptroller contracted with SDSM, Inc., an Austin-based firm, to assist with the review.

The team interviewed district employees, school board members, parents, business leaders and community members and conducted a public forum on October 2, 2001, at the Glen Rose High School from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. To obtain additional comments, the review team conducted small focus group sessions with teachers, principals and community members and also interviewed the board members. The Comptroller's office also received letters and phone calls from a wide array of parents, teachers and community members.

To ensure that all stakeholders had an opportunity to comment, TSPR sent surveys to students, parents, teachers, school and central administration and support staff. The team received 456 responses from: 103 school and central administrators and support staff, 51 teachers, 95 parents and 207 students.

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

GRISD selected peer districts for comparisons based on similarities in student enrollment, student performance and community and student demographics. The districts chosen were Groesbeck, Palacios, Seminole and Tatum.

GRISD in Profile

In 2002-03, the district served a population of 1,674 students consisting of 77 percent Anglo, 21.1 percent Hispanic and less than 2 percent other.

More than 40 percent of the student body of the district is classified as economically disadvantaged.

GRISD includes one high school, one junior high, one intermediate school, one elementary school and an administration building. TEA Regional Education Service Center XI (Region 11) serves the district.

TEA rated GRISD overall as Academically Acceptable in 2001-02. The rating remained the same for 2002-03 as the state switched from administering the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) to the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). TEA rated the high school and junior high as Exemplary and the intermediate and elementary schools as Academically Acceptable. In 2000-01, the district had an overall rating of Recognized. The high school, intermediate and elementary schools were rated Recognized, and the junior high was rated Exemplary. In 2001-02, 90.7 percent of all students passed all tests taken, 97.1 percent of all students passed the math portion of the test, 94.7 percent of all students passed the reading portion of the test and 90.3 percent of all students passed the writing portion of the test.

In 2002-03, the district employed a staff of 284.7 employees, with teachers accounting for 140, or more than 49 percent, of GRISD staffing. The district had expenditures of \$14.3 million that same year. In 2002-03, GRISD generated 91 percent of its budgeted revenues from local taxes and 4 percent from local and intermediate sources. Approximately 4 percent came from the state, while 1 percent came from the federal government.

In 2002-03, GRISD budgeted 50.2 cents of every tax dollar on classroom instruction compared with the state average of 51 cents.

Glen Rose ISD Report Card

Chapter	Total	Complete	In Progress	Not Implemented	Rejected	Percentage Complete/In progress	Grades
District Organization and Management	7	7	0	0	0	100%/0%	Excellent
Educational Service Delivery	10	8	1	1	0	80%/10%	Satisfactor
Personnel Management	9	6	1	2	0	67%/11%	Needs Wor

Financial Management	15	8	3	3	1	53%/20%	Needs Wor
Facilities Use and Management	9	6	3	0	0	67%/33%	Satisfactor
Operations	9	8	0	1	0	89%/0%	Excellent
Computers and Technology	5	4	1	0	0	80%/20%	Satisfactor
Overall Grade	64	47	9	7	1	74%/14%	Satisfactor

Excellent = More than 80% complete

Satisfactory = 80% to 100% complete or in progress

Needs Work = Less than 80% complete or in progress

Exemplary Programs and Practices

TSPR identified numerous "best practices" in GRISD. Through commendations in each chapter, the report highlights model programs, operations and services provided by GRISD administrators, teachers and staff. The Comptroller encourages other school districts throughout Texas to examine these exemplary programs and services to see if they could be adapted to meet local needs. TSPR lists its original commendations below and provides updated information on each topic in italics underneath the original commendation.

- ***GRISD has an active volunteer program that is tailored to meet the needs of each school.*** During 2000-01, the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) surveyed the elementary teachers to identify their needs, and surveyed the volunteers to identify their skills, preferences and availability. The PTA then matched the volunteers to meet the needs of the teachers, which created a positive experience for both teachers and volunteers.

The PTA continues to meet the needs of the teachers by carefully screening volunteers based on need and assigning volunteers with the particular requested skills to individual teachers. The elementary school principal said that in 2002-03, volunteers provided more than a million of hours of service to the different district schools.

- ***GRISD has a clearly defined process for updating its curriculum and ensuring that its guides are used to direct instruction.***

GRISD has curriculum guides for kindergarten through grade 12 and updates them regularly. The district developed a five-year curriculum planning schedule. GRISD grade level coordinators at the elementary and intermediate schools and department heads at the junior high and high schools work with teachers to ensure the guidelines are clear. One measure of an effective curriculum is how many students pass end-of-course exams. GRISD students scored higher than the state average on Biology I, English II and U.S. History end-of-course exams, and ranked first compared to peer districts. GRISD ranked second in the percentage of students passing the Algebra I exam.

In summer 2003, GRISD began working with five curriculum specialists to align the curriculum in the four core areas of math, reading/language arts, social studies/history and science to prevent gaps in the curriculum from one grade level to the next.

- ***Financial control is enhanced through budget information available to principals and department heads.*** Principals and department heads have immediate access to their school's budget information, with the ability to generate budget-to-actual reports from the system. Schools are also able to initiate purchase requisitions and electronically transfer the purchase requests to the Finance Department for review and approval. By authorizing access to the financial system, principals can review and maintain control over their budgets in a timely manner and be held accountable for excess expenditures.

The district continues to provide principals and department managers immediate access to their school's budget information so that they can maintain control over their budgets.

- ***An external investment advisor actively invests and increases the interest earnings on the district's investment portfolio.*** The district uses an external investment advisor who provides an independent, professional resource that increases the district's investment interest. The advisor's fee schedule is tied to portfolio performance and is capped at \$10,000.

GRISD continues to pay the external investment advisor to invest and increase the earnings on the district's investment portfolio. In 2002-03, the advisor prepared an investment report and helped the district make long-term investment decisions.

- ***GRISD offers special promotions to increase student interest and meal participation.*** The Child Nutrition Services Department

offers a number of themes and monthly promotions including barbecues, pasta bars, Grandparents' Day and Fair Day. These special programs improve student participation in meal programs.

By having cookouts and birthday parties, the Child Nutrition Services Department continues monthly promotions to encourage students to eat in the cafeteria.

- ***GRISD's Virtual Desktop concept allows students and staff to access their files from anywhere in the district.*** GRISD implemented a technology strategy that improved computer access districtwide. The district's Technology Advisory Committee recommended that the district implement the 'Virtual Desktop.' concept, which allows students and staff to securely log in at a computer or desktop anywhere in the district and have access to their assigned applications, user files and policies.

In 2002-03, the district extended the network to the community library to give district students access to their files during the summer. The district also has laptops with wireless connections that personnel can use to open their files from any location.

TSPR Key Recommendations

The following are some of the key recommendations that administrators and staff said had the greatest impact on district operations. The highlighted recommendations are organized by chapter and by the area of operation contained in the original report. The comments came from district administrators during the TSPR team's follow-up visit to the district.

District Organization and Management

Recommendation 5: Implement staffing standards for schools using formulas based upon enrollment.

The district has reduced maintenance workers, custodians and teachers by 39 positions through attrition and early retirement, saving more than \$5 million over five years. Previously, the district had a student-to-teacher ratio of 10:1; now it has established a ratio of 14:1 as a standard. District administrators said that staffing formulas were critical to helping them control costs.

Educational Service Delivery

Recommendation 11: Assign a district Gifted and Talented program coordinator.

In 2002-03, the district asked parents and school representatives to serve on a gifted/talented (G/T) committee to oversee the program. The director of Curriculum and Instruction chairs the committee so there is no additional cost to the district. The committee revamped a majority of the district G/T program to improve the G/T instruction, focusing mainly on consistency. All schools now use the same parent nomination forms. Once a student qualifies for the G/T program, all schools follow the same procedures while the student remains in the program.

Recommendation 12: Develop a districtwide plan for the Gifted and Talented program that ensures program continuity and effectiveness.

District administrators said this recommendation is crucial to improving their G/T program. The G/T committee, led by the director of Curriculum and Instruction, is responsible for the development of the G/T program. The committee appointed school G/T coordinators who meet with the director of Curriculum and Instruction on a monthly basis to share ideas, discuss concerns and maintain consistency within the program. The coordinators help ensure smooth transitions for students between each of the schools. The plan will be fully implemented by 2003-04.

Personnel Management

Recommendation 18: Redefine the Personnel and Human Resources function to reflect actual district needs and the performance expectations determined by the board.

This recommendation caused administrators to take time to determine district needs of the Personnel and Human Resources function. After careful analysis, GRISD reorganized existing staff and eliminated the director of Human Resources position. By redistributing the work among existing staff, the district avoided the cost of additional clerical staff included as part of the original recommendation.

Financial Management

Recommendation 28: Revise the budget planning process to include rigorous examination of proposed expenditures, performance measures and increased public input.

The superintendent presents a comprehensive report that includes revenues, expenditures, investments, budget and fund balance at each board meeting to inform board members about the district's financial

condition. The budget report is presented in a format so the board members understand the process is an activity-based budget and board members noted they have a better understanding of the district's month-to-month finances.

Facilities Use and Management

Recommendation 42: Create a permanent facilities planning committee and develop a long-range facilities master plan.

Creating a permanent facilities planning committee had been a district goal to enable the district to meet student needs even before the review team issued its report. The recommendation gave the administration support in appointing a sub-committee to move forward. The new committee, which consists of school principals and the director of Administration and Support Services, met and developed a plan to present to the board about district facility needs. The long-range plan includes painting the school inside and outside; replacing the carpet and other floor coverings; installing new stadium seats; and renovating science labs.

Operations

Recommendation 53: Analyze meal costs periodically and set prices to fully recover costs.

The district saved \$82,000 during 2001-02 by increasing meal prices and discontinuing the universal breakfast program. The district increased breakfast to \$0.90 and lunch to \$1.95.

Recommendation 55: Purchase automated bus routing software to design a more efficient and cost-effective route scheduling system.

The district did not purchase software but did analyze all routes, reducing the number of routes from 21 to 19 to be more efficient. By eliminating two routes, the district saved about \$20,000 in annual operating costs. By adopting a rigorous methodology for providing access to routes, the district was able to avoid the cost of software while still improving operations.

Computers and Technology

Recommendation 61: Revise the technology plan to add detailed strategies, schedules and costs.

To maintain up-to-date technology, the district has addressed the technology plan through the district improvement plan (DIP). The DIP

goal recommends examining equipment every three years to evaluate replacement needs.

What Still Needs to be Done?

GRISD has made steady progress towards implementing TSPR recommendations. The district has implemented 47 recommendations, 9 are in various stages of progress; seven have been reviewed, but not addressed; and one was rejected. This section addresses the key areas requiring additional attention.

Personnel Management

The district has reorganized the human resources function after a careful needs assessment. The next step in the process will be implementation of Recommendation 20, which calls for the development of a Personnel procedures manual. Because the district has cut staff, it is more important than ever that employees understand their roles and responsibilities and perform the jobs they are now assigned to do. A personnel procedures manual would ensure that staff treatment complies with the law and with district policies. GRISD should draft and implement a personnel procedures manual that outlines district procedures on such duties as developing job descriptions, posting jobs, conducting evaluations and handling payroll.

Financial Management

The district has not developed formal financial policies and a procedures manual that can be used to cross-train employees (Recommendation 29). Although the district has developed guidelines on an as-needed basis, effective practices for finance operations in school districts require written, approved policies and procedures to ensure adequate internal controls and to facilitate the training of new employees and cross training of current employees.

The district also has not developed a purchasing procedures manual (Recommendation 38). A purchasing manual guides district staff at all levels and helps train staff to use the district's established policies and procedures. GRISD should develop detailed purchasing manual to ensure that all staff members involved in the purchasing process are aware of and understand the district's purchasing policies. The manual also will help reduce errors and misunderstandings about the process and help ensure compliance with procurement laws and regulations.

GRISD's Ideas for Improving the Texas School Performance Review

The TSPR team does not assume that its process for performing school reviews works so well that it cannot be improved. As part of preparing the progress report, TSPR asked GRISD staff members and administrators what went right and what went wrong-and how the process could be improved.

The feedback TSPR received from other districts led to improvements in the review process. For example, early reports did not include implementation strategies, and districts told TSPR they needed help getting started.

As a result, the reports now include implementation strategies and timelines to complement the recommendations. Districts have told TSPR these blueprints are invaluable to achieving the desired results. But it is important for TSPR to continually be mindful of those things that did not work as intended so that the review process can be continually improved.

TSPR sent surveys to board members requesting their observations about the review process. Responses indicated that the review fairly portrayed GRISD's challenges and increased the board's and administration's awareness of these challenges. Board members who responded said TSPR provided realistic implementation strategies, timelines and fiscal impact recommendations to guide the district. Board members also said that the review provided focus and direction for the district and gave GRISD a good road map to follow.

District administrators thanked the TSPR team for providing recommendations to improve operational efficiencies. One board member said that the TSPR team had done everything it had been asked to do and the document has been useful. The board member suggested that TSPR should strongly illustrate what might happen if changes are not made. While TSPR attempts to show the benefit of implementing the recommendations, the final usefulness of the report depends on the motivation of the school district.

Another board member suggested that TSPR should meet with the board and explain in greater detail what the review entails and what the subsequent report is likely to look like. The board member noted that only 14 of the recommendations had to do with money and that the board needed to understand that the review was not just about money. He said the board needed to have a clear perspective of the process and understand that TSPR would also be looking at ways for the district to be more effective and efficient.

In an effort to improve this process, recent inquiries from school boards contemplating a review have been handled differently. Packets of

information and sample reports are mailed to aid them in their deliberations. TSPR also met with some boards to thoroughly explain the process, when requested. TSPR will review its procedures to see how it might provide board members with more detail at the beginning of each review.

Appendix A

Appendix A - Status of Recommendations and Savings

Rec #	General Recommendation	Implementation Status	TSPR's Projected Five-Year Savings (Costs)	Actual Savings (Costs) to Date	GRISD's Projected Five-Year Savings (Costs)	Comments
Chapter 1 - District Organization and Management						
1	Develop guidelines regarding the policy-making role of the board and obtain training to effectively implement these guidelines. p. 23	Complete	(\$4,800)	(\$2,625)	(\$2,625)	During 2002-03, the district hired consultants for the board's team-building sessions. During these sessions, guidelines and training were provided regarding the board's policy-making role.
2	Use timed board agendas to reduce the number of called meetings. p. 25	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	By improving communication between the administration and board, the district reduced the number of called meetings. The superintendent gives the board a weekly update and meets with each board member the week prior to the regular board meeting. The superintendent meets with the board president on Monday or Tuesday the week before the Monday board meeting to review the agenda. Board members receive the agenda and any relevant information on

						Wednesday, prior to the board meeting.
3	Implement a comprehensive reporting process to present financial, management and program-related information to the board. p. 27	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	In 2001-02, the district administrators developed a comprehensive board reporting process. The superintendent presents a comprehensive report to the board that includes revenues, expenditures, investments, budget and fund balance at each meeting.
4	Reorganize central administration and freeze salaries. p. 32	Complete	\$768,249	\$274,583	\$1,530,103	The district accomplished reorganization after a careful needs assessment by offering a retirement buyout, not replacing personnel who retired and reorganizing duties. GRISD's actual and projected savings do not include benefits.
5	Implement staffing standards for schools using formulas based upon enrollment. p. 38	Complete	\$2,951,945	\$1,107,653	\$5,538,265	The district adopted staffing standards for schools in 2001-02. The district developed a standard student-to-teacher ratio of 14:1. At the time of the review, the student-to-teacher ratio was 10:1. The district increased the ratio through the district retirement buyout plan. When employees retired, the district did not replace them. As a result, the

						district has 39 fewer teacher, paraprofessional, maintenance and custodian positions than it did in 2001-02.
6	Implement a strategic planning process that links existing plans, the budget and performance evaluations into one integrated districtwide plan. p. 40	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The District Excellence Committee is developing a strategic plan linked to the campus improvement plan and the district improvement plan. The committee actually consists of five committees that link the strategic plan to the budget and curriculum. The committee includes community members, parents, teachers, business representatives and administrators. The committee will continue to meet in 2003-04.
7	Expand outreach to Hispanic parents so that they can be more actively involved in their children's education. p. 48	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	In 2002-03, the district increased the number of Spanish communications sent to parents by 35 percent. Also, the English as a Second Language Parent Involvement Program now includes monthly activities for Hispanic parents for which attendance has been increasing. Schools also offer meetings on topics such as TAKS in Spanish for parents.

	Totals-Chapter 1		\$3,715,394	\$1,379,611	\$7,065,743	
Chapter 2 - Educational Service Delivery						
8	Develop an instructional plan that specifically addresses the risk of academic failure in the transition of students from intermediate to junior high. p. 62	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	In 2002-03, the district redesigned its Optional Extended Year Program using funds for extended day classes for students at risk of failing in grades 4-8. The district found that students are more likely to be successful when they receive help at the time they are experiencing difficulty with a subject. The district received the funds from a noncompetitive grant based on the number of at-risk students in the district. At the conclusion of the program, the district must submit an evaluation to the TEA.
9	Increase the number of students taking the SAT and the ACT. p. 64	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	In 2002-03, the high school counselor sent letters to parents of incoming juniors, advising them to encourage their children to take the ACT or SAT beginning their junior year. In addition to helping students be more "test-wise," the high school has ACT and SAT prep classes each semester. In 2002-03, GRHS students field-tested

						the SAT, which gave more students the opportunity to preview the test. Also, more students took SAT and ACT in 2002-03.
10	Use graduate tracking and follow-up data to review and upgrade the district's academic program. p. 69	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	In spring 2003, GRISD implemented the Graduate Follow-Up Tracking Program. Somervell County pays for the program, which tracks seniors for five years. Results of surveys sent to students after they graduate are used to improve instruction and services. The district plans to review the surveys and assess changes for 2004-05.
11	Assign a district Gifted and Talented program coordinator. p. 71	Complete	(\$6,000)	\$0	\$0	In 2002-03, the district created a gifted/talented (G/T) committee of parents and school representatives. The director of Curriculum and Instruction chairs the committee, saving the district the costs of stipends for a separate program coordinator. The committee revamped a majority of the district G/T program, focusing mainly on consistency. All schools now use the same parent nomination forms. Once a student qualifies for G/T, all schools follow the

						same procedures while the student remains in the program. Each school has a G/T contact person who meets in a group with the director throughout the year to share ideas, discuss concerns and maintain program consistency.
12	Develop a districtwide plan for the Gifted and Talented program that ensures program continuity and effectiveness. p. 73	Complete	\$0	\$41,000	\$205,000	The district established a G/T committee and appointed the director of Curriculum and Instruction as the coordinator. A subcommittee of this group is coordinating and aligning the district G/T program. The district has one full-time employee who works with all G/T students from kindergarten to grade 6.
13	Create strategies that will increase the number of students taking Advanced Placement courses and exams. p. 74	Complete	\$0	(\$3,000)	(\$15,000)	More attention has been given to the scheduling of Advance Placement (AP) classes to provide students a greater opportunity to take the classes. In 2002-03, the district required that all students taking an AP course take the AP test. The district provides \$40 for the cost of each test.
14	Develop instructional strategies specifically	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	In summer 2002, the district provided

	targeting economically disadvantaged students. p. 76					professional development opportunities and training for administrators and teachers to help prepare them to develop instructional strategies for working with economically disadvantaged students. Two teachers attended a seminar based on the research of Dr. Ruby Payne's book, <i>A Framework for Understanding Poverty</i> . These two teachers became trainers and presented the material to all instructional personnel.
15	Provide services to students who are deaf or hearing impaired through the Brazos Regional Day School Co-op for the Deaf. p. 83	Complete	(\$203,540)	\$0	\$0	The board voted to provide these services in April 2002.
16	Develop a vocational education program to meet the needs of work-bound students. p. 89	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	The district is working with Hill College on certification possibilities for career and technology education (CATE) students. Two CATE teachers received additional certifications in order to provide more course opportunities for students. The director of Curriculum and Instruction serves

						on the board of the Somervell County Development Commission (SCDC), and works through the SCDC to determine what needs area businesses have for potential employees. The district will hire a counselor who will have CATE student responsibilities for 2003-04.
17	Staff the intermediate, junior high and elementary school libraries to meet state standards. p. 92	Not Implemented	(\$334,875)	\$0	\$0	With the current budget deficit, the district is not able to staff the librarian positions, but will do so when funds become available.
Totals-Chapter 2			(\$544,415)	\$38,000	(\$190,000)	
Chapter 3 - Personnel Management						
18	Redefine the Personnel and Human Resources function to reflect actual district needs and the performance expectations determined by the board. p. 105	Complete	(\$166,550)	\$0	\$0	The district eliminated the Human Resources position through attrition and combined its duties with the director of Administration and Support Services position with no pay increase. The savings from the elimination of the Human Resource director are reflected in Recommendation 4 as part of the districtwide reorganization.
19	Establish and implement a schedule for routine	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	Using a Texas Association of School Board (TASB)

	position description review. p. 108					template in March 2003, the director of Administration and Support Services completed a schedule for routine position description review and began reviewing job descriptions.
20	Develop a personnel procedures manual that details operating procedures. p. 110	Not Implemented	\$0	\$0	\$0	With the elimination of the director of Human Resources' position and assumption of the duties by the director of Administration and Support Services, a shortage of manpower exists to complete a personnel manual. However, district administrators said the project will be completed as soon as feasible.
21	Obtain additional training for Personnel and Human Resources staff to improve use of the district's human resources information system. p. 111	Complete	(\$880)	\$0	\$0	The elimination of the Human Resources Department changed the training needs. The TECS School Assyst software is currently being used to provide some human resource training. In addition, human resource training was provided in-house at no cost to the district.
22	Develop a recruiting plan that identifies district hiring needs and includes goals, strategies and performance	Not Implemented	\$0	\$0	\$0	The director of Administration and Support Services will develop a recruiting plan; however, since the district began

	measures for staff recruitment. p. 114					eliminating positions, the plan has had a low priority.
23	Modify the interview process and revise the employment application to maximize legal compliance. p. 116	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	In 2002-03, the district began using TASB applications approved by TASB Legal. GRISD prescreens employee applications to reduce unnecessary interviews.
24	Review employee criminal histories periodically. p. 117	Complete	\$0	(\$400)	(\$400)	The director of Administration and Support Services completed background checks for all employees in 2002-03 through the Department of Public Safety.
25	Develop a compensation scale that has maximum salary ranges appropriate to the position and options for addressing future pay increases without exceeding the maximum. p. 122	In Progress	\$0	\$0	(\$9,000)	Pending board approval, the district will retain the service of the TASB Human Resources Division to develop a new pay system and an implementation plan for all district employees. The study, which will cost \$9,000 plus travel expenses, is scheduled for 2003-04.
26	Conduct evaluations of all staff annually. p. 123	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	In 2002-03, using the TASB evaluation tool, the district completed all staff evaluations for the first time. All of the evaluations are sent to the director of Administration and Support Services. Supervisors notify the

						director of Administration and Support Services after evaluations are completed.
	Totals-Chapter 3		(\$167,430)	(\$400)	(\$9,400)	
Chapter 4 - Financial Management						
27	Develop a policy that establishes the optimum balance for the General Fund and require the administration to report regularly to the board regarding changes to the fund balance. p. 132	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	Although the district has not established a policy, the board receives a monthly report reflecting current fund balance information.
28	Revise the budget planning process to include rigorous examination of proposed expenditures, performance measures and increased public input. p. 135	Complete	(\$1,400)	(\$5,000)	(\$10,000)	In 2002-03, the district used a financial consultant for budget planning and to verify the budget. The consultant also helped the district project what to expect in the coming year. The district plans to use the financial consultant again for the 2003-04 budget.
29	Create, adopt and implement a formal financial policies and procedures manual that can be used to cross-train employees. p. 139	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	Although the district developed guidelines on an as-needed basis, because of attrition in the Business Department, the available staff does not have time to cross-train or develop procedures manuals. The district will implement this at a later time.

30	Reassign personnel duties to the secretary in the Personnel and Human Resources Department to provide proper separation of duties. p. 140	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	In 2002-03, the district combined Support Services and Human Resources, and the director of Administration and Support Services' secretary has taken over those duties.
31	Perform cash flow analysis and invest excess funds in higher yield accounts. p. 146	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	In 2002-03, the superintendent, director of Finance and an outside investment consultant worked together to analyze investments. The district put a long-term investment plan in place in which investments earn higher yields.
32	Eliminate unnecessary operating accounts and modify the depository agreement to reduce service charges. p. 147	Rejected	\$2,400	\$0	\$0	The district determined that placing the payroll account and general operating funds in one account was not in the district's best interest at this time and chose to reject this recommendation.
33	Implement written and electronic supervision over generation of disbursements. p. 149	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The district developed security authorizations to process checks. The director of Finance and two co-workers are the only people authorized to use the system.
34	Secure cash receipts in a fireproof safe and make same-day deposits. p. 150	Complete	(\$300)	\$0	\$0	Cash receipts are secured in locked offices or desks if they are in the Business Office. Business

						Office staff members take the Food Service receipts to the bank daily. Other receipts are deposited as soon as possible after they are received.
35	Establish a committee to review the state health plan and develop a long-range plan of action. p. 154	Not Implemented	\$0	\$0	\$0	Because the district employs fewer than 500 individuals, it must join the State Health Care Plan, so it does not need a committee.
36	Reduce costs of property and general liability insurance by annually examining and adjusting deductible limits. p. 156	Complete	\$7,500	\$0	\$0	The property and general liability insurance was analyzed, but insurance premiums still went up.
37	Establish a fixed asset management committee and develop fixed asset management procedures. p. 160	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The board approved a fixed asset policy in 2001-02 that aligns with GASB 34. Only items worth more than \$5,000 are considered as fixed assets. The district also maintains an inventory of computers and other valuable equipment. The district has a committee consisting of the superintendent, director of Administration and Support Services, Business manager and the director of Technology that oversees the process.
38	Develop and distribute a	Not Implemented	\$0	\$0	\$0	The district does not have a purchasing

	districtwide purchasing procedures manual. p. 163					procedures manual, but the director of Finance reviews and approves all purchases.
39	Track and analyze purchases to ensure compliance with state and local purchasing laws. p. 166	Complete	(\$880)	\$0	\$0	The director of Finance tracks all purchases using accounting software.
40	Activate the appropriation control feature of the district's financial software. p. 168	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	The director of Finance monitors all purchases to ensure that expenses remain within budget limits. In October 2003, the district will convert to new software that will help monitor all purchases.
41	Establish inter-local agreements with Tarrant County and other governments in the Somervell County area to reduce purchase costs. p. 169	Not Implemented	\$60,290	\$0	\$0	Although the district investigated this, no savings were found. The Food Nutrition Department uses the state bid list.
	Totals-Chapter 4		\$67,610	(\$5,000)	(\$10,000)	
Chapter 5 - Facilities Use and Management						
42	Create a permanent facilities planning committee and develop a long-range facilities master plan. p. 175	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	During 2002-03, the district established a subcommittee of the District Effectiveness and Compliance Committee to conduct a capacity study and prioritize capital improvement needs.
43	Develop a strategy for more efficient use	Complete	\$145,000	\$96,000	\$480,000	During 2002-03, the district moved the

	of buildings including relocating the A.C.E. School to the junior high school. p. 177					A.C.E. (alternative campus for education) program to the high school. Students in grade 3 will be moved to the intermediate school and students in grade 6 will be moved to the junior high school in 2003-04.
44	Develop a written policy and fee schedule for community use of district facilities. p. 178	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	GRISD changed its policy in 2002-03 by revising the fee schedule, which was implemented by the director of Administration and Support Services.
45	Designate a single position that will be responsible for planning and implementing security initiatives. p. 186	Complete	(\$5,000)	\$0	\$0	The director of Administration and Support Services coordinates security initiatives that include Drug Free and Safe Schools. The director also developed an evacuation plan in the event a problem at the power plant occurs.
46	Develop a districtwide strategic security plan that identifies costs and strategies for implementation. p. 187	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The director of Administration and Support Services developed a strategic security plan in 2002-03.
47	Develop a key control and building access program that includes a key assignment and responsibility policy. p. 189	Complete	(\$700)	(\$900)	(\$900)	During 2002-03, the district schools were re-keyed. School principals developed and implemented a building access program to control current and future

						distribution of keys.
48	Clarify, publish and enforce the visitor identification policy at all schools. p. 192	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	All GRISD schools are enforcing the visitor identification policy.
49	Upgrade traffic signs around schools. p. 194	In Progress	(\$600)	(\$300)	(\$600)	The district replaced half of the traffic signs during 2002-03 and will replace the others during 2003-04.
50	Evaluate emergency communications equipment and develop a long-term emergency communication plan and strategies. p. 196	In Progress	(\$5,400)	\$0	(\$5,400)	This recommendation will be included in the capital improvement plan during fall 2003. The district hopes to use open bond money to install intercom systems at the junior high and high schools during 2003-04.
Totals-Chapter 5			\$133,300	\$94,800	\$473,100	
Chapter 6 - Operations						
51	Develop and implement an incentive plan to encourage cafeteria workers to complete certification classes. p. 210	Not Implemented	(\$16,620)	\$0	\$0	The district has not budgeted overtime funds for certification classes at this time.
52	Prohibit the sale of candy and other items of minimal nutritional value sold in competition with Child Nutrition Programs Department items. p. 211	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The coordinator of Child Nutrition Department has only items that meet the minimal nutritional value available during meal times.
53	Analyze meal costs periodically and set prices to fully	Complete	\$707,835	\$82,000	\$410,000	The breakfast meal was increased to 90 cents and the lunch

	recover costs. p. 213					meal was increased to \$1.95 and the universal breakfast at the elementary school was discontinued in 2002-03.
54	Establish a policy with a target of 20 buses and other vehicles per mechanic. p. 218	Complete	\$166,580	\$16,658	\$83,290	Since the district's lead mechanic serves as the bus coordinator, the position is only considered half-time. The district has 1.5 mechanics for 31 buses.
55	Purchase automated bus routing software to design a more efficient and cost effective route scheduling system. p. 220	Complete	\$77,000	\$20,000	\$100,000	While the district has not purchased software, it has analyzed the bus routes and reduced the routes from 21 to 19 to be more efficient.
56	Provide expanded driver safety training and work with other nearby districts to form a cooperative for driver training to reduce costs. p. 222	Complete	(\$600)	\$0	\$0	The district provides expanded driver safety training in-house because no adjacent districts provide the training.
57	Develop a school bus replacement plan with criteria that consider bus age, condition and capacity requirements. p. 223	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The director of Administration and Support Services recommended that the district buy two buses in 2002-03; however, budgets cuts prevented the purchase this year. The director developed a plan for evaluating and replacing buses every other year.
58	Develop a written policy and fee	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The district's new policy does not allow

	schedule for outside use of buses that reimburses the district for cost of services. p. 224					outside use of GRISD buses because of insurance stipulations.
59	Establish a spare bus and vehicle ratio and sell those buses and vehicles that are in excess of those ratios. p. 226	Complete	\$4,000	\$16,000	\$16,000	The district has eliminated two routes and sold one extra bus. The district must maintain the remaining buses in the event of nuclear disaster evacuation.
Totals-Chapter 6			\$938,195	\$134,658	\$609,290	

Chapter 7 - Computers and Technology

60	Develop a districtwide technology training plan that includes mandatory proficiency standards and deadlines for completion. p. 236	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The district improvement plan has a requirement for mandatory technology training. Each teacher and instructional paraprofessional must have six hours of technology training each year.
61	Revise the technology plan to add detailed strategies, schedules and costs. p. 242	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The district improvement plan has strategies for dealing with aging technology.
62	Store backup tapes in fireproof storage units built specifically for computer data. p. 243	Complete	(\$600)	(\$600)	(\$600)	The district purchased fireproof data storage, and tapes are now stored in the fireproof unit. Back-up tapes are also stored offsite.
63	Explore options for recovering network infrastructure investment costs. p. 248	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The district has an interlocal agreement with local government agencies to share Internet costs and has received a grant for

						\$209,000.
64	Use automated attendance software in all schools. p. 249	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	The Technology Department is developing a three-year plan for software, but at this time it is cost-prohibitive.
	Total-Chapter 7		(\$600)	(\$600)	(\$600)	
	Total Savings		\$4,142,054	\$1,641,069	\$8,318,133	